

# Park People Fall 2017 Newsletter

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## President's Perspective - Kate Ciurlik

As the last of the leaves fall, and we witness a mix of cold, damp and crisp, sunny days, we hope all of you have had the opportunity to enjoy our amazing parks. Whether taking in China Lights, supporting a Weed-Out® event or simply taking a walk in one of our parks, our parks provide opportunities to connect with the community. With the holiday season upon us, the opportunity to enjoy our parks remain plentiful. Milwaukee Holiday Lights. Friends Group Workshops. Visiting Santa in the Park. And in the near future, skating and sledding. There is certain to be an activity for you. In this Season of Giving, please consider contributing to our Parks by becoming or renewing your membership to the Park People. With your support, recognition and commitment, maintaining the haven our parks provide is viable.

## Oak Leaf Discovery Tour End of Summer Party 2017

We had a small but lively turnout at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Oak Leaf Discovery Tour Annual End of Summer Party at the Landing at Hoyt Park Beer Garden. Both of the bike winners this year were at the party, which made for some real celebrating. Vicki Rodriguez, won the Wheel & Sprocket bike, Jim Marks (pictured below) won the South Shore Cyclery bike, Jason Schultz won the Rainbow Jersey \$250 gift certificate. Participants noted that they liked the free downloadable fold up passports. And, of course, they enjoyed the excellent free beer at the party.

Participants also liked the opportunities to discover new parks as we expanded the options to include an Off the Beaten Trail corridor. Parks in that corridor were not on the Oak Leaf Trail. They were Grobschmidt Park, Holler Park and Falk Park, less known smaller parks that are worth exploring.

The plans for next years Oak Leaf Discovery Tour will change. Cheri Briscoe, who is stepping down from OLDT leadership, has suggested we need to create some group events related to the OLDT passport that engage a large number of participants so that our sponsors get a bigger bang for their bucks, which also means more money for the Trails. We have two new potential major sponsors. If you have ideas, and would like

to be on the Oak Leaf Discovery Tour committee, please contact Dawn St. George, Executive Director of the Park People, 414-273-7275 or [dawn@parkpeoplemke.org](mailto:dawn@parkpeoplemke.org).

Please let our sponsors know how much you enjoyed the 2017 OLDT passport. Our 2017 sponsors were: Badgerland Striders, Beans & Barley, Estabrook Beer Garden, Friends of Hank Aaron State Park, Johnson's Cyclery and Fitness, The Landing at Hoyt Park, Milwaukee County Parks, Rainbow Jersey, South Shore Cyclery and Wheel and Sprocket. When you see new directional signs or hear statistics about ridership on the trails, you can know that these sponsors and our map purchasers contributed to it.

Funds from this year will be added to a grant from REI (Recreational Equipment Inc.) to be used for wayfinding signs that help riders figure out their location at less well marked intersections. By the way, the Park People have been getting orders for our wonderful Milwaukee County Parks and Trails Maps from all over the U.S. Don't forget to buy some maps or bells for stocking stuffers for your favorite explorers: go to [www.parkpeoplemke.org](http://www.parkpeoplemke.org).



## **Volunteer of the Year**

Congrats to Sue Goulee for the 2017 Park People Volunteer of the Year award! Sue gave hundreds of hours to the Park People for over the past ten years. She helped with newsletters, mailings, meetings and special events. If the name sounds familiar, Sue is married to Jim Goulee who recently retired as TPP's Executive Director. Sue and Jim can credit their meeting to Milwaukee County Parks! Jim met Sue when they were both working at Madison Park in the summer of



1975.

## **2016 - 2017 Friends Group of the Year: Friends of the Monarch Trail**

The Monarch Trail is located on the County Grounds in Milwaukee near 92nd and Watertown Plank Road. It is an important migratory flyway, not only for the butterflies, but also birds each fall. Friends of the Monarch Trail (FOMT) is proud that this trail is the host of an overnight roosting site for these migrating monarchs. However, disruption from UWM's Innovation Campus, the Zoo Interchange, new roadways and roundabouts have all limited migration potential. This area no longer contains enough meaningful habitat for the monarchs to repopulate. Volunteers count the butterflies daily and have documented that since 2006 the monarchs roosting at this site has declined.

Still, FOMT has much to celebrate after winning the fight for the survival of the Monarch Trail. Members can credit themselves for saving 11 acres of critical roost area from development. While in pursuit of maintaining this green space, they acquired 12 acres of the Department of Transportation land to add to the preserve. Through education, they were also able to convince the D.O.T. to amend seed mixes for the Zoo Interchange right-of-ways to include common milkweed and late blooming

nectar plants to support monarch migration.

Public outreach and education is important to these friends. Guided tours can be scheduled and such requests have increased over that past 5 years. The Natural Resource Foundation of Wisconsin had a field trip as did the Kettle Moraine Garden Club and many individuals during the annual Migration Celebration. Other groups have included master gardeners, seniors and schools. The North Central Integrated Pest Management Research Center Conference also visited the site to experience the trail and learn from their presentation. This organization researches how agriculture practices can be improved to respond to current society concerns including the severe impact of the monarch butterfly from agricultural practices.

In addition, volunteers still find time to work behind the scenes to organize exciting community events and fundraisers. They have applied for grants to restore the habitat and wetland areas that were added. There is an annual fundraiser that includes a plant sale, planting party, Migration Celebration each August and a seed processing party.

If you have not visited this gem, a walk through the Monarch Trail is well worth your time and guaranteed to be memorable. You never know how many butterflies that you may encounter especially during migration season.

Congratulations to our friends, Friends of the Monarch Trail!



**Weed-Out® : Make a Difference Day 2017**

This year on Make a Difference Day, 34 Public Allies Milwaukee AmeriCorps Members provided over 100 combined hours of service, along with the efforts of Friends of Doctor's Park and other volunteers to remove the invasive Buckthorn from multiple areas of Doctor's Park.



Buckthorn kills native plant species and destroys natural habits for insects and other animals, leading to population reduction and death.

### **Thank You for Assisting with Weed-Out®**

We'd like to give a BIG thank you to all of you who assisted this fall.

- Brown Deer
- Cooper
- Doctors
- Estabrook
- Grant
- Honey Creek
- Hoyt Park



Lake Park  
Lincoln



## **Milwaukee County Parks Department Plans Friends Groups Mini-Series**

August Ball, Milwaukee County Parks Volunteer Services Coordinator, started a Friends Group Mini-Series. In October the topic was Grant Writing 101. It was very nicely done, and there were about 30 people in attendance. The presenters did a great job communicating that the fiscally-sponsored groups should coordinate any potential grant proposals with The Park People or Parks Department. These capacity building workshops are an opportunity to meet fellow Friends, get inspired by their successes and benefit from lessons learned. There's one left for 2017.

### **December - Volunteer Recruitment & Retention**

Friends groups with pavilions in their respective parks are encouraged to host sessions. Presenters are confirmed for Fall but if you or your group would like to present or host a spring session, contact August Ball: [August.Ball@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:August.Ball@milwaukeecountywi.gov)

Friends Group members are encouraged to attend these sessions to see other Milwaukee County Parks and learn what other groups are doing. This is a great opportunity to share your successes and failures with others. This is also another opportunity to connect with Parks Department Staff and ask questions about your concerns.

Check the [Milwaukee County Parks Website](#) and the [Park People Website](#), for updates and locations for these mini-series.

### **\*\*Save the Date for our 40th Anniversary Celebration\*\***

In 2018, Park People will be celebrating 40 years improving and enhancing Milwaukee County Parks. To mark this milestone, plans are underway to hold a gala on November 10, 2018 at Boerner Botanical Gardens. Save-the-dates have already been shared with our friends groups who without their dedication and support, Park People and the parks would not be what they are today. If you would like more information or to be involved in the planning, please contact our office.

Thanks for making it to the end! We'll be back this winter with another newsletter.

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