

## Minutes for Friends of Grant Park meeting, April 8, 2010

Attending: Ed Krueger, Carla Staab, Bob Porth, Rob Vajagich, Lynn Crawford, Betsy Abert, Jody Johnson, Mary Kanitz, Brian Russert, Molly Lundberg, John and Martha Lunz.

We had a fireside gathering... the heat had been turned way down.

Grant Park's Centennial Birthday party on July 18 will include a pancake breakfast in the clubhouse sponsored by Friends of the Mill Pond. Friends of Grant Park will set up a geocaching activity for the day. We need to get county approval (from Brian Russert, coincidentally) for those sites being considered so we aren't sending lots of foot traffic over sensitive natural areas of the park. (Was there another project FOGP was responsible for?)

Betsy plans to dedicate our 6 panel kiosk at the Centennial festivities as well. The kiosk will have information about the terrain and vegetation of Grant Park, as well as information from the South Milwaukee Historical Society regarding the history of Grant Park. Another panel will feature input from the middle and senior high schools. We have budgeted \$2,000 for construction/installation of the kiosk.

The next meeting for planning the Grant Park Centennial will be on April 20th at United Methodist Church, 1327 Marshall Avenue, South Milwaukee  
6:30PM - 8:30PM (In past meetings, food has been available at 6 PM)

Our group would benefit greatly if we could fill the following positions: advertising committee and webmaster. Please contact Don or Betsy if that is your calling.

We have printed five signs requesting dog owners to be responsible for cleanup. We need to erect the signs in the park. Thus far, we are so short of park workers, that we will likely have to take this on.

Upcoming weedout sessions are on Saturday Mornings, April 24th, May 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, meeting at 9:00 AM. Also we will have a SUNDAY AFTERNOON session on May 23, 1:00 PM. We always need experienced weeders to help our neighbor and student volunteers be effective, so try to commit to one or more sessions if you can. All Weed-Out sessions meet at the tennis courts parking lot (is also the parking lot for Picnic Area 1).

Spring Bird Walks will begin on Sunday, April 25th at 8 a.m. starting in picnic area 7 & 8 near Wil-O-Way. Observe the annual migration of incredibly colorful species that overwinter in Central and South America as they push north to and through SE Wisconsin to nest: many warblers, eastern towhees, thrush, and shorebirds. Binoculars are encouraged. Walks are weather dependent as most species hunker down during the hard rainfalls of spring. Betsy will guide: 764-9244 if questions come up.

Dr. Brian Russert, from U-W Co-op Extension, is our county Natural Areas manager. He gave a presentation about invasive plant species in the park system, describing how invasives are being successfully eradicated, native plants are being preserved, and prairie and woodland restoration is being undertaken. As well, he highlighted the Grant Park rain gardens and volunteer groups' efforts. His staff is trained to apply the herbicide Round-Up to large areas of invasives before the native woodland plants emerge in the Spring, and also does controlled burning of prairie areas, when weather and timing permits. He shared a wealth of information with us.

Last, a reminder to get out and help with the Great American Cleanup day this Saturday, April 17th, sponsored by Milwaukee County Parks and Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful. For specific information, go to <http://kgmb.org/gac.html>

Our next meeting will again follow the Park Watch meeting on Thursday, May 13th at the Golf Course Clubhouse. Park Watch meets at 6, while the Friends Group does so at 7. Please put us on your calendar. The season of vandalism began with a bang this month; the beach house was severely damaged and broken into, many ruts from lawn driving were made in the first week this month, tires on most of the golf carts were slashed, requiring complete replacement, and a rash of graffiti was found recently.

Submitted by  
Jody Johnson