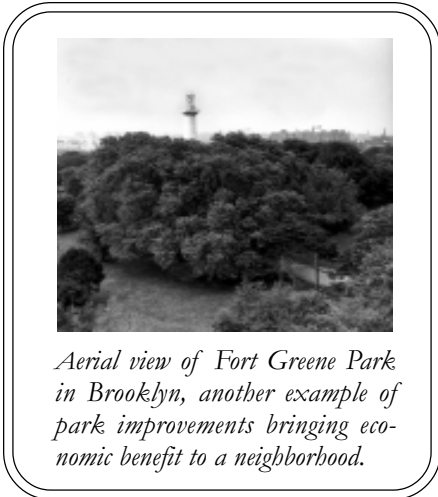




## GREEN SPACES & GREENBACKS: INVESTING IN PARKS BOOSTS ECONOMY

City residents who support parks love seeing green—neighborhood spaces filled with grass, trees, and a variety of vegetation. When businesses observe well-used and well-maintained parks, says Kenneth Adams, president of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, they also see green—and a viable climate for business opportunity.



*Aerial view of Fort Greene Park in Brooklyn, another example of park improvements bringing economic benefit to a neighborhood.*

Mr. Adams, who testified before City Council in Spring 2000 about the vital role that parks can and should play in the economic health of the City, is a big booster of parks. Just as a sound educational system, safe streets, and a good public transportation system

are critical for businesses to flourish, parks, too, can play a critical role in spurring and sustaining economic activity. “Parks are really important for economic development,” he recently told the *Leaflet*.

In neighborhoods throughout the city, attractive and safe parks improve the quality of life for local residents. When parks are inviting, they become a destination for people who want to picnic, play, ride a bike, or take a walk. This increase in people traffic, says Mr. Adams, naturally draws the attention of local businesses. “It creates economic opportunities—from local shops and restaurants down to the sporting goods stores that sell you the in-line skates you use to cruise through the park. It’s undeniable that well-maintained parks add value, to real estate and local businesses,” said Mr. Adams, noting the growth of restaurants and businesses on Court and Smith Streets near Carroll Park in Brooklyn. “It creates wealth at the neighborhood level.”

But, says Mr. Adams, “the benefits of parks go beyond small neighborhood-based businesses. It’s important for the economic health of the city to have a network of safe and attractive parks.”

“The maintenance and expansion of parks can have a profound influence on the social and economic fortune of a neighborhood,” he said. For example, the turnaround of the Union Square area, he noted, can be dated to the renovation of Union Square Park ten years ago. This rehabilitation, along with the construction of Zeckendorf Towers, paved the way for the area to become a major shopping district and a destination for residents throughout the city. *(continued on back page)*

## UPDATE ON CAMPAIGN FOR PARKS

Parks 2001, a citywide campaign to educate candidates and the public in this year's elections and thus get more funding for basic park and recreation services, is gaining momentum. Founding organizations in this historic coalition are The Parks Council, the City Parks Foundation/Partnerships for Parks, the Central Park Conservancy, and the Prospect Park Alliance, and more organizations are signing on each day. In addition, parks groups in each borough are coming together to form borough-wide advocacy groups. Below are a few updates on their recent events. Stay tuned for more updates in the next *Leaflet*, and log on to [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org) or [www.parks2001.org](http://www.parks2001.org) for more information.

### BROOKLYN PARKS ADVOCATES RALLY

On February 22nd, park supporters in Brooklyn braved the freezing cold to rally on the steps of Borough Hall. Chanting, “Save our Parks! We’re freezing for a reason!” members of the Brooklyn Parks Advocates (BPA) announced that their coalition of park and civic groups had reached 90 member organizations and had collected 10,000 petition signatures supporting the BPA. The BPA aims to educate candidates on park issues to garner increased funding for parks.

Council Members Stephen DiBrienza, Ken Fisher and Angel Rodriguez spoke to the crowd, adding their support for the cause. Park volunteer Selwyn Williams summed up the message by asking, “Can one City Park Worker (CPW) keep 43 acres of Park land clean?” Brooklyn Parks Advocates (BPA) are planning

to meet with the Brooklyn delegation to the City Council during the week of April 9th. For information about how to get in touch with or join the BPA, please call Jennifer St. John at (718) 965-8953.

### BRONX PARKS SPEAK UP

Representatives from over 40 community groups (which represent a combined membership base of 42,000) attended the 7th Annual Bronx Parks Speak Up on February 27. Chaired by Dart Westphal of the Bronx Council on Environmental Quality, it included presentations by Elizabeth Cooke of the Parks Council and Tim Tompkins from Partnerships as well as concluding remarks by Commissioner Henry Stern and Bronx Borough Commissioner William Castro. The speakers noted the importance of volunteers’ efforts in and contributions to parks. They also

highlighted the efforts of the Brooklyn Parks Advocates. Ms. Cook stated the Parks Councils goals are to put parks on the agendas of the hundreds of candidates for City office in the 2001 elections in order to bring an increase in funding for Parks & Recreation to 1% of the City budget. Following the speeches, the group broke up into three “speak-out” sessions and discussed the following topics: Key Parks Issues and Concerns in the Borough; How to Get the Message Out to Candidates and Elected Officials; and Forming a Bronx-wide Advocacy Group for Parks and Open Space. The first meeting of the Bronx-wide group advocating for parks was on March 14. Stay tuned for results from that meeting in the next *Leaflet*. For more information call 718-430-4641 or email [bxspeakup@aol.com](mailto:bxspeakup@aol.com).



## "GREEN SPACES..." CONT. FROM PAGE 1

Equally important, Mr. Adams noted, the upkeep and expansion of parks on a citywide basis is a clear signal to businesses about the economic climate of the city. A government that makes a long-term commitment to parks and open spaces "sends a very important message to the private sector about how the government treats the public realm," he said. By creating a more appealing environment, by investing in public spaces, "the municipality [is saying] that it has its house in order—there is competency and leadership. The government knows how to take care of its business. This, in turn, inspires local companies to make investments and expand their commercial activities. When the government makes an investment in public spaces, the private sector feels more comfortable," he concluded.

*Kenneth Adams has been President of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce since 1995 and is a lifelong resident of Brooklyn. This article was written by Ellen Flax.*



### NEW PARKSCARD OFFERINGS

Your ParksCard now gets you 20% discounts on select Circle Line cruises at the Circle Line Marina, Pier 83, on the Hudson River at West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. For details on this and other great ParksCards benefits, or to get your own ParksCard, check out our website at [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org).

### 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

[www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org)

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

*Partnerships for Parks* believes that parks are essential to the life of New York City, and that community involvement is essential to the life of a park. We work to start, strengthen, and support neighborhood park groups; to link them together so that they can learn from each other and be stronger collectively; and to promote parks in general so that people will be more likely to join in efforts to restore and preserve them.

*Tim (Sailfish) Tompkins, Director*

*This issue of the Leaflet was edited by Dana (Violet) Litwack*



CITY PARKS FOUNDATION



City of New York  
Parks & Recreation

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

## EVENTS, GRANTS, AND MORE

**Events:** This spring is chock full of fun events in the parks! Mark your calendars now, and check out [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org) for more details and events listings:

**Saturday, April 14, Easter Eggstravaganza.** Hop on over to Central Park 11am to 3pm for the city's largest Easter celebration. For more information call 1-888-NYPARKS or surf [www.nyc.gov/parks](http://www.nyc.gov/parks).

**Saturday, May 5, New York Cares Spring Clean-Up Day.** Join in greening and cleaning projects in some of the City's parks and gardens. Call 212-228-5000 or surf [www.nycares.org](http://www.nycares.org) for more info.

**Saturday, May 19, "It's My Park!" Day.** Join Parks & Recreation, Partnerships for Parks, and the thousands of New Yorkers who will show their support for parks by cleaning, greening and rallying for their neighborhood parks. For example, participating sites will be organizing by signing up supporters for the Parks 2001 Campaign. **Participating groups and sites must register by April 13.** Contact your Outreach Coordinator, or Carrie Grassi at 212-360-8126/Carrie.Grassi@parks.nyc.gov, to register. For more information go to [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org).

**May 19-20, You Gotta Have Park!** weekend in Prospect Park 718-965-8960, Flushing Meadows Park 718-760-6563, and Forest Park 718-235-4100.

**Grants:** The following dates are upcoming grants deadlines; for more details, go to [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org):

**March 1 through June 1, 2001:** The Eastman Kodak American Greenways Awards. 703-525-6300 or [www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org).

**April 1 & July 1, 2001:** City Parks Foundation Quarterly Grants Program. 212-360-8121.

#### Other:

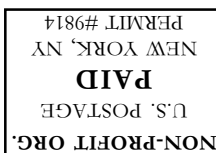
**LIFEGUARDS NEEDED!** Looking for a fun and rewarding summer job? Parks needs more than 1000 lifeguards to safeguard our 14 miles of beach and 53 outdoor pools. Interested? Call (212) 830-7880 for info on testing times and locations.

**Talk:** Lee Ann Levinson, author of *East Side, West Side: A Guide to New York City Parks in all Five Boroughs* will give a lecture titled "Researching the Greatest Parks in the World." Parks Library, Arsenal, May 3 at 6:00 p.m. 212-360-8240.

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,  
With the wonderful water round you curled,  
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—  
World, you are beautifully drest.

— William Brighty Rands, "Great, Wide,  
Beautiful, Wonderful World," 1868

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



Partnerships for Parks  
CITY PARKS FOUNDATION



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