



## OF CARNIVALS AND CONSTITUENCIES...

Like many parks groups with a small-but-dedicated following, members of the McGolrick Park Historic Preservation Partners in Brooklyn spent their first three years working on critical, but modest-sized projects. These included: clean-up days and plantings, mowing the lawn, and advocating to restore two historic statues in the park.

The McGolrick Park Historic Preservation Partners (The Partners) faced a quandary familiar to other new friends groups: without additional members, they couldn't take on additional projects—but without additional projects, they couldn't attract new members and supporters and thereby bolster the park's constituency. To break out of this cycle, the group organized its first large-scale event in July: a full-day children's carnival that attracted over 1,500 people to their favorite green space. By the day's end, countless neighborhood children and their parents had a good time—and the Partners had added 300 new names to their mailing list. By any measure, the event was a wild success. "It was a good, fun day and a way for us to meet more people than we normally do during a clean-up" said R.J. Leddick, the Partners' project organizer.



For other groups thinking about staging their first large event, Leddick offered these pointers:

- *Start early.* The Partners began planning their event last December—eight months before the Big Day. By starting early, they were able to draw upon a wider array of volunteers and discuss various contingency strategies if their original plan wouldn't work out.
- *Contact your Outreach Coordinator as soon as possible.* By drawing upon the knowledge and experience of their Outreach Coordinator, Abu Bakr Moulta Ali, the Partners drafted a successful grant proposal to the City Parks Foundation that covered the event's expenses.
- *Don't take on more than you can chew.* For their first event, the Partners decided to contract with a local entertainment firm to provide activities and attractions that children would enjoy—rides, a booth with games, and three adults dressed as funny characters who mingled with the crowd. They deliberately avoided searching out food and beverage vendors, said Leddick, because it was more than they could handle for this event.
- *Develop a "Plan B."* Because the Partners knew that they wouldn't hear back from the City Parks Foundation about their grant proposal until late spring, they sought additional funding sources for their event. To ensure that the program would go on as scheduled, they spent the winter months talking to local businesses about potential sponsorships. Although they didn't need these donations for their July event, they established important relationships that can be tapped in the future.
- *Overplan.* No detail is too small, said Leddick. Make sure you have the proper permits and that someone at the event has first-aid training. "If you think you need 10 volunteers," he said, "get 20."
- *Follow up.* After adding the 300 names to their mailing list, the Partners spent time later in the summer writing thank-you notes to their potential new supporters, telling them about the group. Future mailings will alert them to upcoming projects and issues facing the park.

Staging their first event was such a positive experience, said Leddick, that the Partners are already thinking about their next event. "We are so excited about the next time," he said. "We can't wait."

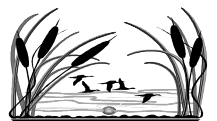
### CLEAN-UP DAY 2000



Partnerships for Parks' Annual Fall Clean-Up Day is scheduled for **October 21, 2000**. Join thousands of other volunteers at hundreds of sites citywide who will paint fences, plant bulbs, rake leaves, and beautify the parks in many other ways! To register your group, or to attend a Clean-Up Day workshop (which is required if your group is participating for the first time), please contact your Outreach Coordinator: **Bronx: 718-430-4641; Brooklyn: 718-965-8902; Manhattan: 212-408-0214; Queens: 718-520-5913; Staten Island: 718-815-7194.**

### COASTAL CLEANUP

Join thousands of New Yorkers on **September 16** to clean up our beaches and waterfronts. The American Littoral Society (ALS) coordinates the coastal clean up in NYC, sponsored in part by the City Parks Foundation and Parks & Recreation, as part of the Center for Marine Conservation's International Coastal Cleanup project. The goals include: removing trash from waterfronts; devising solutions to prevent waterfront pollution; and increasing public appreciation of the environment. If you would like to participate, call ALS at **718-471-2166** or visit **www.alsnyc.org**.



### CELEBRATE THE BRONX RIVER!

Celebrate the Bronx River on October 14, 2000 at the second annual Bronx River Golden Ball event! At 9 a.m., parks and Bronx River supporters will gather at 219<sup>th</sup> Street and Bronx Park to canoe an 8-mile stretch of the river, accompanied by a large golden orb. Watch the procession or join the party at its end point, Starlight Park, at noon. For more information about this day of celebration, call 718-430-1846.



### FREE COMPOST

In September and October, the New York Department of Sanitation and the City's four botanical gardens will be distributing free compost at various sites throughout the city. City residents may collect up to 30 gallons free of charge with their own containers; bins will be available for the reduced price of \$20. For more information about dates and sites of distribution near you call: **Bronx and Manhattan: 718-817-8543; Brooklyn: 718-623-7290; Queens: 718-539-5296; Staten Island: 718-273-0629.**

## FUNDING DEADLINES

**October 1, 2000: City Parks Foundation Quarterly Grants Program.** Supports projects developed by community groups for parks and playgrounds. 212-360-8121.

**October 6, 2000: Hudson River Foundation's NYC Environmental Fund.** Funds projects that foster restoration, care, and public enjoyment of and education about natural resources of NYC and the Con Edison service area in Westchester County. 212-924-8290.

**October 16, 2000: Hudson River Improvement Fund.** Funds projects that enhance the public use and enjoyment of the Hudson River and its shores, with an emphasis on public access, building and equipping education facilities, and restoring natural habitats. 212-924-8290.

**November 1, 2000: National Gardening Association.** \$750 awards for gardening supplies to 400 schools, neighborhood groups, community centers or organizations working with groups of at least 15 children aged 3 to 18. 800-538-7476 or [www.kidsgardening.com](http://www.kidsgardening.com).

**Mid-November: EPA's Environmental Education Grants.** Supports programs that promote environmental careers among students, educate low-income or culturally diverse audiences about environmental issues, or inform the general public through community-based organizations or the media. 212-637-3674.

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

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

*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) Litvack.*



CITY PARKS FOUNDATION



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## PARTNERS OF THE MONTH

July's Partner from the Bronx, **Sirio "Conan" Guerino**, has been active in the Woodlawn/Norwood section of the Bronx for more than 10 years. He is a member of the Mosholu Woodlawn South Community Coalition; a founding member of Norwood Against Graffiti, a group that is constantly working to combat graffiti throughout the Norwood community; and a volunteer at Williamsbridge Oval virtually on a daily basis. Throughout the years, he has spent many hours building cribbing in the park to counter slope erosion and has organized planting projects. He is constantly working with community volunteers to help maintain every aspect of the park.

Another July Partner, **Armando "Komodo" Buria** of Manhattan, has been active in his West Village neighborhood since he moved there nearly 15 years ago. He founded the Downing Street Neighbors, a popular block association that soon grew to incorporate nearby Bedford Street and became the Bedford Downing Block Association. Armando has served as president of both groups, which now boast a combined membership of nearly 200 households. Under Armando's leadership, the block association has addressed a variety of community issues but has paid particular attention to parks and green spaces. In the mid-1990's, the BDBA worked with a local merchants' association and Community Board 2 to advocate for the renovation of Downing Playground and the Minetta parks along 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue; the parks were recently renovated, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in July.

A third outstanding July Partner, **Charles "Railroader" Pierson** of Queens, has worked with the Railroad Park Garden Club to fight crime, ongoing neglect, and out-of-control weeds in Railroad Park. With help from Parks & Recreation, the Garden Club has been working hard to transform the perimeter of the Park. They have cut back invasive weeds and vines and replaced them with groundcover, and they have installed a series of raised beds. In addition to their on-going work, the Club organized a planting day in the Park taking place over Labor Day weekend.

Pillowed and hushed on the silent plain,  
Wrapped in her mantle of golden grain.

Wearied of pleasuring weeks away,  
Summer is lying asleep today.



— E. Pauline Johnson (*Tekahionwake*),

"Harvest Time" in *Flint & Feather*, 1912

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