

Grant Park Watch / Friends of Grant Park Minutes June 9, 2016

Attending: Lynn Crawford, Jody Johnson, Ken Lauffer, Pam Uhrig, Christian Matson-Alvarez, South Milwaukee Police Officers Todd Vinogradsky and Auxiliary Tom Ceparski, Sue Hibben, Betsy Abert, Rick Kaiser, Debby Pizur, Jan Marsh, Don Lawson, Jackie Benka

Security:

Theft from several garages and vehicles has been reported in the area. All were unlocked at the time, and primarily tools were stolen. Officer Vinogradsky strongly suggested to lock garages and vehicles at all times. Noting serial numbers of tools is helpful in recovery.

FOGP will set up an information table at the Traveling Beer Garden. Volunteers are needed to encourage membership, sell Garlic Mustard Pickers CDs, and Oak Leaf Trail Passports and bicycle maps. A raffle will also be featured. Individuals can join FOGP for \$10, and receive a complimentary FOGP tote bag.

Milwaukee Public Museum's Bio-Blitz (24 hour species census program) at Grant Park will start Friday, June 10 at 3 pm and finish Saturday, June 11 at 3 pm. The public is invited on Saturday to view the findings and meet with scientists at their base camp: area 5 pavilion. Children are encouraged to attend this learning opportunity and view insects, invasive species, water quality samples, reptiles, spiders, plant life and animals that have been observed within the last 24 hours in Grant Park. 85 distinguished scientists and technicians will be present for questions.

Betsy Abert was one of the speakers at the Alliance for the Great Lakes' Ravine Workshop at Chicago Botanic Gardens in Glencoe, IL. Betsy described how FOGP volunteers used a mini-grant to fund ravine restoration in Grant Park. Many other professionals addressed the participants of the workshop on improving water quality in ravine environments. Storm water management was a major theme.

Brian Russart, natural areas coordinator for Parks, will meet during the Bio-Blitz with anyone in our group willing to discuss further slope restoration in the park. He is concerned about the slopes on the north side of the ravine which are severely denuded due to foot traffic on informal "volunteer paths."

A burdock removal day will be scheduled for June 18th, from 9 - 11 a.m. Burdock root is easier to sever during the month of June, but becomes woody by mid-summer and difficult to remove.

The long awaited FOGP 2017 calendar is still under construction. Sue Hebner, a volunteer with a background in graphic design, is helping Pam with this project. Hopefully it will be printed in time for sale at the beer garden.

Christian Matson-Alvarez, owner of Brew City Safari urban hiking, leads open hiking tours of historical, architectural or scenic areas of the city. He is planning a Grant Park Sunrise hike on Saturday, July 2nd. Meet at Nomi's coffee on Chicago Ave. at 3:30 am, and then walking to Grant Park beach by 4:30, then to the 7 bridges beach and trail and returning to Nomi's for coffee. He was seeking background information about Grant Park, or its ecosystem that could be shared with his hikers. Hikes are advertised on social media, and the charge for the hike is \$5 each, with proceeds going to charity (St. Benedict the Moor). Register at brewcitysafari@gmail.com. Bring a friend!

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June 25th will repeat a June 4th walking tour of the ravine with the South Milwaukee Library's summer reading program participants. Unfortunately, June 4th was rainy, although 10 people showed up anyway and seemed to enjoy the walk. Betsy Abert was facilitator.

Jackie Benka suggested FOGP have tables at either (or both) Evening on the Avenue (July 28), and South Milwaukee's National Night Out (Aug. 17). Lynn Crawford volunteered to work Aug. 17th. Also, a table in September at the South Milwaukee Farmers Market would be good exposure for FOGP.

Jackie Benka attended the Grant Park Neighborhood Watch meeting. They are starting a block watch program. Emerson St. and Brookdale Court have had less traffic than usual due to construction.

The Milwaukee County Sheriff's department Targeted Enforcement Unit (TEU) is training new horses for their horse patrols this year. Consequently, the horse patrol will not be patrolling the area this summer.

Debby Pizur and Jackie Benka are working to restore the garden areas at Wulff Lodge which will be 100 years old next year. They have been in contact with Brian Russart about acceptable plants to use in the beds there.

A contact list of core members will be created. Watch for emails seeking current contact information.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, July 14th at 6:30.

Respectfully submitted by
Jody Johnson