

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL, EASIER EVENT

Tap into other groups.

- ✓ Encourage everyone—Scout troops, schools, athletic leagues, day camps, block and tenant associations—to participate in relevant events.
- ✓ Better yet, get them to co-sponsor the event.
- ✓ Your group will benefit from another set of connections, multiply your resources, and (ideally) lighten your workload.

Don't bite off more than you can chew.

- ✓ The size and scale of events should be decided by the number of people willing to help organize them.
- ✓ Do something simple first, then build from there.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to scale back if you find you've been too ambitious; better to have a few strong successes.

Plan ahead. Allow two weeks of planning for regular clean-ups, at least a month for small events, and several months for large events.

Publicize, publicize, publicize.

- ✓ Notify your mailing list.
- ✓ Put fliers up everywhere: shop windows, bulletin boards, in churches, schools, apartment buildings.
- ✓ List your events in the community calendars of local papers, local access cable, and radio stations.
- ✓ Most important, get your friends to tell three friends who tell three friends (and so on). Nothing works like word of mouth and networking.

Expect the unexpected. A first-time event will take twice as much effort to plan as you think it's going to, and will go over budget by about 20%. There will be bureaucratic hurdles you never expected, egos that need to be soothed, last-minute emergencies, and unseasonable blizzards. Don't worry. Be happy.

Delegate responsibilities and develop expertise.

- ✓ Have one person in your group deal with Parks, another with publicity, a third with fundraising or membership.
- ✓ Having one person consistently responsible for something lets him or her build specific skills and useful relationships.

Say thank you. People will be happy to help you next time if you sincerely, publicly, and frequently thank them this time. When in doubt give people *more* credit than they deserve.

Build on your successes.

- ✓ Repeat annual events. It's easier the next time; people know to expect it; and you begin to build traditions that lead to larger participation each year.
- ✓ Try to do at least one event each season to maintain your profile and presence in the park.