

## Staff Leadership

Barry Waddell, Executive Director

## Board of Directors

Nadine Weske, President

*Community Volunteer*

John Machulak, J.D., Vice President

*Machulak, Robertson & Sodos, S.C.*

Patricia Hintz, J.D., Treasurer

*Quarles & Brady*

Anne Stadler-Vailancourt, Secretary

*Lincoln Park Friends*

Luanne Coyne

*Community Volunteer*

Amy Diliberti

*Community Volunteer*

Traci Gondek

*Milwaukee County*

Lucas Olivieri

*Milwaukee County*

Michael N. Pierce, MBA, MS,

*Colonel USAF/Ret*

*Community Volunteer*

Nathan Rackers

*BSA Three Harbors Council*

Steven Silverstein

*Community Volunteer*

Dr. Ken Solis

*Community Volunteer*

Marrissa Werner

*Visit Milwaukee*

## Directors Emeritus

Roger L. Boerner

Robert Cowan

Joy G. Teschner

David Kinnamon

## Benefactor of Support

Milwaukee County Parks

## Major Partners

Milwaukee County Parks Foundation

Preserve Our Parks

## Contact

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## Did You Know . . .

More than \$300 million is needed over the next 10 years to address infrastructure needs in 157 Milwaukee County Parks (2018, Wisconsin Policy Forum).

More than **two-thirds** of Milwaukee County Parks are not supported by a local group of residents who actively engage the community in their park or advocate for needed improvements.

## Vision of The Park People

All 157 Milwaukee County Parks are supported by a Friends Group, which engages residents, raises funds, and advocates on behalf of their park.

## Mission of The Park People

The Park People's purpose is to preserve, support, and enhance Milwaukee County Parks through building an effective volunteer organization.

The Park People achieves its mission through:

- **Fiscal sponsorship** – Falling under The Park People umbrella allows Friends Groups to focus on engaging residents in supporting their park.
- **New Friends Groups** – The Park People engages residents to form new Friends Groups and then provides mentorship and ongoing support as they evolve into sustainable groups.
- **Liaison** – The Park People helps Friends Groups navigate county processes AND effectively communicates the work and needs of more than 50 Friends Groups to Milwaukee County Parks.



## Background

**The Park People**, founded by Joy Teschner in 1977, formed as a response to the disbanding of the Milwaukee County Parks Commission. Filling the gap for citizen input and oversight for Milwaukee County Parks, the new organization focused on promoting and advocating for parks, fundraising, and establishing a volunteer base.

The first Friends Group formed in 1984, and today **Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens** is considered the gold standard for what a Friends Group can become. **Preserve our Parks** spun off as its own organization in 1999, acting as a watchdog advocacy group. **Milwaukee County Parks Foundation** launched in 2019 to raise funds to finance projects and address a growing backlog of deferred maintenance.

*Our Friends Groups and our beloved parks are stronger because of the great work of the Park People. With their support, Friends Groups can focus their energy on enhancing parks and ensuring they're clean, safe, and accessible for everyone.*

Jason Haas,  
Chair, Committee on Parks, Energy & Environment  
Milwaukee County Supervisor



*Friends of Milwaukee County Parks*

## Friends Group Success Story

The Park People has been instrumental in forming and supporting Friends Groups that advocate for and engage residents in more than **34 Milwaukee County Parks**.

A number of Friends Groups have become sustainable as their own nonprofit, including Boerner Botanical Gardens, Milwaukee Domes, Hoyt Park & Pool, Lake Park, North Point Lighthouse, Wehr Nature Center, and Juneau Park.



Because of the services The Park People offers, our Friends Group has been able to offer events that showcase our beautiful park and help bring people in our neighborhood together.

The Park People is an invaluable partner, providing expertise and resources that our group would otherwise have a difficult time acquiring on our own.

Thanks to The Park People, we can concentrate fully on why we formed our group in the first place: to preserve, protect and promote our area park.

*Kelly Grant Moore, Friends of LaFollette Park*

## Other Major Programs

### Weed-Out® Volunteer Initiative

Milwaukee County Parks contain most of the county's remaining natural areas, which are threatened by aggressive, non-native plants referred to as "**invasive weeds**." Invasive weeds can dominate an area so completely that they crowd out native wildflowers, shrubs and even trees. When the native plants are gone, wildlife that depend on them also disappear.

**Weed-Out® program** is a volunteer initiative spearheaded by the Park People in cooperation with Milwaukee County Parks. Volunteers are provided with the tools and supplies required to effectively remove the invasive weeds while educating the public about this specific threat to our parks.

Volunteers devote more than 2,100 hours each year, which has resulted in more than 40 acres of parkland being cleared of these invasive weeds. To get involved, visit <https://parkpeoplesmke.org/get-involved/programs/weed-out/>.

### The Park Market

The Park Market helps beautify our parks while also providing individuals with a unique way to honor special people and events in our lives. The Park People offer a selection of trees and benches through its Park Market, the only program in Milwaukee County that allows a tree to be planted or a bench to be placed on your behalf in your favorite park. Your gift includes a commemorative tag. For more information visit <https://parkpeoplesmke.org/park-market/>.



### How You Can Help

- **Sponsor or attend our Gala** – This signature fundraiser will be held on Saturday, November 6, at the Botanical Gardens pavilion, featuring The Eddie Butts band. Funds raised will help us form new Friends Groups and engage more volunteers to participate in our Weed-Out® initiative.
- **Engage with a Friends Group** – Volunteer for or donate money directly to your local Friends Group or contact us about how to form a new group for your local park.
- **Donate** – Become a member of the Park People or donate via the Park Market.