

# Save Cedar Lake Park

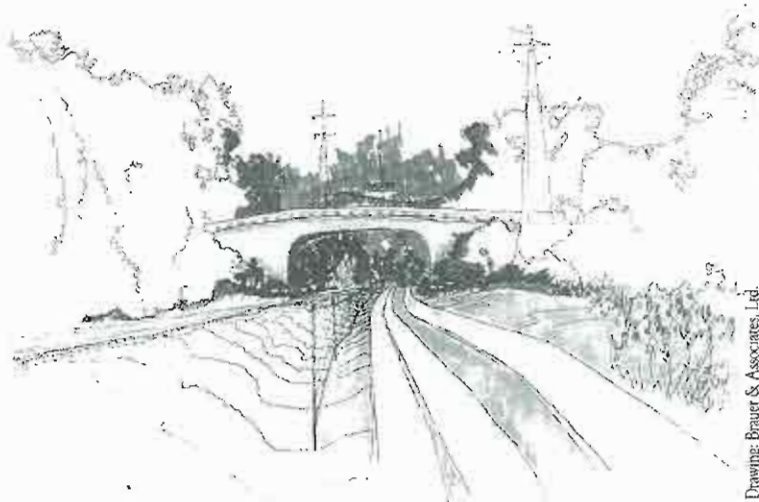
UPDATE

November/December 1992

## Citizens are Blazing New Trails at Cedar Lake Park

An extraordinary new chapter in our city's park history has begun to unfold as Save Cedar Lake Park and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board jointly convened the Cedar Lake Park and Trails Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) on September 21st. The CAC's initial charge was to assist two public agencies—the Park Board and Public Works—in developing a conceptual plan for a pedestrian/biking/skating/skiing trail connecting Cedar Lake Park with the Mississippi Riverfront at Nicollet Island. While it is not unusual for citizens to be convened to assist in park planning, this is the first time such a group has been convened by the Park Board in partnership with a citizens' organization. With 54 delegates, 54 alternates, and many guests, it is the largest citizens' advisory committee in recent park history. The collaboration between the Park Board and Public Works is a first, too.

In order to meet a mid-October application deadline for federal funding under ISTEA, which dedicates federal highway moneys to alternative transportation systems (such as bicycle trails), the CAC was obliged to address the design of the trail before it had first established design criteria for the Park itself. The citizens believed that the Park should establish the broad context in which the trail would be designed. But the deadline had to be met if there were to be any hope of beginning trail construction within the next year. If funded, the effort would be worth a half-million dollars.



A character sketch of the bike and pedestrian trails as they approach the Cedar Lake Parkway Bridge from the West.

The CAC completed its work within only five weeks, achieving a very high degree of consensus around the issues embodied in the concept plan. On only one occasion was it necessary to take a vote, and then only a single dissenting vote was cast. Park Board planners Gary Criter and Maureen Durand provided excellent staffing assistance to the CAC. On October 28, with about ten CAC members in attendance, CAC Chair/SCLP President Brian Willette presented the concept plan to the Commissioners of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, who received it with enthusiasm and praise.

The plan calls for separate pedestrian and biking trails. The pedestrian trail would be a 6 ft. hard-surface path with an adjacent 3 ft. aggregate or other soft-surface walking/jogging path. The biking trail would be two one-way hard-surface paths, each 8 to 10 ft. wide, and

separated by a median. The plan calls for these paved trails to be located at the periphery of the Park's conservancy areas, so as to interfere as little as possible with wildlife habitat and the Park's rustic character.

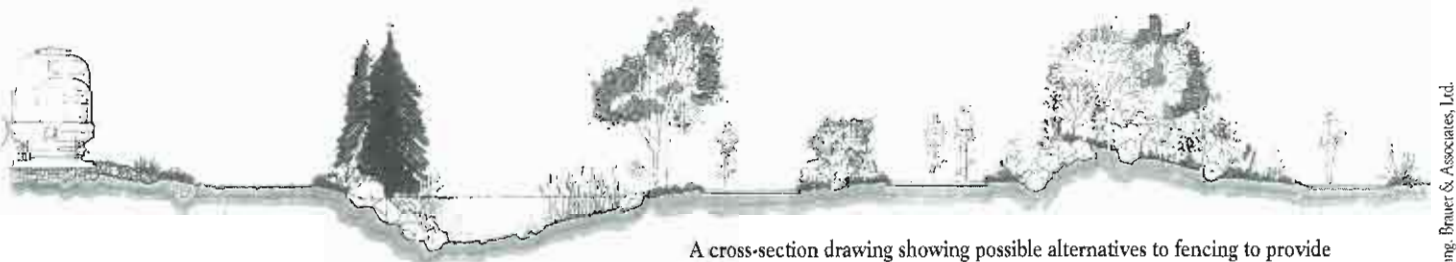
On November 11th, the CAC was reconvened to begin planning for the nature park itself. Park Board environmentalist Al Singer has taken a leading role in staffing this portion of the CAC's work, which will more resemble an environmental education course than a traditional planning process. A day-long environmental workshop was held on December 5, with presentations by experts on

the history, water, plant and animal life of Cedar Lake Park. As responsible trustees, we must understand the Park as an ecosystem before decisions affecting its balance and sustainability are made.

Although it will not be formally adopted until the CAC's self-education process is complete, the CAC has already developed a tentative philosophy and statement of park design criteria. The document will be periodically reviewed and modified throughout the process. These criteria are broad declarations that describe how the Park is to be in the future, and against which any decisions regarding the design, operation, and governance of the Park will be judged.

If you would like to see a copy of the statement in its present form, contact Laurie Lundy at 377-9522, and it will be mailed to you.

—Dan Dailey



A cross-section drawing showing possible alternatives to fencing to provide safety and separation from the active rail line.

Drawing: Brauer & Associates, Ltd.

Drawing: Brauer & Associates, Ltd.

# Osprey Report

**D**o you wish, too, that you could simply take off and fly south for the winter? That's exactly what the Osprey did, our new fine feathered friends that were introduced to Cedar Lake this summer. They headed down along the "midwestern corridor" migrating to Central and northern South America, where they will stay and mature for twelve to eighteen months before returning back home.

Once, most of Minnesota was home territory for the Osprey, but they began disappearing from our area in the late 1800's. This summer marks the ninth straight year that Osprey have been reintroduced to the Twin Cities metropolitan area. However, it is the first time Osprey have been introduced into the heart of the city on heavily used lakes (a second site is Lake Vadnais in St. Paul).

The majestic Osprey is also known as the Fish Hawk because of its exclusive diet of fish. Typically, it stands 22 to 25 inches high with a wing span of four and a half to six feet. Its body is dark brown with a white breast and a prominent black eye stripe or mask on its face. It soars to great heights, but loves the vantage point of perching on limbs at the top of dead trees.

If you strolled around Cedar Lake in August, you may have seen siting scopes set up at the beach on the second point of the lake. You may also have seen volunteer monitors with binoculars peering into the sky and

across the lake, hastily taking notes and sporting the look of official "birders". They jotted a note if a bird flew away from the hack box (their surrogate "nest" made of donated portable scaffolding with conduit bars on three sides, and covered with hardware cloth to discourage raccoons), where they flew to, if they were quiet or noisy, and most important, if (without adult Osprey mentors) they were learning to fish. For closer eye-to-eye contact, volunteer Paul Fusco was often on the scene with his celestial power telescope to help identify individual birds. Hundreds of hours were volunteered by over 60 people. Over 33 days, in three-hour stints from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., the monitoring time added up to 450 hours.

On three different occasions, the young birds fell into the marsh and needed to be rescued. One such harrowing rescue was successfully accomplished by Sarah Sanford and Mary Alyce Krohnke. In Mary Alyce's own words: "It was probably the bird's first attempt to fly. It left the hack box and flew into the cattails. A canoe came along and frightened the bird.

It flew deeper into the cattails and landed in the water. I could see it flopping in the water, but it didn't come out. So I called volunteer coordinator, Judy Voigt

Englund, on the life-guard's telephone and she said this did indeed constitute an emergency! I didn't want to go after the bird by myself, so Judy began calling volunteers who lived close by.

Just as I was about to give up, Sarah Sanford appeared and we paddled a canoe across the lake. I saw a glimpse of a black, water logged lump. I expected to find a vicious hawk, but all we found was a soggy chicken. The

bird offered no resistance when I picked it up. We climbed up the hack box and put it on the platform, but it kept rolling over and falling off. After half an hour, it still wasn't stabilizing, so we took it to the Raptor Center where they dried it off with a hair drier and rehydrated it with an I.V.. Just a reminder and word of caution for people and canoeists next summer....please stay back away from the hack box so you don't force the birds to fledge before they're ready to." The bird that became only a "little wet rag" recovered well, was returned to the hack box and will hopefully reappear in this area next year.

The Osprey Reintroduction project was first started by Hennepin County Parks in 1984. In 1989, the program was turned over to the Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota. In 1992, three birds were introduced at Vadnais Heights and five birds at Cedar Lake. The lakes were chosen for clarity and depth of water and availability of fish. There are now 37 nesting platforms set up in the Twin Cities area for returning Osprey. The birds generally return to within 10 kilometers of their original nesting area. Currently five have been occupied.

The Raptor Center will release Osprey in the middle of the Twin Cities for two more years. In the future, the Center hopes to incorporate more education programs in conjunction with the releases, possibly working with schools. The program has received national and international attention. Currently, South Dakota, New York and Germany are interested in similar release programs.

So next summer crane your neck, look up into the branches of dead trees, search the sky, and study the water for swooping Osprey. You, too, might become enamored with these magnificent birds. As volunteer Marie Thurn put it, "When you get involved with wildlife, it's like walking through the pages of national Geographic and never coming back out."

—M.J. McGregor



## A Discovery at Cedar Lake Park

While exploring last Fall in a secluded part of the Park, we happened upon a simple wreath of vines that someone had placed against a rock. Under the wreath was a small mound of coarse grey ash that had, in the recent rains, begun to wash into the grass and earth. In the quiet of that moment, we commented that it is somehow comforting that all life eventually returns to sacred Mother Earth, from whence life is reborn each Spring. —D.D.

Save Cedar Lake Park gratefully acknowledges the many financial gifts that are being donated in memory of friends and loved ones.

### Memorialized

Mrs. Franklin M. Crosby Jr.  
Rose M. Ennis  
James Giles  
Gladys Jacobson  
Kenneth K. King  
Stanley J. Krolikowski  
Walter Lundy  
Walter Lundy  
James Lusk Nye  
L. Sheldon Palmer, Jr.  
Beanie Peterson  
Leonard Schultz, Sr.  
Helen Tell  
Emma VanHoof  
Patrick Willette

### Donor

Sally Anson  
Nick & Virginia Puzak  
Nick & Virginia Puzak  
Nick & Virginia Puzak  
Nick & Virginia Puzak  
Nick & Virginia Puzak  
Jack & Betty Larouelle  
The Willette Family  
Nick & Virginia Puzak  
Sally Anson  
Dick & Laurie Lundy  
Holly, Henry & Dan Dailey  
Cathy & Mike Holmberg  
Nick & Virginia Puzak  
Dick & Laurie Lundy





## Bluebirds Nesting

APRIL-JULY

For the first time since the 1950s, bluebirds have returned to Minneapolis. Please observe from a distance, only. By giving them a chance, each nesting pair may produce five to ten young! Thank you.



## The Bluebird Class of '92

The past summer was full of surprises for fans of the bluebirds (*Sialiasialis*) in Cedar Lake Park. With additional parkland, it was possible to add more nestboxes, for a grand total of ten, in three different designs. Three pairs of birds produced 17 young, all of whom were banded. Two of the pairs had successive nestings.

Predation was not a factor, and apparently there was only one case of vandalism. That occurred on July 4 when a pinwheel firework was set off on one of the nestboxes; the birds survived the celebration.

Much credit must go to the informative signs at the sites which successfully protected the birds during the nesting period. The signs themselves remained in place longer than anyone expected.

Bluebirds also nested in Wirth Park, and four young were banded and fledged there. Were these returnees from previous nestings at Cedar Lake? Will our banded birds come back to us next year? We have much to look forward to. March 1st isn't so far off, is it?

—Mary McGee

SAVE CEDAR LAKE PARK UPDATE • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1992

SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

## Catching Up...

It seems like only yesterday, but it was a year ago that we were announcing the purchase of the 48-acre "keystone" of land and western trail corridor at the north end of Cedar Lake. After three years of hard work and thousands of volunteer hours, Cedar Lake Park was at last a reality!

In late April in our last newsletter, we described the upcoming planning process for the Park, informed you of coming events, and alerted you to the need for your immediate help in saving legislative funding for the Cedar Lake Trail. Since then, there have been a string of remarkable happenings and achievements.

### May 1-2 Clean-Up

Members of the Sierra Club and Audubon Society joined SCLP's most dedicated volunteers for an extensive clean-up of Cedar Lake Park. The event chair was Henry Rauenhorst. Old tires, scrap metal, bottles and cans were rooted out of the woods and underbrush and lined in piles along the dirt roads. Afterwards, Park Board workers separated and hauled the piles away for recycling or disposal.

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

Environmentalists, park lovers, and trail enthusiasts should be pleased to learn that George Puzak has recently announced his intention to run for one of the at-large seats on the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. For more information, call George at 374-3624.



Here, SCLP board member George Puzak shows us his discovery of a tree that has grown up inside an old inner tube.

## Walk & Roll for Cedar Lake Park

Co-Sponsored with the Minnesota Volkssport Assn. and the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

"Walk & Roll for Cedar Lake Park" on July 25-26 was a weekend packed full of walking, biking, and people celebrating the addition of a new park to the Minneapolis park system.

Planning for the event began a year earlier when the Minnesota Volkssport Association decided to sponsor an event that would raise money for Save Cedar Lake Park and expose trail users to the effort involved in establishing trails—the acquisition, planning, community involvement—as well as to celebrate the accomplishments of Save Cedar Lake Park's many dedicated volunteers and donors.

The planning committee was composed of representatives of various environmental groups who had shown an interest and commitment to saving Cedar Lake Park. Committee members were Pat Boland, Sierra Club; Jane Crane, Min-



Over 100 volunteers made the event and party afterwards a huge success.

neapolis Municipal Hiking Club; Dick Hartmann, American Youth Hostels; Marlene Marble and Neil Trembley, SCLP; Leonard Martin, Izaak Walton League—Minnehaha Chapter; Dennis Mashuga and Mike Cantrill, Twin Cities Volksmarchers; Bob McGonigal and Sharon Peterson, Minnesota Volkssport Association;

Jerry Urbaniak, Kenwood Park Center; Jo Elle Warolin, Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis. The committee met regularly twice a month to lay plans for the event. The end result was a weekend of activities that were enjoyed by all.

More than 425 people from all over



April-July  
**Bluebird Success!**  
story at left

June  
**Hennepin County Board Vote**

In June the Hennepin County Board voted to add their railroad land to the Park through a lease arrangement with the Park Board, enlarging the Park by about 50 acres. Now Cedar Lake Park is over 160 acres of land and 200 acres of water!

July  
**Train Derailment  
in Cedar Lake Park**



This is my photo of a Minnesota Valley R.R. train derailment in early July, on the Chicago & Northwestern tracks that go through Cedar Lake Park and merge into the Burlington Northern main line. The accident happened because something was wrong with the wheels on one of the train cars. The derailment caused the car to lean at about 45 degrees, pulling another car with it. This was on the side track, but part of the main line was destroyed in the derailment, too. Rail workers cleaned up the wreckage in an amazingly short period of 4 days. Trains are now running on the repaired track again.

—Henry Dailey

July  
**\$610,000  
for The Cedar Lake Trail  
Plus a \$200,000 Private Match**  
see story on overleaf

July 25-26  
**Walk & Roll for Cedar Lake Park**  
story below

**More Train Facts...**

**Are The Tracks Safe?**

The Chicago & Northwestern line is, according to one railroad official, so "loose and sloppy" that trains may not exceed 10 mph. A Chicago and Northwestern operations manager says that the railroad inspects the track monthly, and that hazardous cargo is no longer hauled through Cedar Lake Park. Most CNW cargo is grain, bricks, and soybean oil. Trains operated by the Minnesota Valley R.R. also use the CNW tracks. Their usual cargo is reported to be clay, but this could not be confirmed.

**What About The CNW Tracks' Future?**

Today the CNW line sees only 2 or 3 trains per week, but we could see an increase in traffic after July if the 29th street corridor is purchased by Hennepin County Rail Authority. If this purchase occurs, the 29th Street rail line would be severed at Hiawatha, and Soo Line trains could be rerouted through Cedar Lake Park. There is, however, another possibility. The Soo Line traffic could also be rerouted on the Twin Cities & Western R.R. line that runs north/south through St. Louis Park. There is some indication that the railroad people think this would be a preferable option. The CNW operations manager speculated that he would be surprised if the Cedar Lake line were there in another five years.

July 26  
**Acquisition Party**

Following the Rock & Roll event, hundreds of volunteers and visitors celebrated the acquisition of the 48-acre "keystone" and western trail on the Prudential grounds. The weather was glorious. Hundreds of hot dogs were consumed. There were short speeches by Ted Mondale, Allen Spear, and other key players in the legislative funding of Cedar Lake Park. The Raptor Center was present with birds to see, the Park Board sponsored naturalist tours and entertainment, and the Audubon, Sierra Club and other nature organizations were out in full force.

September 26-October 28  
**Citizens' Advisory Committee Develops Concept Plan for Cedar Lake Trail**  
story on front page

November 11  
**Citizens' Advisory Committee Begins Planning for Cedar Lake Park**



SCLPers Neil Trembley and Laurie Lundy receive a \$932 check from Volksmarchers David Hunt (state president) and Donna Seline (event chair).

in addition to contributions from the sponsors of the event, donations were received from Freewheel Cycle, Exclusively Yours, Turnquist Paper, Glenwood Springs, Hardees, 3M Co., Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis, Bryn Mawr Market, Izaak Walton League - Minnesota Division, Minnesota State Parks, Penn Cycle, Strait Stuff, Alternative Bike & Board Shop, Fast Freddy's, Izaak Walton League - Minnehaha Chapter, Kenwood Cyclery, Minneapolis Municipal Hiking Club, REI Inc., Schuler Shoes.

Finally, a thank you to Marlene Marble for a wonderful patch design, John Lane for marking a fantastic set of walking trails, Dick Hartmann and Bob McGonigal for a great bike trail. We would be remiss not to add a big special thanks to Prudential Insurance Company for their generosity in the use of their grounds for the start/finish, parking, overnight storage, and the SCLP Acquisition Celebration.



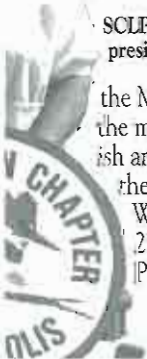
Thanks to everyone for a successful event!

—Donna Seline, Chair, Walk & Roll Event

the Metro area attended the event, including the many volunteers who staffed the start/finish and check points. 295 people walked either the 5km or 10km trails in Cedar Lake and Wirth Parks, and 70 people biked the 25km route up Wirth Parkway to Webber Park. After all expenses were paid, the

Minnesota Volkssport Association turned over a check for \$932 to Save Cedar Lake Park.

Many thanks are in order to our volunteers and donors. In addition to the planning committee listed above, Harvey Feldman and Larry Nelson of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board gave much assistance to the project. And





LORING'S LESSON IS

# Our Year-End Challenge

As the year draws to a close, 1992 will be remembered as a successful year for Save Cedar Lake Park's fundraising efforts. Thanks to the untiring energies of volunteers including Dan Dailey, Ellen Sturgis, John Richter, John Herman, and Gene Nestle, as well as project coordinator Laurie Lundy, \$230,000 in cash and new pledges has been raised in 1992 from public and private sources for land acquisition, park planning, and development of trails. An additional \$28,000 was raised for operating expenses.

As of November 15, Save Cedar Lake Park's cash position was about \$5,000. We are scheduled to receive \$40,000 in pledges by January 15, by which time a final payment of \$31,000 is payable to the Bell Foundation. (As readers will recall, the Bell Foundation provided bridge financing for last November's 48-acre land purchase.) This final payment will signal the fulfillment of our pledge to the Legislature to raise approximately \$530,000 for Cedar Lake Park and its connecting trails.

Our upcoming payment to the Bell Foundation is thus fully covered by available cash and pledges. But here's the rub: After paying the

Bell obligation and current payables, we will be left with virtually no reserve with which to operate our organization and continue our work—just as we are poised on the edge of the most important and formative period in the development of Cedar Lake Park.

It reminds me of a story we recently heard about Charles Loring, the "Father of Minneapolis Parks." In 1883, the first year of the Park Board, there was no park superintendent. It seems that Loring himself was supervising the work of the laborers and gardeners in Central (now Loring) Park. Loring devoted so much time to the creation of a great park system, that he neglected his business and nearly went broke. It was then that landscape architect Horace Cleveland urged him to hire William Berry as the first superintendent. In 1884 Loring returned to his business affairs, and many years later died a rich man.

We find ourselves in the same kind of situation as Loring. While we have been immensely successful in the capital fundraising that has allowed us to establish our vision, we have not properly addressed our need for general operating support. If we do not refocus our attention "back to the office," Save Cedar Lake Park will not be able to continue fulfilling the vital role it has been playing in the stewardship of Cedar Lake Park:

- Our planning process is giving citizens a direct "say" in the future of the Park;

- Our communications efforts (such as this newsletter) are keeping people informed; and
- Our volunteer activities are giving the Park's visitors a way to nurture and learn from nature.

Achieving and maintaining a sustainable balance between people and nature will depend on Save Cedar Lake Park's ability to meet its year-end challenge and fund its general operations. It all comes down to money—and your continuing generosity.

—Brian Willette  
President



Charles Loring

Will you please remember  
Save Cedar Lake Park in your  
year-end giving?

Besides a salary for our part-time project coordinator, we have no fixed operating expenses. We have virtually no fundraising overhead. Our administrative expenses are bare-boned.

100% of your tax-deductable  
gift will support the productive  
work of Save Cedar Lake Park.

A gift given today will result in tangible resources that will serve our beloved city and its people for all time.

Thank you!

## \$610,000 FOR THE CEDAR LAKE TRAIL— AND A \$200,000 PRIVATE MATCH

# You Made The Difference!

You, yes all of you who wrote or called our legislators last summer regarding LCMR funding for the Cedar Lake Trail, you made a difference—a very big difference!

Last spring, we reported in our April newsletter, that we had developed a proposal for the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources, asking for \$700,000 funding for the Cedar Lake Trail. A fund of \$40 million was available from state lottery profits, and tobacco taxes. However, there were \$400 million in requests! Many projects thus were cut early in the process—including ours!

But there was something peculiar about the projects the Commission was looking at funding. 4th Park District Commissioner Patty Baker noticed that only \$435,000 was earmarked for projects in Hennepin County—a mere 1%



Brian Willette and Doris Peterson were named "Volunteers of the Year" on September 24th by the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board. Pictured here are MPRB President Scott Neiman, SCLP President Brian Willette, Commissioner Patty Baker, and Corky Peterson (who received the award for Doris, who was ill).

of available funds was to be allocated to where a quarter of the state's population lives! She began raising heck with the Commission about the priorities, and asked Save Cedar Lake Park for some back-up.

That's where YOU came in. Many citizens—SCLP members, Sierra Club Members, Audubon Club members, etc.—called, wrote, or visited district legislators and legislative commissioners.

WE WERE SUCCESSFUL! The metro area finally received its fair share, and the Cedar

Lake Trail was included for funding.

\$610,000 was allocated to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (in collaboration with Save Cedar Lake Park), to plan and construct a non-motorized recreational and commuter trail from Highway 100 to downtown, linking Cedar Lake Park to the Mississippi River-

front. The grant was contingent upon the trail's inclusion in the Metro Council's master plan, and upon a \$200,000 private match, which was pledged by the John Hedberg Family. Now the LCMR's two-year budget plan must be approved by the full Legislature, which seems likely. Funds could be available for construction by July 1993.

Citizen activism really works! Thank you SCLP members and supporters. You made a difference!

—Laurie Lundy

**See Inside:  
"Our Year-End Challenge"**

Needed: Writers of all ages and interests. We also seek a Mac-based publication designer experienced with Quark XPress and other graphics software such as Photoshop, Illustrator, or Freehand.

**Newsletter Committee**  
Organizational Meeting  
Wednesday, January 6, 1993  
7:00 p.m. Kenwood Park Center

**Annual Meeting**  
Wednesday, January 27, 1993  
7:00 p.m. Lurie, Besikof, Lapidus & Co.  
2105 Wayzata Blvd.

**Meeting Notices**

(612) 377-9522

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

**Save Cedar Lake Park**

As A Holiday Gift...

# Help Plant a Grove of Cedar Trees at Cedar Lake

Where are the cedars at Cedar Lake? Except for a few individual trees scattered throughout the Park, there is no grove or stand of cedar trees to help Cedar Lake Park live up to its name.

Help crown the creation of Cedar Lake Park by helping create a grove of cedar trees at Cedar Lake Park.

- Your tax-deductable donation of \$300 or more will provide for the planting of a red or white cedar tree (depending on the site chosen) in honor or memory of someone you love.
- Your gift of \$150 - \$299 will provide for the planting of native wildflowers and other ground cover suitable to the grove.
- Your gift of \$75 - \$149 will support a research project to determine the best site and design for the Cedar Grove.
- Gifts under \$75 (as well as portions of the above gifts) will be used to fund the general work of Save Cedar Lake Park.

All memorials and donors of \$150 or more will be recognized on a permanent plaque within the grove. Gift recipients will receive a handsome card acknowledging your thoughtful generosity.

To order this extraordinary holiday gift,  
please use the enclosed envelope.



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