



ParkPeopleNews

Creating Citizen Connections to Our Parks

Summer 2014 Park People Newsletter

The Park People Annual Meeting - June 26th

Join us for The Park People Annual Membership meeting and cookout on Thursday, June 26th from 6:00 PM - 8:00 at the **Dretzka Park Chalet**. The Board and Executive Director will share our success stories from the past year. We have a highly engaged board and are proud of what our members have inspired us to accomplish on behalf of Milwaukee County Parks. We will also recognize our recipient of the 2014 Park People Partnership Award. Milwaukee County Parks Director John Dargle and members of his staff will be present as well.

The Terry Smirl Jazz Trio will be on hand playing jazz renditions of classic tunes from the Great American Songbook.

Please note We have extended the RSVP date to June 24th.

President's Perspective: You Have to Be a Friend to Have a Friend

Friends Groups are critical to the success of The Park People of Milwaukee County (TPP), but just as TPP needs Friends so do other park systems. Milwaukee County has over 150 parks and about one third are represented by Friends Groups. The Park People is the umbrella organization for these Friends Groups and for some TPP acts as fiscal sponsor, while the larger more established Friends Groups maintain their own non-profit status but still occasionally turn to The Park People for support.



However, there is the same call to action from National, State and Municipal parks to join Friends Groups and get involved. The challenges faced by the Milwaukee County Parks are

not unique. Most parks systems are facing declining budgets, decreased revenues, increases in cost for maintenance and stiffer competition for donor dollars.

Most park enthusiasts have several "favorite parks" and while I am loyal to The Park People I love to rollerblade at Lake Shore Park (state park), enjoy the beach at Atwater Park (municipal park) and love camping in the Apostle Islands (national park). As much as I want to see these parks thrive and improve, like all of us, I only have so much time and money to give. However, it occurred to me that while I can't join and support them all, I can still be a Friend in a less formal way than joining their groups. I make sure on each visit I do one thing to leave the park nicer than when I got there by picking up garbage or pulling a few weeds. And I'll hope that members of Friends Groups of other park systems do the same when they visit our Milwaukee County Parks.

Unless we someday have a dedicated revenue source (Park District or sales tax) we have to rely on our Friends. On behalf of The Park People, thank you for being a Friend.

Oak Leaf Discovery Tour Grows in Popularity

This year's Oak Leaf Discovery Tour passport is being touted as an opportunity to discover new ways to practice healthy habits. As a result, passports are being snapped up quickly. At this time over 2000 passports have been sold or distributed, substantially surpassing the total that we distributed or sold last year.

Well City Milwaukee, an organization of 60 businesses interested in mentoring programs for workplace wellness, purchased 500 passports that were used as table gifts for their Annual Well City Awards Breakfast to encourage businesses to promote the Oak Leaf Discovery Tour as a wellness opportunity for their employees.



Numerous businesses both private and not-for-profit have purchased our special package offer of 25 passports for \$50 to distribute to their employees and members. Do you know a group or business that would be interested in promoting healthy opportunities in our Milwaukee County Parks? Contact Jim Goulee, jim@parkpeoplemke.org or Cheri Briscoe, cherib41@gmail.com to learn more.

The OLDT was featured in Day Out, a weekly column in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and wisconsintrails.com. The article, written by Chelsey Lewis, is available [here](#). As a result of the publicity, there was a run on passports and a half dozen park golf club houses ran out! Rest assured, they have more passports now. So, stop by and pick one up!

Join the OLDT adventure and take a friend with you! Friend Oak Leaf Discovery Tour on Facebook.

Run for the Parks!

Save the date!! The fifth annual Run for the Parks is scheduled for Tuesday, August 19th, 2014, at 6:30 p.m. The cross country style course will wind its way through beautiful Humboldt Park, and includes both a 5k run and new this year, a family walk. The runners



and walkers will end the race by crossing the finish line in front of the stage where the 5 Card Studs will be rocking out for the weekly Chill on the Hill concert. All runners will receive a t-shirt and access to the post-run VIP area where they can enjoy refreshments, kick back and listen to the band. The registration site will go live in early July. Watch our website for more information.

You run! You walk! Our parks win!

The fun run is co-sponsored by the Bay View Neighborhood Association.

Partnership with UPAF Results in Successful Inaugural Performing Arts in the Park Event



On a beautiful day in May, appreciators of both the arts and nature flocked to our parks to enjoy free performances in our beautiful park environment. More than two hundred people enjoyed the performances including a concert by the Milwaukee Symphony

Orchestra string quartet at Humboldt Park, a rhythm workshop by Danceworks at Dineen Park, a concert by Milwaukee Children's Choir at Greenfield Park, and an interactive storytelling workshop at Wilson Park (pictured). The successful event was a result of a partnership of the Next Generation UPAF group and The Park People. Thank you UPAF!!

Weed Out Appreciation

Our annual spring Weed Out is officially over. We'd love to thank every volunteer personally, but that of course is impossible so please accept our sincere appreciation to so many of you who turned out once, twice, or in some cases each and every weekend during the month of May! Does what we do matter? You bet! If nothing else, it highlights the threat to our natural areas, which, without your efforts would ultimately affect the state of our parks. Pat yourselves on the back. You are true heroes if only appreciated by our insects, butterflies, birds, and critters whose homes you are helping



to rehab! We look forward to working with you all again in the fall.

The Park People thank REI for their continued support of our Weed Out Program which allows us to purchase new tools and supplies and coordinate the solicitation of volunteers!

The Park Market is Always Open

The Park People Park Market offers trees, benches, and bricks for individuals or companies to purchase as long-lasting additions to our county parks. The Park Market's offerings are a perfect gift for that person who has everything or has a special connection to the parks. In addition, the trees, benches and bricks are a sentimental way to celebrate a special event or remember a loved one.



A brass tag will accompany your tree and a 2x8 inch brass plaque will be attached to your bench and placed in the park and approximate location of your choosing, to honor the recipient



or special event. A brick bearing the name of your loved one or event will be placed in O'Donnell Park near the iconic di Suvero sculpture overlooking the Calatrava and Lake Michigan shoreline.

Look for these special donated trees and benches next time you're in your favorite County Park, and consider contributing one of your own.

Featured Friends Group: ROMP

Did you know Milwaukee is ranked as one of the best cities to have a dog? It is no surprise to us, given all the great work our local Residents for Off-leash Milwaukee Parks (ROMP) has been involved in lately. Did you know they recently helped open a new dog exercise area in Bay View? The mayor and Parks Director were there to help celebrate, along with other local leaders. Keep an eye out for their newest dog exercise area called Roverwest, in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood. It is expected to open later this month!



ROMP has upcoming events that provide a different kind of exercise and socialization for dogs and their human companions.

10th Annual Labor Day Doggy Dip - Mon, Sept 1 from 630-8 pm

Location: Cool Waters in Greenfield Park - 2028 S. 124th St.

After Cool Waters Park closes for the "human swimming season," and before it is drained for the year, dogs are allowed to swim at the Doggie Dip.

3rd Annual Barktoberfest - Sat, Sept 27 from 1-5 pm

Location: Estabrook Park Beer Garden - 4400 N. Estabrook Dr.

Join ROMP for an afternoon of tail-waggin' fun. Enjoy live music, food and libations from the Estabrook Beer Garden along with lots of activities for your four-legged friend.



The events raise money for dog waste bags, signage and other amenities at the dog parks. They also serve as a way to further educate the community about responsible pet ownership.

"Besides the obvious benefits of exercise and socialization for our dogs, dog parks have contributed

to the renaissance of our parks in Milwaukee. ROMP hears all the time from dog park users that they rarely visited our parks until the dog parks were created. A new, dedicated user base was created with a strong interest in our parks now. Dog parks provide another form of recreation that entire families can enjoy in our parks," states Robin Barry, ROMP's Co-President.

We'd like to thank the passionate and dedicated members of ROMP for their hard work in improving the community for our two and four legged friends. For more information on the events above, or getting involved, check out their website:

<http://milwaukeedogparks.org/>.

In the Know: Milwaukee County Trails Council

What is it the Trails Council?

The Milwaukee County Trails Council was created in 2005 by County Executive Scott Walker and the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors to act as an advisory committee to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture for long-term planning, policy recommendations, and identifying user needs for our trails.

Current membership includes Milwaukee County Parks staff, Milwaukee County Department for Special Needs, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works, Wisconsin Bike Federation, Badgerland Striders, Wheel & Sprocket, Milwaukee Metro Mountain Bikers, Wisconsin Snowmobile Association, and **The Park People**. Board member Cheri Briscoe represents The Park People on the Council.

Some accomplishments of the Council include development of a Trails Network Plan, the popular Milwaukee by Bike map (2011), policy and procedure review, trail project updates, helping to facilitate grants, helping obtain better signage, and sharing of information. Updated Milwaukee by Bike maps are being developed for 2015.

Meetings of the Trails Council are open to the public and take place on the second Thursday of every odd Month at 10:00 am at the Parks Administration Building. Meetings are planned for July 10, Sept. 11, Nov. 13, and Jan. 8, 2015. In an effort to make more people aware of the Trails Council activities, an evening meeting with more outreach is being planned for January or February 2015.

Current construction and trail activities.

Milwaukee County has recently bought 200 new graffiti resistant Oak Leaf Trail signs that will be posted during the summer of 2014 to replace missing signs and improve wayfinding. Work is scheduled to start on the Burleigh Street to Capitol Drive section of the Menomonee Parkway in June 2014. Detour signs have been posted for the Hank Aaron State Trail in areas where the trail is closed due to the ongoing Zoo interchange freeway project. Work will begin this summer on development of a bridge and bike trail corridor at the Hampton East Side Bike Trail intersection on the Former C&NW Railroad right of way.

The Park People contributed funds from net proceeds of the Oak Leaf Discovery Tour passport to purchase a sophisticated electronic trail counter for evaluation of trail use and needs. Evaluation will be done in cooperation with UWM Department of Urban Planning and University Extension Departments. This information will aid Parks Department staff in writing grants and procuring funding for trail maintenance and expansion.

Come to a Trails Council meeting and learn about the excellent things that are happening to improve our trails. We are fortunate to have such dedicated staff working to improve our trails.

Milwaukee County Parks Advisory Commission – What is it?

The Milwaukee County Parks Advisory Commission was created in 2007 by the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors "for the express purpose of providing 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." It is made up of seven members who are appointed by the County Board Chairperson and confirmed by the County Board.

The Chairperson of the Milwaukee County Parks Advisory Commission (MCPAC) is currently Cheri Briscoe, who is also a member of The Park People's Board of Directors.

The Milwaukee Metropolitan Association of Commerce created a task force in November 2013 "to focus on the region's cultural and entertainment institutions." They are expecting to make a recommendation by November 2014. MCPAC has an interest in the MMAC's vision and funding recommendations because our Milwaukee County Parks system is a major cultural, entertainment and recreation provider for residents and

visitors to Milwaukee County. Ms. Briscoe has recently been invited to serve on the Cultural and Entertainment Capital Needs Task Force.

Another area of interest to MCPAC is a County Board resolution to "perform a cost benefit analysis of the O'Donnell Parking structure to help policymakers determine a prudent course of action on the future of the facility." Are there plans to sell it to a private business? Could this start a precedent of selling our county parks to stave off the growing effects of increasingly underfunding our county parks for the last 30 years? Is it legal? Are there solutions that could benefit the parks and business without decreasing income for the parks?

The Park People and Friends of our Milwaukee County Parks all have an interest in these activities because we all love our parks.

The next MCPAC meeting will be on June 30th at 5:00 pm at the Mitchell Park Pavilion on the Lagoon, 2200 W. Pierce St., Milwaukee. Both of the above mentioned concerns will be discussed at the MCPAC meeting. These meetings are open to the public.

Welcome to New Park People Members

The Park People would like to cordially welcome the following new members who joined us since the spring newsletter. We sincerely thank you for your membership and support of your Milwaukee County Parks. Cheers to another year of enjoying all your county parks have to offer!

Welcome New Members

Bob Hangsterfer

Renee Joos

Katherine Keller
