

# DEPART

THE NEWSLETTER OF *Partnerships for Parks*

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

MAYOR BLOOMBERG'S PLANYC, A SWEEPING ROADMAP TO THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF New York City, allocated \$1.2 billion to the Department of Parks & Recreation, including \$386 million to fund the completion of eight underdeveloped regional parks. Working through Partnerships for Parks, the Department of Parks & Recreation and City Parks Foundation embarked on an unprecedented effort to gather community input into the design of these regional parks. Park users were invited to share their ideas at listening sessions held in all five boroughs, and through surveys asking people to prioritize possible improvements. At the listening sessions, the consultants hired to design the parks heard directly from community members about facilities and programs they hope to see. The surveys, distributed in multiple languages through the Parks website, local organizations, and in-person surveying, allowed a wide audience of park users to express their needs and desires.

Rockaway Parks Administrator Jill Weber noticed that the surveys collected at Far Rockaway Beach, which will be transformed by \$40 million from PlaNYC, represented the needs of summertime visitors from all over the city, while community leaders voiced more local concerns at the listening sessions. For Jill, hearing from both of these populations was important, because PlaNYC will "make Far Rockaway Beach a beloved place for locals and also a great destination park for people from all over New York." (*con.*, p.2)

winter2008

## DEAR FRIENDS,

The Department of Parks & Recreation and City Parks Foundation are working through Partnerships for Parks to inform the public about how PlaNYC will impact parks in the coming years. In October, parks volunteers attended two presentations to learn about the \$1.2 billion allocated to Parks from PlaNYC, the largest investment in New York City's parks since the 1930s. They heard from Commissioners Benepe and Kavanagh and asked questions about the new trees, playgrounds, ballfields and other green spaces in the works.

As part of PlaNYC, Parks will plant one million trees by 2030. Thank you to the volunteers who helped to jumpstart this ambitious tree-planting effort on It's My Park! Day in October. Over 875 volunteers planted 10,158 trees at five city parks, while hundreds of other volunteers participated in tree care and beautification activities in parks throughout the city.

Sincerely,  
Adrian Benepe, Commissioner,  
Parks & Recreation  
David Rivel, Executive Director,  
City Parks Foundation



Jill also remarked that the community input process showed New Yorkers that the Department of Parks is “here to serve the public. The people who filled out surveys and spoke at listening sessions know the needs of the community better than we do. Who better than the users of the space to tell us what they need?”

Partnerships' Outreach Coordinators spent many long, hot days administer-

chair of the Highbridge Coalition Steering Committee and the Director of CLIMB, participated in both the listening session and survey collection for the High Bridge, which will be reopened for public use thanks to \$60 million from PlaNYC. Lourdes noticed that although gathering community input at the listening session was “messier” than surveying, the listening sessions provided a special

doesn't end with filling out a survey, and the campaign to reopen the High Bridge doesn't end with opening the gates. The bridge has to be used and programmed and cared for, and hopefully the people who shared their ideas will be part of this ongoing process.”

Taking a survey or attending a listening session can be a springboard for casual users to become active stewards of their parks. At the three PlaNYC sites mentioned in this article (Far Rockaway Beach, McCarren Park Pool, and the High Bridge), an average of 56% of survey respondents said that they want to be invited to future meetings about plans for the parks. This commitment from community members to sustained involvement will help the Department of Parks and City Parks Foundation respond to the needs of park users long after design and construction are completed.

To see the results of the PlaNYC surveys and for future updates on park design and construction, visit Parks' website: [www.nyc.gov/parks](http://www.nyc.gov/parks). 📍

“When your voice is heard you feel respected and you feel a sense of ownership over the park.”

ing surveys this summer. Northern Brooklyn Outreach Coordinator Tannise Palmer, who led the surveying effort at McCarren Park Pool, found that surveying introduced her to park users she hadn't met before. She recalled, “After filling out a survey, a lot of people stuck around and wanted to talk. They were happy to be included in the process of reopening the pool, and now I can find ways to support these potential park volunteers.”

opportunity for “people to respond to the ideas of others, which inspired insights that wouldn't come from filling out a survey on your own.” Both methods of gathering community input sent the message to the bridge's neighbors that Parks truly cares about their needs. Lourdes observed, “When your voice is heard you feel respected and you feel a sense of ownership over the park. It makes the difference between passive park use and actively shaping how amenities and programming will take shape. But being actively involved

Lourdes J. Hernández-Cordero, the co-

Cover photo: Surveying at Fort Washington Park in Manhattan. From left to right: Volunteer Kirsy Concepcion, Partnerships for Parks Outreach Coordinator (OC) Sarah Fort, Volunteer Jean Bonnes, OC Leah Worrell, and Partnerships Technical Assistance Coordinator Channaly Oum.

### Caring for Street Trees Workshop

In this basic workshop offered by **Partnerships for Parks** and the **New York Tree Trust**, you'll learn to care for young street trees, receive free tools, and get a Parks Volunteer Permit which will allow you to care for street trees and greenstreets. Advanced registration is required; space is limited. To register or for information, contact [channaly.oum@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:channaly.oum@parks.nyc.gov) or (212) 676-1929.

**January: Wed. Jan. 30, 7-9 pm.**

Highbridge Recreation Center, Manhattan  
2301 Amsterdam Avenue, Washington Heights

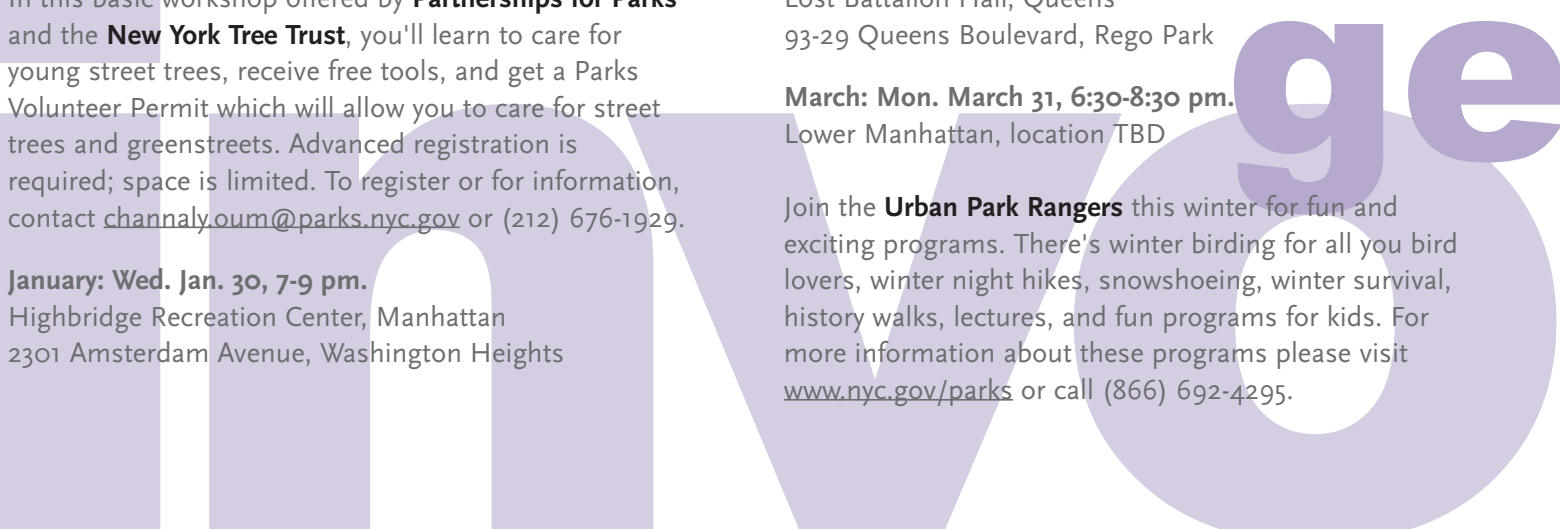
**February: Wed. Feb 27, 7-9 pm.**

Lost Battalion Hall, Queens  
93-29 Queens Boulevard, Rego Park

**March: Mon. March 31, 6:30-8:30 pm.**

Lower Manhattan, location TBD

Join the **Urban Park Rangers** this winter for fun and exciting programs. There's winter birding for all you bird lovers, winter night hikes, snowshoeing, winter survival, history walks, lectures, and fun programs for kids. For more information about these programs please visit [www.nyc.gov/parks](http://www.nyc.gov/parks) or call (866) 692-4295.



# did you know?

## FALL 2007 IT'S MY PARK! DAY WAS THE LARGEST EVER

Thank you to the over 12,000 New Yorkers who cared for and celebrated their local park on Saturday, October 20, 2007. Over 200 projects and events drew record numbers of participants who helped with clean-up and planting projects, and enjoyed free cultural events. Join us next spring for It's My Park! Day on Saturday, May 17. Contact your local Partnerships Outreach Coordinator to start planning your event!



## Dear Mary,

*I want to take my group to the next level – we need to learn about working with the Parks Department, promoting our group, planning successful events, and fundraising. Can Partnerships help us?*



Yes! Apply to participate in Partnerships Academy, a year-long program that provides skills, materials, and contacts to help your park group succeed by learning essential elements of partnering for long-term success. Participants learn new skills, network and share best practices, hear from experienced resource speakers, and are eligible for a selective grant program after graduating from the Academy.

Apply to join the class of 2008! For more information or an application, visit [www.partnershipsforparks.org](http://www.partnershipsforparks.org) or call (212) 676-6054. Applications are due February 29.

## Congratulations to the graduating class of Partnerships Academy 2007.

We would like to recognize the following groups for their hard work, dedication, and accomplishments:

- Friends of Boerum Park, Brooklyn
- Friends of Crispus Attucks Playground, Brooklyn
- Red Hook Boaters, Brooklyn
- Friends of the Woods, Bronx
- Green Shores NYC, Queens
- Kidz Care Junior Civic Association, Queens
- Neighborhood Neighbors, Manhattan

Vickie Archer (right) of Friends of Crispus Attucks Playground, Brooklyn works with Partnerships for Parks' Outreach Coordinator Tannise Palmer (left) during a 2007 session of Partnerships Academy.

## Get your new Volunteer Permit for 2008-2009!

**Partnerships for Parks** issues Volunteer Permit cards to regular volunteers which allow them to work unsupervised in a park, with approval from a Parks Department employee. They are a great way to show everyone that you are a dedicated Parks volunteer!

Volunteers who have a current permit (from the 2006-2007 season) will receive a renewal application in the mail this December. Just complete the form, submit it by January 16, 2008 and your new 2008-2009 permit will be mailed directly to you.

**PERMIT RAFFLE 2008!** Partnerships is pleased to announce a raffle drawing for all volunteers who submit their permit renewal application by our January 16 deadline. New permit applicants who apply between December 15 and January 16 will also be eligible for this drawing to win fun Parks prizes, including our grand prize – a 2008 SummerStage membership package.

If you are a new permit applicant, contact your Partnerships for Parks Outreach Coordinator for information about how to submit an application.

# thingstodo

# How to reach us

[www.partnershipsforparks.org](http://www.partnershipsforparks.org)  
[www.nyc.gov/parks](http://www.nyc.gov/parks)  
[www.CityParksFoundation.org](http://www.CityParksFoundation.org)

To contact Partnerships for Parks or for information on volunteering in parks, call (212) 360-1357 or call the City's non-emergency hotline, 311.



PARTNERSHIPS FOR PARKS works to increase community support for and involvement in parks throughout New York City. Founded in 1995, Partnerships works to start, strengthen and support neighborhood park groups; to link these groups together so that they can learn from each other and become stronger collectively; and to promote involvement in parks so people will join in efforts to restore and preserve them.

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor  
City of New York

Adrian Benepe, Commissioner  
Parks & Recreation

David Rivel, Executive Director  
City Parks Foundation

Jason Schwartz, Director  
Partnerships for Parks

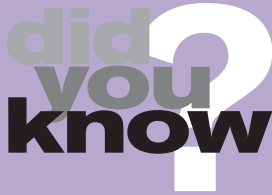
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# LEAFLET

THE NEWSLETTER OF *Partnerships for Parks*, A JOINT PROGRAM OF CITY PARKS FOUNDATION AND THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

## winter2008



Funded by the J.M. Kaplan Fund, the recently formed Immigrants & Parks Collaborative consists of nine organizations committed to creating opportunities for immigrant involvement in neighborhood parks. Partnerships for Parks and the New York Immigration Coalition will jointly provide technical assistance to Collaborative member organizations as they work together over the next eighteen months to develop strategies for connecting immigrants to parks both locally and citywide.

### The member organizations of the new Immigrants & Parks Collaborative are:

Asian Americans for Equality, Hester Street Collaborative, Queens Community House, Queens Museum of Art, El Centro de Hospitalidad, Centro Hispano Cuzcatlan, Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, Center for Family Life, and Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.

To learn more about the Immigrants & Parks Collaborative contact Neerja Vasishta, Parks Advocacy Coordinator at [nvasishta@thenyc.org](mailto:nvasishta@thenyc.org).

Attention: For address corrections call (212) 360-1357

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