

Grant Park Watch / Friends of Grant Park Minutes June 14, 2018

Attending: Debby Pizur, Betsy Abert, Jan Marsh, Rick Kaiser, Lynn Crawford, Pam Uhrig, Jody Johnson, Chris Marifke, Susan Gresser, Thomas Gardner, Bobbi Koehler, Lynn Meidam, Justine Bellamy, James Davies, Sierra Dawkins, Brian Morrison, Annemarie Adsen

Vandalism was reported by Pam Uhrig who said the kiosk near the tennis court had the plexiglass smashed and a door hinge knocked off; and Debby Pizur reported a second window broken at Wulff Lodge (has already been boarded up).

Treasurer's report: Lynn Crawford reports \$8,419.69 in our Guardian Credit Union account; \$8,762.19 in our Park People account. Total funds amount to \$17,181.88.

We discussed using security cameras in the park. Cameras are legal, as long as they are used in areas where there is no expectation of privacy. A while back, we installed cameras in two areas, although one camera was vandalized in short order and not replaced. The other camera was immediately successful helping police to identify two graffiti taggers. As far as we know, it is still operational. James Davies did some online searching to see what other areas of the country were doing: some installations were very helpful and others were removed due to citizen complaints of "big brother". It was suggested we mention 'security cameras are in use' as deterrence by posting in the kiosks in the park. We thought we should contact parks administration about our idea to use security cameras at Wulff Lodge (and perhaps Area 5 pavilion again). We will send an inquiry to Mike Wrench at Milwaukee County Parks.

Youth Works volunteers will be helping in the park each Wednesday from 9:30 am to 3 pm. Rick Kaiser is lining up projects to keep them busy. Contact Rick if you have a suggestion. Invasive Buckthorn and Honeysuckle removal are on the "to do" list. Buckthorn trees will be used to reinforce the brush "fence" that thwarts use of social footpaths to the lake rather than stairs and trails.

Justine Bellamy introduced the scavenger hunt she designed for our Beer Garden amusement commitment, and Jody Johnson explained the Invasive Jeopardy quiz show she created. Members volunteered to facilitate on Thursdays, from 5 to 8 pm:

- **June 28th** - Pam Uhrig, Lynn Crawford, Debby Pizur, Jody Johnson
- **July 5th** - Justine Bellamy, Bobbi Koehler
- **July 12th** - Justine Bellamy, Lynn Meidam, Sierra Dawkins

Justine will inquire about gift certificates from the vendors for the winner of the scavenger hunt. We hope to have t-shirts available to sell as well, with our newly designed Master Beer Gardener image.

An issue of concern in the metro area is light pollution. James Davies told us about an effort to light the Hoan Bridge with 500,000 LED lights, near Lakeshore State Park. James explained the confusion for migratory birds at night with the extra light. Since the Hoan Bridge is an interstate road, it is up to state officials to approve this. He urged members to contact their state representatives to use caution before approving this, and to challenge US Bank and NW Mutual Insurance Co. to go dark during bird migration season. Shielded lamps are preferred to keep the sky dark.

On June 7th, Preserve Our Parks held a meeting at South Shore Park to launch "Our Turn", a petition drive to address the massive backlog of repairs needed in our county parks, and to restore parks for the public's enjoyment. The petition demands a sustainable source of funding

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for parks. The solution needs to come from Madison, in the form of increased revenue for parks. Signatures will be collected all summer long. For more information, visit <http://www.preserveourparks.org>. You can download a petition and circulate it yourself! Get involved.

Our theme for the 2019 Friends of Grant Park calendar will be history. We are looking for submissions of historic images of Grant Park such as the swans in the middle pond, the interior water feature near Wiloway, and wild flowers before the onslaught of garlic mustard. Submit photos to Debby Pizur or email to friendsofgrantparkcalendar@gmail.com.

The first Suburban Soles Guided Nature Walk was rainy, but a few intrepid souls had one-on-one access to Milwaukee County's Natural Areas Coordinator, Brian Russart. The June 24th walk will be guided by FOGP member Sierra Dawkins, Eastern region botanist for US Forest Service. More information is on our website, fogp.org and on Facebook.

We had a brief report about the May 23rd Friends Group Gathering sponsored by the Park People. The Friends of Lincoln Park were named the Friends Group of the Year. They are encouraging all to use the Lincoln Park pool to prevent its closure. Interim Director Barry Waddell also highlighted Wehr Nature Center's hiring of a full time restoration ecologist.

Debby Pizur wants us to explore the idea of establishing 501(c)(3) status for our group. Five other friends groups have done this so far.

Betsy Abert deposited a check for \$1,556 awarded FOGP by the Southeast Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium. We will use these funds to purchase tools and materials for Weed-Out; they are given in a matching grant formula per hours volunteered which means every hour truly counts!

Many thanks to Rita Wiskowski for presenting our program about saving Monarch Butterflies. We had about 24 people attending, with much interest, and very good questions. Kathy Slamka brought several monarch chrysalis that she was sheltering until metamorphosis.

Our next meeting is Thursday, July 12th. This meeting may be held at the Beer Garden as a social gathering... more details will be sent on this.

Respectfully submitted by
Jody Johnson
Consensus Chair and Secretary
Friends of Grant Park