

Save Cedar Lake Park

UPDATE

April/May 1992

What Kind of Nature Park Do You Want?

The people who love Cedar Lake Park will have an opportunity to decide the Park's future for the next hundred years," said Save Cedar Lake Park president Brian Willette as he described an innovative planning and environmental education process that will bring citizens, experts, and public officials together in a positive new way.

"It was in partnership with the Park Board that we citizens generated the money and the political support to create a nature sanctuary at Cedar Lake. Now that the land has been acquired, someone must plan for how the Park will be managed, developed, and linked via trails to other parts of the city. The Park Board has asked us to continue working in partnership with them to develop a 5-year plan within a 100-year vision for the Park. We will develop our vision and plan together with the Park Board and an expanding circle of citizens, we will develop a vision of a place within the city where people can learn to live in harmony with Nature for generations to come," said Willette.

A coordinating committee of volunteers has been working since January to design a process that provides for maximum citizen involvement and input. "A central and continuing issue for Cedar Lake Park will be maintaining a balance between the needs of people and the needs of Nature," said Dan Dailey, a member of the coordinating committee. "By involving park users of

all ages and backgrounds in the creation of the plans and rules for the Park, we are hoping to establish a behavior culture among park visitors that will allow Nature to thrive without fencing or a blight of signs," he said.

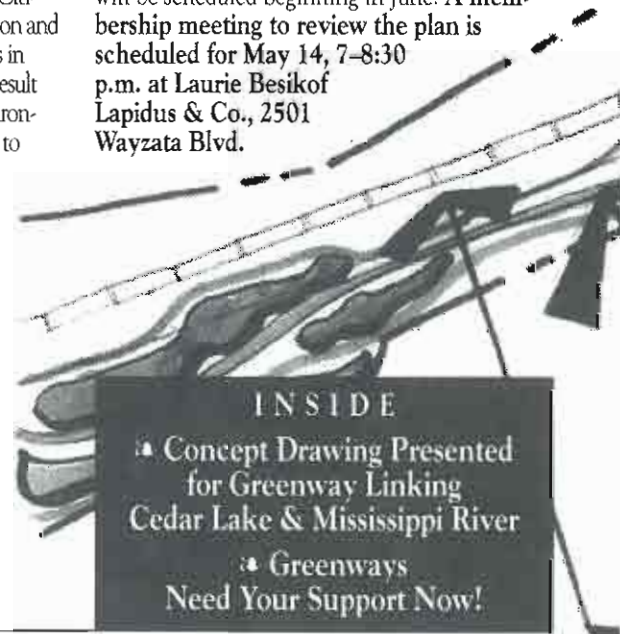
Committee member Juris Curiskis described a series of meetings and workshops taking place over the course of a year, through which citizens will be presented with information about the needs of plants, wildlife, soil, water, air. Experts will present information about habitat, pollution, and other technical factors. Citizens will examine human needs such as recreation and safety, and will be asked to analyze the trade-offs in achieving a desired balance. "Though the end result will be a plan, the process will in fact be an environmental education experience for anyone caring to become involved," Curiskis said.

A model of the planning/education process is to be presented to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board at its May 6th meeting, where it and the continued partnership with Save Cedar Lake Park are expected to be embraced by the Board. "Citizens today want a more direct voice and hand in the affairs of their community, and parks are a logical starting place," said Fourth District Park Commissioner Patty Baker. "This approach is exciting because citizens, officials, staff, and outside professionals will all be work-

ing together and making decisions."

Planners envision a process open to any citizen who wants to get involved. Participation opportunities will involve volunteer time commitments of various lengths of time — as short as two 2-hour meetings (or as long as weekly meetings for a year). The only requirement for participation is that volunteers agree to see their particular commitments through to completion.

Public meetings on various planning topics will be scheduled beginning in June. **A membership meeting to review the plan is scheduled for May 14, 7-8:30 p.m. at Laurie Besikof Lapidus & Co., 2501 Wayzata Blvd.**



INSIDE

• Concept Drawing Presented for Greenway Linking Cedar Lake & Mississippi River

• Greenways Need Your Support Now!



Planning the clean-up: Ted Tonkinson of the Sierra Club, SCLP Board member George Puzak, and Mike Wallner of the Park Board.

PHOTO: HENRY RAUENHORST

Cedar Lake Park Clean-Up Days

Help us correct years of dumping and abuse!

Friday, May 1

4:00 p.m.

Co-sponsored by the Sierra Club and the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
Meet at the Jewish Community Center 4330 Cedar Lake Road

Saturday, May 2

9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Co-sponsored by the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

For more information call:

Save Cedar Lake Park at 377-9522 or Henry Rauenhorst, event chair, at 377-5229.

Work Proceeds On Greenway Connections

At the April 9th meeting of the SCLP Steering Committee, The Park Board's Assistant Superintendent for Planning Al Whitman reported that meetings were continuing with Burlington Northern Railroad and the Minneapolis Public Works Department to negotiate easements and leases for a greenway trail connection between Cedar Lake Park and the Mississippi Riverfront Park at Nicollet Island. While conversions of abandoned railway corridors to trails is becoming more and more common, the Cedar Lake Trail greenway would be unusual in that trails would be established alongside active rail lines.

Then Al surprised everyone at the meeting as he unrolled a concept drawing that the Park Board's planning department had prepared for the meetings with the Railroad and Public Works. The drawing shows how a pedestrian path and bicycle commuting trail could be separated from the rail line by a safety "buffer" zone. A physical barrier between park users and the rail line could be created with trees, berming, and fencing. Establishing linear parks along active rail lines could have far-reaching implications for the future of the city.

"Just as a river gives life to an ecosystem, greenways can nourish urban life," said SCLP board member George Puzak. Greenways offer three distinct benefits, he said. First, a greenway's exceedingly long "edge" allows increased contact and access to open space for all people. Second, greenways that utilize rail corridors for biking and walking allow for uninterrupted movement of people and wildlife, as well as pollution-free transportation. And third, the physical connections that a greenway provides also supports linkages of neighborhoods and community resources such as parks, schools, libraries,

commercial establishments, churches, and community centers.

"Since the end of World War II, Minneapolis has become increasingly dominated by the automobile," said Puzak. "Where the traffic is heaviest and fastest, neighborhoods have been physically dissected by freeways and commuter arteries. Greenway development is a way to reclaim former industrial land and roadway infrastructure to heal neighborhoods and nurture community. Greenways can help create villages within the city that can be an incentive for people to return to or stay in the city."

Greenway development in Minneapolis could be stimulated by at least three sources of potential funding: the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR), which distributes money raised from the lottery; the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), which distributes \$20 million annually to city neighborhoods; and the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA - "Ice tea"), which allows for Federal transportation funds to be used for bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Concept drawings developed by the Park Board to visualize a portion of the Cedar Lake Trail greenway currently under development.

An Evening for M.P.L.

M.P.L. (formerly M.P.L.S.) is having a silent and live auction on May 6 at the Calhoun Beach Club from 5-9 p.m. For more information, call 922-2852 or 378-0285.

It's Nesting Time for Geese & Ducks

Dog owners are asked to please keep their dogs out of the marshes where waterfowl nest in the Spring.



Urban Greenways Need Your Help Now!

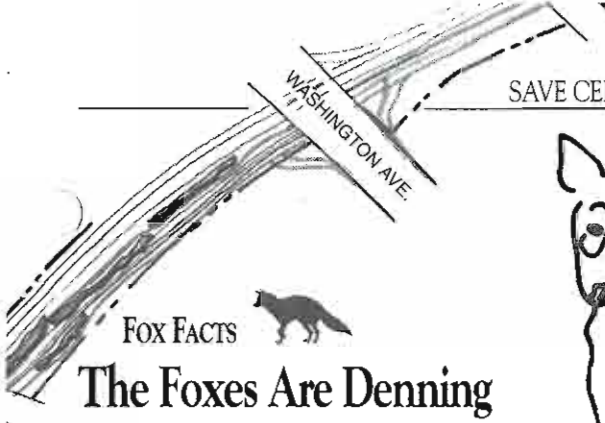
A grant proposal requesting \$700,000 for development of the Cedar Lake Trail greenway through the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR) was submitted in cooperation with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Sierra Club, and the Minneapolis American Indian Center.

Even though all criteria were met, the SCLP proposal was cut from the grants being considered—along with all other urban trail, forest, and environmental learning projects!

Why? Is it because there is only one urban resident on the LCMR citizens' advisory committee? Of the estimated \$29 million available, only \$435,000 has been recommended for Hennepin County, where 1/4 of the state's population live.

Please write to your legislator NOW to assure that the Metro area is not excluded from LCMR grantmaking, and send a copy of your letter to Senator Gene Merriam, LCMR Chair, 122 Capitol, St. Paul MN 55155. For more information, contact Save Cedar Lake Park at 377-9522.

Rail and recreational use of linear corridors will be possible through the use of trees, berming, and fencing in safety "buffer" zones.



FOX FACTS

The Foxes Are Denning

Fox pups are born around mid-March. So any time now, on a warm sunny day, the observant passerby could notice a fuzzy-faced, blue-eyed fox pup taking its first curious look at the world. At birth the pups are only 6"-8" long, with about a 3" tail, and weigh just 4 ounces. At nine days their eyes open, and the vixen begins to spend longer periods of time away from them, yet always staying close to the den. Nourished by their mother's rich milk, the pups grow quickly, and at 4-5 weeks of age they will already weigh about 1 1/2 lbs. At this age, the pups cautiously poke their heads out of the den, and only the slightest sound or a fluttering leaf will send them, tumbling back to the darkness and safety below. In just one more week their curiosity overtakes fear, and before long they're sitting at the den entrance and venture out when their parents come to feed them. This is a vulnerable time for the little pups, when they're not always aware of danger or quick enough to respond.

Cedar Lake Park affords us the rare opportunity to observe these special creatures. But for the safety of the pups and the comfort of their parents, please enjoy them from a distance. Dog owners, especially, should be careful to keep their dogs away from the hillsides where the foxes are likely to have their dens.

Watch for the next Fox Facts, which will report on the antics and developments of this year's Cedar Lake Park "fox family."



With the increase in the popularity of mountain bikes in Cedar Lake Park, we note mounting tension between mountain bikers and naturalists. Rather than allow tensions to escalate, SCLP will convene a meeting at Hidden Beach on Thursday, May 21st at 7:00 p.m. Bikers, hikers, nature enthusiasts—anyone concerned about mountain bikes in the Park—are encouraged to attend to identify the issues involved and to begin working together to achieve a solution satisfactory to all. In case of rain, the meeting will be convened the following Thursday, May 28st, at the same time.



Hey, Party Animals!

At the time of the land acquisition in November, Park Superintendent David Fisher said, "We should have a party to celebrate." The party will happen on Sunday, July 26th at the conclusion of the Walk & Roll event.

Party planners Patty Baker, Laurie Lundy, Doris Peterson, and Elly Sturgis say the Prudential has volunteered its parking lot and grounds for the event, and there is talk of live music, good food, and naturalist tours of the Park. SCLP members should watch their mail for further details.

If you would like to get involved in planning this celebration for the Park, call Laurie Lundy at 377-9522.

Volunteers Needed for Osprey Release

by Sue Czulewicz, Hill & Lake Press

A program for releasing ospreys on the north shore of Cedar Lake is in the works. If all goes according to schedule, the UofM Raptor Center will reintroduce four young ospreys to the Lake at the end of July or beginning of August. The lakes area was home to ospreys until the 1930s and '40s, when they were killed off by humans shooting them for sport and by DDT pollution.

Volunteers will be needed to observe the 5-week-old ospreys and protect them from vandalism, said Judy Englund, a wildlife specialist with the Raptor Center. Volunteers will work 2- to 3-hour shifts, writing observations every 15 minutes about "who fishes, who fleges; do they stay, do they fly away?" said Englund. Volunteers will be needed through mid-September, although the first two weeks are the most important.

The ospreys will be put into cages perched on high scaffolding called hack boxes. The cages protect the birds from their major predator, the Great Horned Owl, while their wings and feathers develop and while they get to know their surroundings. The males fledge at about eight weeks of age, while the females fledge a few days later.

People interested in volunteering or donating money to support this and other wildlife Nuture are encouraged to call Laurie Lundy at 377-9522.

Walk & Roll For Cedar Lake Park July 25 & 26

START-TIME: 7:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

FINISH BY 5:00 P.M.

SCLP and the Minnesota Volkssports Association will sponsor a non-competitive hiking, biking, and fundraising event on July 25 and 26. There will be 5K and 10K hiking courses, and a 25K biking course. Wheelchair and rollerblade events are also being planned, according to event chair Donna Seline.

Participation is open to all. A \$3 donation for individuals or a \$10 donation for families is suggested at the time of pre-registration. On the day of the event, a \$4 or \$11 donation is suggested. Food, souvenir hats, and Volksmarmer event patches will be available at a small additional cost.

The Walk & Roll will be co-sponsored by a host of organizations who will be promoting the event to their members and providing information tables at the event:

Isaak Walton League, Minneapolis Chapter of Audubon, Minneapolis Hiking Club, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Sierra Club, Twin Cities Volksmarmer, and others.

Volunteers are needed for checkpoints, registration tables, t-shirt sales, etc. To register or volunteer, please call Laurie Lundy at 377-9522.

Bluebird Report

Six new nesting boxes have been placed in the Park this Spring. Mary McGee reports there are two pairs of bluebirds nesting in the North Meadow of Cedar Lake Park. Each pair may produce five to ten young, if vandals will only leave the nesting boxes alone from April to July. Temporary signs have been placed in the park to encourage people to observe the bluebirds from a distance.

Park visitors, in the evening especially, are encouraged to watch for (and discourage/report) anyone approaching or disturbing the nesting boxes. If, during the daytime, you see a band on a Bluebird, you are asked to call Dorene Scriven at 922-4586 or Mary McGee at 377-0630.

Volunteers are also being sought to monitor bluebird boxes in Wirth Park.

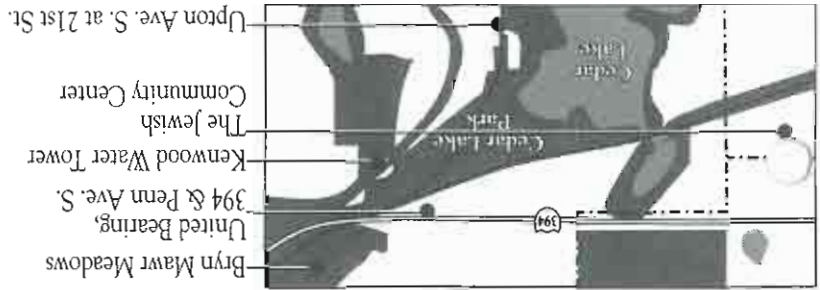


PHOTO: LOIS NISSEN

**Cedar Lake Park
Clean-Up Days
MAY 1 & 2**

(612) 377-9522

Cedar Lake Park Preservation & Development Assn., Inc.
1137 Cedar View Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55405



Enter the Park at:

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #2543
MPLS., MN 55401

Dear Friend,

We continue to be astounded by the large number of people—including even those who have been extremely active in our cause—who do not realize that

\$45,000 Must Still Be Raised from the private sector for the acquisition of Cedar Lake Park.

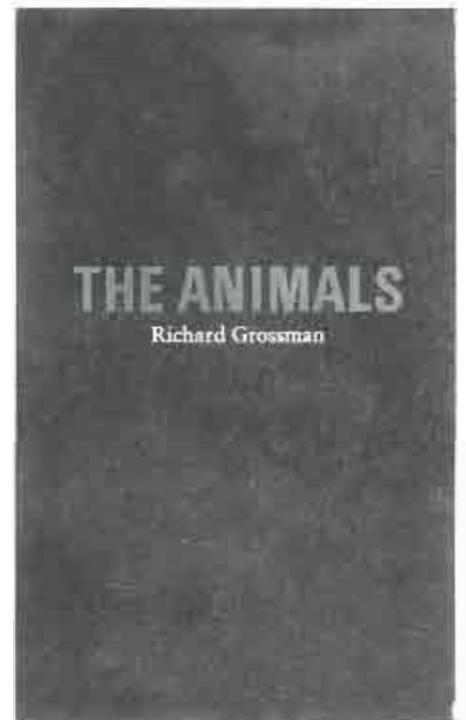
It is a fact that's been obscured by the loans that were received in order to close on the property in November. When we went to the Legislature for acquisition funding, we said we would raise 1/3 of the purchase price—and we're still \$45,000 from fulfilling that commitment.

As we are being asked to take on more commitments within the Park and along the network of trails and greenways that will one day extend for miles outside the Park, it is essential that we first honor our word to the Legislature before taking on more.

Can you help put us "over the top" and retire our obligation? Your help is urgently needed now to assure that Save Cedar Lake Park can pursue planning and additional fundraising for park and trail development.

Thank you,

Brian Willette, President



ps: Thanks to the generosity of poet Richard Grossman of Hollywood CA, we are able to offer copies of his best-selling book of poetry, *The Animals*, to anyone making a donation of \$75 or more. I hope you will take advantage of this offer—*The Animals*, which critics have called "an artistic triumph," may well be the most beautiful softcover book you'll ever see or own!