



Friends of Clark Park
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April 2005

Frank L. Chance, Editor
 Anthony West, Publisher

CLARK PARK CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring and Summer 2005:

Youth Soccer League begins	3.26.2005
FOCP Board Meeting	4.4.2005
Clark Park Farmers Market	4.9.2005
FOCP General Membership Meeting	4.20.2005 7:30 PM
Health Fair Festival	4.25.2005
Party for the Park	5.5.2005
Spruce Hill May Fair	5.7.2005
Youth Soccer League wraps up	5.21.2005
FOCP Board Meeting	6.20.2005 7:30 p.m.
Clark Park Music and Arts Festival	6.18.2005 or 6.25.2005
FOCP General Membership Meeting	7.20.2005 7:30 p.m.
FOCP Board Meeting	8.15.2005 7:30 p.m.
Woodland Avenue Reunion	9.10.2005
Clark Park Music and Arts Festival	9.17.2005
Bark in the Park	10.1.2005 or 10.15.2005
FOCP General Membership Meeting	10.19.2005 7:30 p.m.
Peoplehood Parade	10.22.2005 or 10.29.2005
Halloween Parade	10.31.2005 4 p.m.

See <http://www.clarkpark.info> for additional events and date or time changes,

MAJOR SUPPORT FOR CLARK PARK Philadelphia Green Offers Skilled Help and Money

By Tony West

Clark Park has been included in a large two-year Philadelphia Green program to improve community parks in Philadelphia. The program will assign technical experts to assist Friends of Clark Park in pursuing a number of goals. Some grant money will also be made available.

The Parks Revitalization Project is administered by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society using a large grant from the William Penn Foundation and other sources. Our PHS Project Coordinator is Jennifer Brodsky. FoCP officers met with Brodsky and a PHS landscape architect Lisa Hanes, who lives in Cedar Park. We discussed the 2000 Renewal Plan and identified priorities to work on.

University City is one of three areas that the Parks Revitalization Project will focus on. Four other community green spaces -- Cedar Park, Malcolm X Park, Barkan Park and Saunders Park will receive aid as part of the same package.

PARTY FOR THE PARK

Invitations have been sent from the University City District for the annual Party in the Park, scheduled for May 5, 2005. For more details on this *Cinco de Mayo* celebration please see the article on Page 3 of this Newsletter.

MAJOR DONORS TO THE PARK
Generous Giving Keeps It Green

By Tony West

Without community support, we wouldn't enjoy the park we now have. The Friends of Clark Park are extremely grateful to the many members who have volunteered for advanced levels of support. Their contributions make so much possible! Thank you, everybody.

BENEFACTORS (2005 Support Level \$150)

Diane Gallagher
Dr. Margaret Kasschau
James Matt Lane
Ann & Andy Leonard
Tony West

SPONSORS (2005 Support Level \$90)

David Ade
Liz Campion
Scott & Nancy Geryk
Anne Kringel
Joe & Vanessa Lowry
Chris & Grace O'Donnell
Cynthia Roberts
Kate Stover
Lynn & Reuben Wetherbee
Harry Wilkinson

PATRONS (2005 Support Level \$45)

Michael Barr
Bettie Bowers
Paul Brooks
Frances Byers
Angela & Paul Coghlan
Kevin Fisher
Vladimir Gapeyev
Marianne Gellert-Goldman
Dorothy Gillam
Adam Goldman
Mary Goldman
Lester T. Goldstein
Mike Hardy
Jan & Marja Hoek
Richard Hotchkiss
Joe's Market
Sally H. Johnson
Jane Kauer
Lauren & David Leatherbarrow
Janet Lewis
Joe Lorenc
Drake McCoy
Jacqueline McCrea
Dawn Middleton McKnight
Joseph S. Moloznik
David Musto
Libby Rosof
Kenneth Rosso
Joseph J. Shapiro
Darryl Stovall
Sharon Thompson-Schill
Tom & Whitney Van Dean
Mark Wagenveld
Joy Wiltenberg
Rebecca Wright
Ken Yanoviak

GET YOUR 'PARTY FOR THE PARK' TICKETS NOW

Cinco de Mayo Event Pays for Summer Maintenance

By Tony West

Spring will be busting out all over in the park soon enough. That means *people* will be busting out all over it too, hopefully including you and me. So let's start the season off right, by attending PARTY FOR THE PARK on Thursday, May 5!

This is the revel that will level the greensward all summer; this is the bacchanal that will bag the garbage after every warm weekend. Proceeds from PARTY FOR THE PARK are the *only thing* that keeps the park clean and inviting for the throngs of folks who take delight in it from May through October. This party needs to clear \$40,000 in order to pay for the private contract with Moon Site Management, the company that does the job.

And there's a special problem this year: one of our major corporate funders is not able to support Clark Park as it has in the past. That means we, the residents of University City and the users of Clark Park have to step forward and contribute extra strongly, or the contract won't be renewed this summer. That's right: starting in 2005, the park will slide back into decay. We can't let that happen.

PARTY FOR THE PARK is a stellar cocktail party, the snazziest public gala to be found in University City. Held under a pavilion on the curbside of 43rd Street every May, its price (just \$60 for a Friend of Clark Park) allows everyone to play a role in maintaining the heart of the neighborhood, and have a good time at it to boot.

This year the benefit falls on Cinco de Mayo, so look for Mexican musical and gustatory frills. (You don't have to eat the worm, though.) The Silent Auction will be bigger and better than ever this year, with some unusual offerings.

Tickets to the party are obtained through University City District. You can call UCD at 215/243-0555. You may request tickets by emailing meridith@ucphila.org. You can even purchase them on line by going to http://www.ucityphila.org/ucd_programs/party.cf m.

I definitely hope to see you there

FULL COURT PRESS IN B PARK

By Brian Siano

Last year, the Department of Recreation applied for funding from the State of Pennsylvania to rebuild several of its basketball courts. Although Recreation did not get as much funding as they desired, they did decide that the Clark Park Basketball Court would be among those to be rebuilt in the near future.

Reconstruction of the Basketball Court has long been a part of the Clark Park Renewal Plan. The current Basketball Court is a little over forty years old. Its chain link fence is coming apart, its asphalt surface is uneven and cracked, and the basketball standards are in need of repair. It is also one of the most consistently *used* areas of the Park, which means that the reconstruction will be a more-than-substantial improvement.

The plans call for a high-school sized court (85 feet long by 40-50 feet wide) with a free-throw area. Happily, the existing basketball court site can accommodate such a project, requiring only a small expansion of paving over the small area to the court's west end.

In addition, the Renewal Plan calls for a new fence, of a hollow-core metal system, which will resemble a classic, wrought-iron fence. We have not yet determined if the Recreation funding will cover the entire cost of this new fence—but when we find out, we'll let you know, so we can beg money from you to make up the difference.

Sadly, we recently heard from Recreation that the funding has been held up in Harrisburg (for reasons unconnected to us). Because of this delay, we have been told that work on the Court would not be happening this year. It is very likely (though not certain) that the project can begin early in 2006.



FALLING NUMBERS

New Study Shows Tree Loss

By Tony West

Our trees are dying.

Chris Leswing, the tireless chair of Friends of Clark Park's Tree Committee, has completed the first thorough update of the Tree Inventory in the 2000 Renewal Plan. The results are enlightening, and a little disturbing.

First, some good news. In the five years since 2000, Clark Park has gained 21 new trees, thanks to FOCP's explosive activity in the last couple of seasons.

Now the bad news. In that same period, the park lost 38 trees. That was 12% of our entire patch of urban forest, which is now down to 299 individuals. One out of every eight trees lost in five years – you do the math.

Our valiant replanting efforts are not enough, in other words. We are falling behind.

The chief problem is our London plane trees. These hardy English mutants evoke so many Victorian cityscapes, truly a kind of living history. But they are a monoculture, comprising almost half the trees in the park. They're all of a similar age, and they're all reaching the natural end of their lives. Three quarters of our deaths were plane trees – 26 of them. Over the next 10 years, the Grim Pruner is going to come back more and more often for the doomed giants that remain.

As Charles Dickens himself might have pointed out – *Income, 21 trees; outgo, 38 trees; result, prairie.*

Because of this fast-approaching wave of old age, for years now every FoCP activist of every stripe (and we've got more stripes than a zebra) has agreed that the top priority of FoCP right now must be tree replacement. Believe me, we do know about the 40-jillion other vital needs in the park and we'll work on them too.

But without the trees, it wouldn't be the park we all love, would it?



Stumps, logs, mounds of mulch
All that remains of
Lost trees in beloved Clark Park.

(With apologies to *haiku* master Matsuo Bashō)

YOUTH SOCCER BEGINS MARCH 26

These photos were taken on the first day of Youth soccer, 2005. Newsletter Editor Frank L. Chance thanks the parents, coaches, and players for their participation!



Hardworking Coaches take a break.



More action in the bowl.



The Cherry Bombs team (or maybe the Red Ants).



Action in the bowl.



Attacking the goal.

SPRING SOCCER KICK-OFF MARCH 26

More than 120 girls and boys, ages 5 through 11, are participating again this spring in Clark Park Youth Soccer League. Our 18th season began on March 26 and will continue every Saturday through May 21. CPYSL features intramural games, skills-development, and fun. Field prep begins at 10am and each session wraps-up about 1:30pm. Cooperation from other park users, especially dog owners -- clean up after your dog and fill his or her holes back in, so our players don't trip -- is greatly appreciated. Well over half of the players this season are returning from previous CPYSL seasons, a sign of our success, and we are particularly pleased that a large number of girls have stayed with us this season.

Volunteer coaches are the key to CPYSL. This season our coaching staff includes: Adam Goldman, Andy Frishkoff, Ben Fryer, Beth Jarrett, Carolyn Laurenza, Chris and Alina MacNeal, Erik Johnson, Ethan Leatherbarrow (a CPYSL "grad" who expects to play this fall for his high school team), Jeanise McCrea, Jim Hardy, Joan Erwin, Jordan Parman, Kaz Uyehara (a high school player who's coaching his third season for us), Marianne Gellert-Goldman, Melanie Bartlett, Mike Zhuraw, Ramon Martinez, Susan Meeker, Victoria Bowman, Victoria Chongolola, and Vivianne Nachmias. We're also expecting two to four players from the University of Pennsylvania's Women's Soccer team to come work with our players on two or three Saturdays mid-season. If you might be interested in coaching, this season or next fall, please call us right away (215-552-8186) -- no experience required, we will train. Besides our coaches, Jim Cummings handles much of our purchasing; Bill Moriarty keeps the books straight; and Frank Innes, Andrew Stephens and Kathleen Turner helped with registration. Paul Brooks announced recently that, after 18 seasons, this will be his last season as CPYSL Coordinator.

Financial support for CPYSL comes from local sponsors including: Spruce Hill Community Association, 257 S. 45th St.; O'Donnell Real Estate, 4534 Baltimore Ave. (222-2600); Calvary Center for Culture and Community, Calvary Church (386-6494); Reading Terminal Market; Warrington Community Garden; Liz Champion &

Larry Motyka; Vincent Goffredo Plumbing & Heating; Dr. Sigrid Larson & Northeast Physicians Associates, Univ. of Penna. Division of Public Safety; and from our "national" sponsors including: the U.S. Navy, by its friend Charles Larson; and Margaret Brooks. CPYSL appreciates the continuing support of the Philadelphia Activities Fund, and of Councilwoman Jannie L. Blackwell.

Sponsoring a youth soccer team is a great way for a business, professional or organization to benefit local children and strengthen our neighborhood, while gaining recognition as a "good citizen". You can sponsor a team for a year (two seasons) for \$150. Call Paul Brooks (215-222-5339) for more information

TREE TENDERS TRAINING

We Need People To Help Take Care Of The Trees.

By Lew Melman

Friends of Clark Park saw 16 young trees planted last fall -- a record! But hard experience has taught us that many of those trees WILL DIE if they don't get proper tending. This spring they will need proper staking, watering and mulching.

Officially trained tree tenders can guide other volunteers to accomplish these life-giving chores. Tree tenders learn how to care for trees on their block or in their backyard as well as in the park. It's a lifelong skill!

We urgently need a few members to step forward and take the Horticultural Society's tree tender training course this spring. That'll be on Wednesdays, April 27, May 4 & 11 from 5:45 to 8:45 p.m. and on Saturday, May 7 in Clark Park, 43rd and Baltimore Avenue, or the "Picnic with a Purpose" from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. planting new trees alongside other tree tenders. The annual "May Fair" will be going on during the day -- you'll play a wonderful role. FoCP will set you up with everything you need.

Please contact me by email at lewismellman66@msn.com. You can make a difference this spring by helping to keep the park alive!

DICKENS BIRTHDAY PARTY

By Frank L. Chance

On Sunday, February 6, we successfully celebrated the 193rd birthday of British author Charles Dickens. A musical welcome was triumphantly performed by the brass band Susan Watts and Friends, including hymns and marches as well as demonstrations of historical instruments. Literary selections included a moving selection from *Nicholas Nickelby* performed by Nina Hope, a humorous satire called "The Boy at Mugby Junction" read by Frank L. Chance, and the delicious presentation of "A Dinner at Poplar Walk," Dickens first published fiction, by Cecile Mann. The afternoon continued with delicious refreshments provided by Cindy Roberts, Rita Cabry, and many others. The event organizer, Bob Behr, then led the assembly on a march to the Dickens statue where all sang *Happy Birthday* and the statues of both the author and Little Nell were crowned with laurel wreathes.

Friends of Clark Park wishes to thank the Philadelphia branch of the Dickens Fellowship, the Calvary Center for Culture and Community, and the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia for their support of this event.



Mr. Squeers, from a Royal Daulton Plate.

SEE REDS FOR PARK GREEN Baseball for the Park!

By Lew Melman

We are going to see the Reds on Thursday May 12 at 7:05.

Tickets are \$20 each, and all money raised will go towards tree care. We add a \$5 service fee to every order (whether you buy 1 or 10 tickets, it's only \$5. extra, total). This will raise a few more dollars for the trees. If you take 10 to sell, we will waive the fee.

Of course, additional donations of any size are welcomed.

Clark Park Tree Nights at the Phils have become very popular, and tickets will go fast. Please reply soon to indicate how many tickets you want and to tell me that "the check is in the mail".

One game a summer is your max? Busy that night? No worries; tickets to FoCP Tree Nights at the Phils make great gifts! Can't think of someone to give a ticket to? Ask me for a suggestion. Not really into baseball, but you want to donate to the Planting Fund? Excellent!

Please send checks, written to FRIENDS OF CLARK PARK, to Lewis Mellman 4503 Kingsessing Ave Phila PA 19143 (send check to me, but please write them to the FoCP)

Tickets will be distributed for cash (check) on the barrelhead, first come first served, until we are SRO (sold right out).





“Swingers” in the park on March 26, 2005

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