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The bulletin of Partnerships for Parks, an initiative of the City Parks Foundation and the City of New York/Parks & Recreation

BUILDING ON EVENTS

For parks groups across the city, the green-ups and celebrations during "It's My Park!" are the start of a busy season of events in their parks. Late spring brings Arbor Day (April 24), a day for tree plantings, and Memorial Day (May 25), when some groups plan picnics. Throughout the summer, other groups will plan events for children, festivals, performances and clean-ups.

Every event you put on in the parks this summer is an excellent opportunity for your group to build its membership and build alliances with other local groups and officials.

BUILDING MEMBERSHIP

Any event in your park can be used to recruit new members for your group. In fact, events are your best publicity. When regular park users see that fun, positive things are going on, they'll want to know who is making them happen. Publicize your event beforehand by posting flyers in neighborhood stores and bulletin boards and by putting a listing in the local paper. On the day of the event, put flyers up to advertise what's going on and who's sponsoring the event, set up a table with information about your group and the park, and greet visitors as they enter the park. (Check first with your park's supervisor before you do these things.) Then, introduce yourself to people, thank them for coming, and take down their names, addresses and phone numbers for your mailing list. Some groups have even designed their own recruitment cards which they ask newcomers to fill out. Others use sign-in sheets to collect names. After the event, make sure you follow up by calling new volunteers or holding a meeting to plan the next event.

BUILDING ALLIANCES

Organizing and running events in your park is also a great way to build alliances with local organizations, businesses, and officials. When planning an event, you might get another group to co-sponsor it. Approach a theater group or school if you want to put on a dramatic performance, a bookstore or library if you are planning a poetry reading, or a scouting group if you're thinking about a childrens'

fair. Getting to know other organizations is important because they can provide volunteers, monetary support, expertise, and other resources. Banding together on parks issues also lends you credibility and political power; elected officials and City agencies will be more responsive to your requests when you represent a broader constituency. And always remember to say thank you to all those who helped -- a note is best.

You might also want to invite local elected officials to events in your park. They'll prove much stronger allies if they have confidence in your group and the work you do for the park. They also may be more likely to remember your park in the City budget process.

BUILDING A TRACK RECORD

Events, from clean-ups and green-ups to neighborhood fairs and musical performances, are visible products of your group's enthusiasm for your park. They are the most effective way for your group to become known and respected in your neighborhood -- to build a track record.

To preserve and share these successes, it is necessary to record them. Some groups have found it helpful to keep a scrapbook of materials relating to their group's activities, and press clippings and photos from events can be an important section. Save copies of the flyers you create to publicize your event, the programs you publish to introduce performances, the thank-you notes you write to sponsors. Take pictures at the event and paste them in, too. As your organization grows, so will your scrapbook. Then bring it with you to meetings with businesses that are thinking about giving you money or in-kind donations and take it to your Community Board to keep them abreast of your activities. Finally, show it to new members and interested neighbors who want to know your group's history.

Try following these suggestions. By the end of the summer, your group will surely have attracted more members and more support from your community.

SIDEWALK ARBORETA

In fall of 1997, Parks & Recreation created the first **Sidewalk Arboretum** in the tree pits bordering St. Nicholas Park in Manhattan. By this fall, examples of all the different kinds of street trees planted by Parks -- from the Littleleaf Linden to the Goldenrain tree -- will line the streets. Local primary and elementary schools and City College, located near St. Nicholas Park, will use the Arboretum as an outdoor laboratory as well as help in caring for the young trees. Some of the trees, like the Pioneer Elm, were planted with bare roots, an experimental new tree planting technology in which the roots of a tree to be transplanted are coated with a gel which prevents them from drying out.

Another Sidewalk Arboretum has been planted next to Asser Levy Recreation Center on East 23rd Street in Manhattan, and this spring others will be planted in Queens and Brooklyn. Groups or individuals interested in having a street tree planted near their house have only to visit the Arboretum to see their choices. For more information on this program, call 212-360-TREE.

IT'S MY PARK!

Join the City of New York/Parks & Recreation and *Partnerships for Parks* in cleaning, greening, and celebrating New York City's parks and natural areas. Here's what is happening and when:

It's My Park! Green-Up Days -- The date your park will participate is determined by its location. Each borough has been divided up by community boards (CBs).

APRIL 25: Brooklyn: CBs 1-7; Bronx: CBs 1-6; Manhattan: CBs 1-4, 6-8; Queens: CBs 1-7; Staten Island: CB 1

MAY 9: Brooklyn: CBs 8-18; Bronx: CBs 7-12; Manhattan: CBs 5, 9-12 & Recreation Centers; Queens: CBs 8-14; Staten Island: CBs 2-3

MAY 2 -- New York Cares Spring Clean-Up Day. Cleaning and greening projects in major parks, co-sponsored by New York Cares, a city-wide volunteer organization.

MAY 16 & 17 -- You gotta have Park! This celebration of parks takes place in selected sites across the city.



www.nycparks.org: Parks on the Web

Parks' website is bursting with new information for Spring. Now you can see photos of the 19 historic houses that Parks manages in the five boroughs, learn about their history, and find out when tours of them are offered. This month there is also a lot of information about recreational programs for children in parks. Also on the web is information about jobs available with Parks & Recreation, a Parks trivia quiz, and -- now updated every day -- the *Daily Plant*, Parks & Recreation's in-house newsletter.

LABEL YOUR TREES

Have you ever wondered what kind of trees are growing outside your home or office? Parks & Recreation's **Street Tree Labeling Program** can clear up that mystery. Call **212-360-TREE**, and a representative will come out to your neighborhood, identify your trees, and provide you with labels identifying the trees by their species. Botanical labels are visible signs that the trees are cared for and may help discourage vandalism. Identification visits cost \$50 (for 30 trees in the same area), and labels are \$3 each.

GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINES

April 30: Community Training and Assistance Center/Charles Mott Foundation. Grants for community groups in low income neighborhoods that strive for change through organizing and advocacy. 617-423-1444.

May 1: Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Re-grant Program. Funds projects of community-based artists and arts groups in Manhattan. Grants also available for Manhattan groups from a new fund, The Fund for Creative Communities. 212-432-0900.

HELPFUL NUMBERS

<i>Partnerships for Parks</i>	212-360-1310
To volunteer or to join your local parks group:	212-360-1357
For recorded information about special events:	888-NY-PARKS
To report graffiti, vandalism, or crime:	800-201-PARK

Parks on the Web: www.nycparks.org

Partnerships for Parks works to increase community support for parks throughout New York City. Founded in 1995 as a joint initiative of the City Parks Foundation and Parks & Recreation, *Partnerships* strengthens groups that care for local parks, links these groups so they are stronger collectively, and promotes citywide appreciation of our parks.

Tim Tompkins, Director

This issue of the Leaflet was written by Bodi (Sunlight) Luse.



CITY PARKS FOUNDATION



City of New York
Parks & Recreation

Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mayor
Henry J. Stern, Commissioner

NEWS FROM THE BOROUGHES:

MARCH PARTNERS OF THE MONTH

On March 20, at a luncheon with Commissioner Stern, February's Parks Partners of the Month were announced and celebrated. The activities of these outstanding community leaders are good examples of the many exciting things going on in New York City's parks!

Brooklyn -- Gussie "Sumner" Cutts is one of the founding members of **Parents of Sumner Playground/Kids on the Move**, a Bedford-Stuyvesant based group dedicated to improving the quality of life of their neighborhood and bringing children's activities to the playground. They began last year by hosting weekly meetings in the park, and sending out mailings to bring the neighborhood out for Clean-Up Day.

Bronx -- Christine "Seton Falls" Foreman is the founder of the **Seton Falls Park Preservation Coalition**, which works both to preserve and to spur community involvement in **Seton Falls Park**. Under Christine's leadership, the group received a \$5000 grant from the Hudson River Foundation to increase Urban Park Ranger programming in the park.

Manhattan -- Jim "Deeds" Bawek, with his friends and colleagues at **City College** has been working tirelessly to take back **St. Nicholas Park** since 1995. Recently, Jim brought the "top brass" of the three Police Precincts that adjoin the park to discuss security concerns of the schools near the park. As a result the head of North Manhattan Precincts asked his officers to step up their visibility in and around the park.

Queens -- Len "Rock Maple" Maniace, president of the **Friends of Travers Park**, has been working since 1995 to transform the park. They have eliminated graffiti, planted flowers and shrubs, and solicited grants from the City Parks Foundation for wrought-iron fencing. This year, the Friends will participate for the first time in "You gotta have Park!" drawing on the rich resources of the Jackson Heights area.

Staten Island -- Miguel "Miramar" Ramos is a volunteer coach with **Cromwell Recreation Center's** coed afterschool basketball program. Rather than turning kids away from his popular team, the Cromwell Cagers, he drafted another coach and formed an additional team. His dedication has been greatly appreciated by all the children.

Gardens -- Gioya "Penny" Fennelly, a teacher at I.S. 45, has made the school GreenThumb garden, the **Penny Harvest Garden**, her priority. She has fully incorporated the garden into her school curriculum and has successfully reached out to the surrounding community, getting people involved in and bringing resources into her garden.

"Garden and park-making goes on everywhere in civilization, for everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to the body and soul."
--John Muir

ATTENTION: FOR ADDRESS CORRECTIONS CALL 212-360-1357.

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