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Friends of Milwaukee County Parks

Park People Winter 2018 Newsletter

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](#)

Attention Friends!

All members of all Friends Groups are invited to The Park People's upcoming annual spring meeting scheduled on Wednesday, May 23rd from 6-8 p.m. at South Shore Park's pavilion. As requested, we are returning to the original format helping you to become a stronger volunteer who can make a bigger difference for your park. This gathering will focus on "what we can do for you" and give you a chance to provide updates about what is happening in your favorite park with those in attendance.

Please watch for details and the invitation.

Lake Park Friends

Mission: To promote the preservation, enjoyment, and enhancement of Lake Park in the spirit of Frederick Law Olmsted.

After Lake Park's summer centennial celebration in 1994, interest in the formation of a friends group began. That fall, a small committee came together and formed a board after the receipt of a \$1000 seed grant from The Park People.

This successful group of dedicated volunteers seems to have endless energy to continue to improve and care for their park. They offer organized events including bird watching, summer concerts, nature and history walks and talks, park clean-ups, weed-outs, and activities for children. Annual plantings are facilitated, ravine paths and lake vistas are maintained, an ice skating rink created (if the weather cooperates), and annual fundraising for the restoration, renovation, and new improvements for the park is done. The group's largest fundraiser (aside from the member/annual appeal campaign) is Cirque du Lake Park. This even is an evening of wine, a silent auction, hors d'oeuvres, and music with all proceeds to benefit this historic park.

Lake Park is almost 140 acres which means that there is always work to be done. The group's primary focus now is to help Milwaukee County restore three bridges in the park that have fallen into disrepair. The Ravine Road Bridge, the Locus Street Rustic Wooden Bridge, and the Steel Arch Bridge. Tree planting is also currently a focus area. Almost one-third of this park's tree have/will be removed due to the emerald ash borer. Plus, trees that reach maturity must also be replaced. Therefore, efforts continue to enhance and maintain Lake Park's beauty, as close to Olmsted's original design as possible.

The North Lighthouse Ravine has been restored and even dogs are happy with the installations of a pet friendly water fountain. Children are visiting the park even more as the number of Wonderful Wednesdays concerts has grown and tennis lessons are now being offered in the summer. Other current projects seeking funding through donations include bluff maintenance/creation of new Lake Michigan vistas and restoration of the 100+ year old cinder running track.



Featured Friends Group: North Point Lighthouse Friends

Since 1855, the North Point Lighthouse with its 74-foot tower and a Queen Anne-style Keeper's Quarters has been standing between two ravines in Lake Park on a two-acres of land. Annually, many neighbors, Wisconsinites and tourists visit this historical landmark and enjoy the sites of this Olmsted park and Milwaukee's east side vintage neighborhood. Because of the commitment of the North Point Lighthouse Friends, this gem has been preserved and restored to its early 20th century charm in 2007.

This group of friends has organized a 2018 monthly lecture series with talks that will feature prominent historians, authors, and scholars. Upcoming topics include Borchert Field and the Milwaukee Mafia. Members are invited free of charge but the

community may also attend for a price of a \$10 ticket at the door (\$5 for seniors/student with an id). Landmark Credit Union generously is the sponsor of this special offering.

Specific information can be found at: [NorthPoint Lighthouse Lecture-series](#)

Fall 2017 Weed-Out® Report **by Ken Solis**

By many measures, the 2017 fall Weed-Out effort was a great success. The numbers: volunteers and associated friend's groups worked in 11 parks or parkways with 20 "official" fall weeding events and donated over 2,250 hours. Some events drew over 40 volunteers which meant that even heavily infested areas were often cleared of invasives. Some friend's groups like Lake, Brown Deer, and Menomonee River Parkway to name a few, also did weeding outside of the "official" Weed-Out events. Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), exotic honeysuckle (*Lonicera spp*), wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*), burning bush (*Euonymus alata*), and Japanese Lilac tree (*Syringa reticulata*) were just a few of the species that were culled to give our native species a better chance to thrive.

Many people may not be aware that often planted species like wayfaring tree or burning bush can be invasive and displace native species, but this was the first time I was aware Japanese lilac tree even existed, much less was taking over some areas of Grant park. Even Brian Russart, the Parks natural areas manager, had to consult an expert at Johnson's Nursery to identify this fast growing and spreading ornamental tree. Our relative ignorance about yet another invasive species can be excused, however, because even the U.S. Department of Agriculture lists only one county in New York state where this species has been noted to be invasive. Moral of the story: stick with native species for your landscaping. You never know which non-native plant will be tomorrow's garlic mustard, common buckthorn or . . . Japanese lilac tree!



A final note, after taking the reins back from John Lunz after about 10 years (thanks John for your hard work!), the best part of chairing Weed-Out again was meeting and working with incredibly dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers who all share our love for Milwaukee Park's invaluable remaining natural areas.



GALA

Based on conversations with our constituents and in order to focus on what you think is most important, the originally planned Gala has been canceled. Should you have any questions regarding this change, please contact us.

Offering Precious Gifting Options

Finding the right, personal gift can prove challenging. You want a gift that shows you care about the individual, the special occasion and the impact the individual makes in life. The Park Market helps beautify our parks while also providing individuals with a unique way to honor special people and events in our lives. By gifting a tree or bench, an enduring commemoration of an event in one's life is possible.

The Tree Donation Program enables an individual to select an ornamental, evergreen or shade tree to be planted or to 'adopt a tree' in a park and location*of the individual's choice. The selected tree is marked with a commemorative tag. The Park Market Bench Program places a bench in your favorite park. Three different bench styles are available to choose from. The Park People also work with donors who envision a larger scale commemoration achieved through a park enhancement.

All funds generated from the Park Market Programs are redirected into the beautification of our precious treasure, the parks. For more information, contact us.

*Subject to confirmation of location by Milwaukee County Landscape department; alternative location may be recommended based on assessment of location vs needs of tree

Working with Students Provides a Learning Opportunity

Concordia University has a mission to serve, and this group of students is fulfilling that mission. Their advanced public relations course is designed to give students an opportunity to create and execute a PR plan for a business or non-profit organization. This team was looking for an organization that is doing good in the community and could use some help with awareness, volunteer recruitment and branding. The Park People was a perfect fit because of their great commitment to the people of Milwaukee County, their passion for the environment, and their reliance on dedicated volunteers. This is an experienced group of seniors who have already developed PR Plans and have interdisciplinary majors ranging from marketing to criminal justice. Currently students are creating a social media campaign, exploring corporate and university partnerships, and promoting The Park People everywhere they go! We look

forward to our continued partnership with Concordia University as they help spread awareness and promote our mission!

"The Park People play a very important role in the Milwaukee community. As PR students, getting to work with a non-profit that has such real impact in our area is a tremendous opportunity. We're happy to get to support them during this semester." Anne

"I've participated in their weed outs before but it is cool to learn more about the organization and the passion that they have for parks in Milwaukee County. The Park People are easy to work with. The Park People have done a lot of great work for parks in Milwaukee County, and as someone who utilizes them regularly it has been great to help out the organization accomplish their goals of promoting engagement in the parks even more." Nick



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

Thanks for being a member and making a difference! We'll be back this spring with another newsletter.

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