



“It’s My Park!” Day: Saturday, May 19—Volunteers to Rally

On May 19, thousands of parks supporters will cram the city’s green spaces for “It’s My Park!” Day to clean, green, meet, greet, party, petition and rally in their favorite parks and gardens. These supporters show the strength and breadth of the advocates for greater City support for our parks.

For participating community groups, in addition to your membership-recruitment activities that day, consider ways to involve your volunteers in citywide efforts to fight for greater funding for our parks, gardens, and recreational spaces. Your group can transform “It’s My Park!” Day into something much greater than a volunteer outing—it can mark the beginning of your group’s efforts to state loudly and clearly that our green spaces are valuable to the community in countless ways, and deserve resources and manpower to maintain and enhance them.

To give your May 19th program an advocacy bent, consider adding any or all of these activities to your cleaning and greening routine:

- ◆ Conduct a letter-writing or postcard campaign to elected officials, as well as candidates for higher office, telling them about the importance of parks in your community.
- ◆ Have your group’s leadership meet and greet park visitors, and explain the importance of the park in your community. Encourage them to become involved in future efforts, especially the PARKS 2001 campaign.
- ◆ Have visitors to the park that day sign the petition in support of the PARKS 2001 campaign to increase funding for parks.
- ◆ Invite public officials—such as your council member, and those who are running for office—to your park on the 19th. Let them see your efforts and the condition of your park first hand, and urge them to incorporate support of parks in their platform.

Groups who want to incorporate more outreach-oriented activities into their “It’s My Park!” Day program or throughout the year are encouraged to attend Partnership’s new advocacy workshop. For more information about dates and times, contact your Outreach Coordinator, or check out our website: www.itsmypark.org.

BOROUGH-WIDE COALITIONS GATHER FOR PARKS

In recent weeks, borough-wide advocacy groups have been meeting in every borough, and formulating strategy to ensure that funding and support for parks, gardens, and recreational facilities is kept on the front burner.

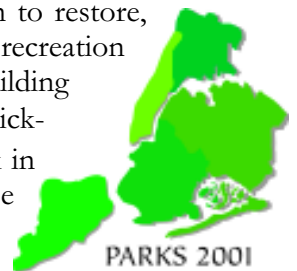
In the Bronx, parks advocates met in March and April to formally establish the Bronx Coalition for Parks and Green Spaces. In Brooklyn, meanwhile, the Brooklyn Parks Advocates designed a postcard for volunteers to send to elected officials to advocate for greater financial support for parks.

In March, new groups met for the first time in Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. The Manhattan Parks & Green Spaces Coalition adopted a mission statement calling for greater funding for city parks. “Adequate maintenance and operation of our public parks and green spaces is an important governmental responsibility, one which—simply put—New York City is not meeting,” the statement says. In Queens, 20 groups formed the Queens Coalition for Parks. Members are now soliciting other groups to join their efforts. And in Staten Island, Staten Island P.A.G.E. (Parks Advocacy Groups Endeavors) embarked on a plan to engage other groups in borough-wide efforts to fight for parks. These coalitions are planning to focus their energies in the next six months on the PARKS 2001 campaign. (See article at right.)

To learn more about these coalitions, and for contact information on how to join their efforts, go to www.itsmyparks.org.

PARKS 2001 Is LAUNCHED!

Parks 2001, a citywide campaign to restore, reform, and revitalize parks and recreation services in New York City, is building steam! On April 23rd, a formal kick-off rally was held in Bryant Park in Manhattan, and highlighted the need for greater funding and services for our city’s green spaces.



The campaign, which advocates for more funding for parks and recreation facilities, is fighting to counter long-term budget cuts, which has left parks with 40 percent less funding since 1986, and 70 percent fewer workers since 1970.

Due to new term limit regulations, the November 2001 elections will mark a watershed year in city politics—35 out of 51 City Council seats will be up for grabs, as well as all citywide posts. As a result, Parks 2001 is poised to make parks a major campaign issue, and is urging candidates to voice their support for the city’s 1700 parks, community gardens, and recreational facilities. In particular, it is pushing for at least 1 percent of the city’s budget to be spent on parks; current funding is less than .5 percent of the city’s budget.

Over the past few weeks, Parks 2001 has hired organizers to reach out to even more organizations to support the cause.

To join Parks 2001, or to find out what you can do for the effort, log on to www.parks2001.org.

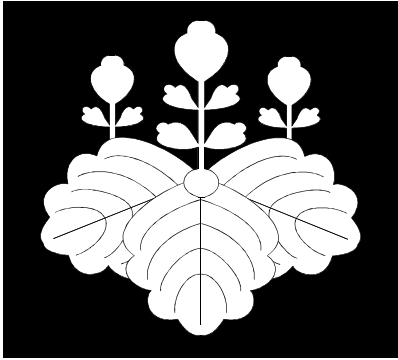


SHARE YOUR SECRETS OF SUCCESS!

We are eager to document and share success stories of the parks groups that we work with. Does your group have a "success story"? Don't be shy—send it to us!

What makes a "success story"? Our definition is broad—you don't have to have thousands of people coming to your events or a million-dollar renovation project underway to be a "success." A great story describes a significant change that's taken place in your park as a result of the work your group has done. Have playing children replaced drug dealers? Did you have your first Family Day this year? Have the flowers lasted all year long without being stolen? Have you been able to boost membership, work more closely with other neighborhood groups, or create better ties to local businesses? These are all great successes, and we want to

hear about them. Call Charlotte (Weaver) Kaiser at (212) 360-8166 to share your story. Or email it to: weaver@parks.nyc.gov. Stories will be posted on our website, www.itsmypark.org, and may be featured in future *Leaflet* articles.



HELPFUL NUMBERS

Partnerships for Parks 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

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

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

GRANTS: The following dates are upcoming grants deadlines; for more details, go to www.itsmypark.org:

June 1, 2001: The Eastman Kodak American Greenways Awards. 703-525-6300 or www.conservationfund.org.

June 11, 2001: Community Training Assistance Center/ Charles Stewart Mott Foundation environmental justice grants. 617-423-1444 or ctac@ctacusa.com.

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

PARTNERSHIPS FOR PARKS BENEFIT

Come celebrate the first day of summer with *Partnerships for Parks* at our fourth annual benefit. Meet old friends and new on **Thursday June 21, 2001** from 6 pm to 9 pm in Tompkins Square Park. For ticket information, please call 212-360-1310.

URBAN PARKS GETS THEIR OWN WEBSITE

All around the country, thousands of people are working hard to improve their parks. A new Web-based resource center, Urban Parks online, will provide these friends of parks with additional help. The site, which is produced and managed by the Urban Parks Institute at the Project for Public Spaces, has been redesigned and expanded. It now includes information about the benefits of urban parks, park management and funding, innovative program ideas, park news and more. Visit the site, and discover how it can help you help your park thrive as a vital community place: www.pps.org/urbanparks.

Now that the winter's gone, the earth hath lost
Her snow-white robes, and now no more the frost
Candies the grass, or casts an icy cream
Upon the silver lake or crystal stream;
But the warm sun thaws the benumbed earth,
And makes it tender; gives a sacred birth
To the dead swallow; wakes in hollow tree
The drowsy cuckoo, and the humble-bee.
Now do a choir of chirping minstrels bring
In triumph to the world the youthful Spring.

— Thomas Carew, *The Spring*, 1640.

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

Address Service Requested

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Partnerships for Parks
CITY PARKS FOUNDATION

