## THE PACT:

THE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL TRIBUTE NEWSLETTER



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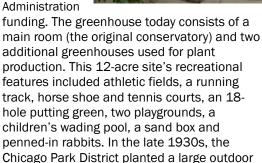
### FRIENDS OF KILBOURN PARK ORGANIC GREENHOUSE:

ADVANCING STEWARDSHIP AND CONNECTING COMMUNITY TO NATURE

Kilbourn Park, 3501 N. Kilbourn. Submitted by Karen Oliver, Secretary/Treasurer, Friends of Kilbourn Park Organic Greenhouse.

Kilbourn Park was designed in 1928 by Chicago architect Clarence Hatzfeld, in collaboration with the famous greenhouse manufacturers Lord and Burnham. Originally

built as a small conservatory, in 1934 the Chicago Park District converted it into a production greenhouse using Works Progress Administration





perennial garden in Kilbourn Park.

Although the original garden was not maintained, interest in gardening was renewed in the neighborhood. In 1996, committed community residents were successful in reopening the original conservatory as a teaching space and

began the annual organic plant sale and other programming.

Friends of Kilbourn Park Organic Greenhouse was formed in 2007 as a

sub-committee of the Kilbourn Park Advisory Council. Now an independent organization, the mission of Friends is to advance environmental stewardship in our community by connecting people to nature, teaching sustainable gardening practices, and promoting fresh and healthy food to people of all ages through garden-based educational programs. Our largest project each year is the Organic Plant Sale. Friends volunteers, working with greenhouse staff, beginning in January and February, plant thousands of seeds and nurture them in preparation for the annual sale.

We have, literally, a small army of volunteers who raise the plants and then work the plant sale giving vast amounts of hours to make this event a success every year – regardless of the weather.

In addition to the (Continued on page 2)



(Continued from page 1) plant sale, Friends' funds and hard work built raised beds in the greenhouse, constructed a hoop house in the garden, purchased fans for the greenhouse, and also raised funds to build a pergola in the garden. The first-ever public fruit tree orchard in a major metropolitan city was planted in Kilbourn Park at the Greenhouse in the fall of 2008.

By far, the biggest accomplishment has been the replacement of the outdated, cloudy greenhouse roof. Working with Alderman Reboyras, funds were secured to have a new roof installed in 2015. Prior to the new roof, the plants in the greenhouse received only a small percentage of daily sunlight – now they are thriving. Friends of Kilbourn Park Organic Greenhouse was chosen to receive the Friends of the Parks 2013 Park Advisory Council Award for a decade of work maintaining and preserving the Kilbourn Park Organic Greenhouse.

For more information, visit www.kilbournparkfriends.org or facebook/kilbourn.park.organic.greenhouse

## PAC/PPO RESOURCES: THE THREE GROUPS THAT WORK WITH PACS

Submitted by Tom Drebenstedt, Rutherford Sayre Park Advisory Council

#### Chicago Park District (CPD), established 1934 - www.chicagoparkdistrict.com

CPD is an independent, taxing body (just look at your real estate tax bill) that is a separate agency from the City of Chicago and manages almost 600 parks, numerous nature areas, conservatories, golf courses, harbors, and beaches. The District's superintendent and CEO is appointed by the Mayor, as are the District's Board of Commissioners – though they elect from themselves their President and Vice-President after appointments are made. They are responsible for activity programing and facility maintenance. The question is, how are resources determined and distributed through a diverse city?

#### Chicago Parks Foundation (CPF), established 2013 - www.chicagoparksfoundation.org

CPF is a charity of the Park District. The former Chicago Park District foundation, Parkways Foundation, was disbanded in 2012 after being created in 1994 with a similar mission. Through fundraising and partnerships they support park advisory councils by creating workshops, an annual conference, and offering fiscal partnership. Their community efforts are sponsoring programs such as camping, arts, sailing and recently establishing "It's Your Park Day" in the month of June. The question is, can PACs have an independent voice while having a fiscal partnership with CPF?

#### Friends of the Parks (FOTP), established 1975 - www.fotp.org

A parks advocacy non-profit formed in response to parks not functioning for Chicago residents, FOTP engages in lively discussion to keep CPD responsive to communities. In 1980, FOTP initiated development of park advisory councils to watch over the distribution of federal funds available through the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program. Over the years, FOTP has balanced the roles of watchdog and partner of the Chicago Park District, and offers programs to park advisory councils and other park partner organizations (PPOs), like block clubs, neighborhood associations, etc. These groups can participate in programs like FOTP's annual Chicagoland Earth Day Clean-Up, fiscal sponsorship, their annual advocacy conference that this year was titled "Parks as Democracy?" and quarterly PAC networking meetings, and residents can contact FOTP with general technical assistance questions and needs.

...use an old fashioned phone tree. Having a phone tree in place is an effective tool to organize park neighbors and users into action on short notice. This tool can be used to quickly mobilize and activate community members, and by providing a personal invitation you can increase turnout or action. As with everything in this work, relationships are key.

#### When can you use a phone tree?

- In the case of park security issues, phone trees can be particularly helpful in reporting illegal or illicit activities in parks to 911, and arguably can increase response time if multiple neighbors call on an issue.
- Responding to a new park issue, by having calls-to-action to contact the local alderman, park staff, and/or
  having neighbors present testimony during the Chicago Park District's Board of Commissioner's monthly
  meetings, during the "People in the Parks" section of the agenda.
- Notifying members of meetings, hearings, or last-minute event changes.

#### How to set up a phone tree?

The method can be adapted based on the structure and capacity of your group, but generally the leadership team creates a list of all park neighbors and users' phone numbers. The core team divides the list amongst themselves (about 3-10 numbers), and is called to action by another member of the core team.

THE FOTP TREE SAYS...

