

Save Cedar Lake Park

UPDATE

Spring 1993

Citizens' Advisory Committee Completes Phase II

by Neil Trembley

After four months of work, the Cedar Lake Park and Trails Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) held a simple ceremony on March 1st to sign its Statement of Philosophy and Design Principles to guide the future development of Cedar Lake Park and its associated trails. Two days later CAC chairman and SCLP president Brian Willette presented the document to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on March 3, 1993. The park commissioners complimented the CAC not only on the quality of the document, but on the process through which it was developed.

The CAC's work began on November 11, 1992, when the CAC began a series of high-spirited, constructive meetings through which participants wrote, discussed, and revised each and every idea and paragraph of what park officials are describing as a truly historic document.



Laurie Lundy, Carol White, and Martin Richmond were among the thirty-five citizens who signed the Statement of Philosophy and Design Principles document on March 1st.

After a short breather, the CAC has begun its meetings around Phase III of their planning, which will focus on the proposed Kenilworth Trail, which would pass along the eastern boundary of the Park. For information about visiting the CAC's meetings, call Laurie Lundy at 377-9522.



The Park Board's Al Singer and SCLP president Brian Willette celebrate completion of Phase II with a cake frosted with a map of the Park.

Selection Process Begins for Design Firm

by Jim Preston

Save Cedar Lake Park, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Minneapolis Public Works, working as the Cedar Lake Park and Trail Partnership, began the process of design team selection in mid-March by sending Request for Qualifications (RFQ) packets to over one hundred landscape architecture and design engineering firms all over the United States. The RFQ packets contained a history of our project and description of the Cedar Lake Trail conceptual plan. The heart of each packet was the *Statement of Philosophy and Design Principles* recently completed by the Citizens' Advisory Committee. RFQ recipients were asked to signify their interest in the project by submitting their proposed design teams' qualifications. Twenty-one firms responded.

The SCLP steering committee and the Citizens' Advisory Committee held a joint meeting on April 3rd to review the 21 responses and identified four responses that most clearly match or capture the spirit of the *Statement of Philoso-*

phy and Design Principles. Their conclusions were shared with Dan Dailey, one of SCLP's representatives on a seven-member selection committee that made the actual selection. The selection committee consists of two representatives from SCLP, three from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation board, and two from the Department of Public Works.

On April 5 the selection committee selected five semi-finalist firms: the four identified by the citizens plus one additional firm. They are:

Andropogon Associates Ltd., Philadelphia
Balmori Associates, Inc., New Haven
Jones & Jones/Richard Haag Assocs., Seattle
Martin & Pitz Associates, Minneapolis
Sanders Wacker Wehrman Bergly Inc., St. Paul

Design teams from these firms will be invited to visit the site and meet the people involved. During their visits, they will receive more details on budget and schedule.



Dan Dailey records citizen input during the half-day session. "There was clear consensus as to which firms best caught the spirit," said Dan.

Each firm will be asked to produce and submit a conceptual written proposal (to be presented to the Partnership and the public), participate in a panel discussion, and be interviewed by the selection committee, which will announce its selection of a finalist design team in early May. Modest honoraria will be provided to all firms to help defray some of their costs. After contract negotiations, the contract with the selected firm will be submitted to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board for approval at its scheduled June 2 meeting.

Nature Walks in the Park

Park Board environmental expert Al Singer has begun a series of nature walks through Cedar Lake Park and its surrounding area. During these walks, Al has discussed the Park's vegetation, water quality, and animal species, and familiarized participants with the complex issues involved in reestablishing a healthy ecological balance in Cedar Lake Park.

On one such walk, participants set out from the 21st Street railway crossing and meandered through the Hidden Beach area and walked the northern lakeshore. Along the way, Al pointed out the various types of trees and brush, and which ones are considered natural or "exotic." He also

described how some species such as buckthorn have become dominant by pushing out other, more desirable tree species. "We may want to take a look at controlling the spread of this non-native," said Al. He pointed to a grove of cottonwoods and explained that they tend to become established when the soil is disturbed. "Judging from the age of the trees, the area was disturbed between fifty and seventy-five years ago," he said. He identified a small number of red cedar trees, noting that these grow naturally in dry soil. In reintroducing cedars to Cedar Lake Park, soil dampness is a decisive factor in choosing between red and white cedars.

Farther along the north shore, Al described areas appropriate for possible restoration of wetlands. He noted the marshlands around Cedar Lake



The first of Al Singer's nature walks took place on a frigid day. Here SCLPers David Dayton, Doris Peterson, George Puzak, Neil Trembley, and Dick Hartmann brace themselves against the cold.

were originally much larger than they are today. Such areas play a critical role in filtering runoff from the surrounding land and feeding waterfowl. The Bliss property, for example, receives runoff from about 48 acres of surrounding land.

On one outing, a white tailed deer bounded across the prairie and into the woods; on another, a great horned owl appeared with a cacaphanous escort of screaming black crows. On each of his walks, Al has focused on the potential of Cedar Lake Park for the introduction of diverse animal species. Explained Al: "The key to sustainability of animal species is creating edges, such as where the forest meets savannah. In these edges, diverse wildlife will thrive."

Plans are underway for more nature walks — one or two each season, if Al's busy schedule permits. Stay tuned for future announcements. Everyone is welcome!

Fox Sighting!

Toward the end of February, an excited Mary McGee sighted a red fox from her kitchen window. She said, "His tail was bushy, and he looked real healthy. After not seeing fox families playing in Cedar Lake Park all last summer, it was, indeed, a treat to see at least one."



Mother Nature took care of the fox overpopulation of 1991. According to Doctors at the University's Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, our fox had mange. The diagnosis was made after examining a sickly kit that had been live-trapped. After treatment, he was doing well when last seen.

No wonder Mary was excited about seeing a fox again near Cedar Lake. Mary said, "After he sniffed around and left, I ran out with a pan of sunflower seeds, hoping he would come back. Former fox used to love sunflower seeds, but this one didn't!" Said Mary, "He must have been used to meat wherever he came from because he turned up his nose at the sunflower seeds and tried to catch a squirrel instead."

Growing a Landmark at Cedar Lake Park

Dozens of people have already donated several thousand dollars towards creation of a grove of cedar trees at Cedar Lake Park. Though a few lone cedars have been found in the park, there is no grove or stand of cedar trees at Cedar Lake. "It seems somehow wrong that there are so few cedar trees in the park," said Save Cedar Lake Park president Brian Willette. "The response from SCLP members to our cedar grove fundraising appeal was immediate and intense, and we now have enough contributions to establish a grove of at least 40 trees," Brian said.

"One contributor told us he was making a memorial gift for wildflowers in memory of a friend who tended a wildflower garden," said SCLP project coordinator Laurie Lundy. Paul Anderson of the Bryn Mawr Market, by putting out a donation jar in his store, helped the Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association raise \$300 for a tree. "Another donor told us of the poor and

failing health of a family member, adding that planting a cedar tree in the park is his way of affirming his trust in a return to stability in a life that is presently turned upside-down," she said.

Gifts of all sizes have been received. "Gifts of up to \$149 will be used to fund a research project to determine the best site in the park for the cedar grove," Laurie said. "Gifts of \$150 to \$299 will be used to plant native wildflowers or other ground cover suitable to the site. Gifts of \$300 and more will provide for the planting of the trees themselves," Laurie said. "Some people wanting to give smaller gifts toward the planting of trees have asked us to put their gifts together with others to purchase a tree," she said. "We're really happy to do this, and encourage others to participate this way, too."

There is still time for friends of the park to join in establishing the cedar grove. Please contact Laurie Lundy at 377-9522 for more information.

Save Cedar Lake Park gratefully acknowledges the following people who have made memorial gifts to the park in honor of some friend or loved one.

Donor
Don & Mary L. Beimbom
Don & Mary L. Beimbom
Gretchen & Roger Clemence
Lisa Jackley Dayton
Barbara Methven DeCosse
Jeffrey L. Edelson &
Marcie K. Stein
Shannon B. Halford
Nick & Virginia Puzak
Morris Stockberger &
Carla Pavone
Morris Stockberger &
Carla Pavone

Donor
Sally Anson
Sally Anson
Sally Anson
Bryn Mawr
Neighborhood Assn
Elizabeth Dolan &
Charles Geach
Jim Garrity
Ronald Gier &
Barbara Hanawalt
Mike & Cathy Holmberg
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Ed & Peggy Pluimer
Jim & Judy Preston

Memorialized
David Paulson
Anne Knickerbocker
Angeline Ahlberg
Carroll Jackley
Don & Barbara Methven
Dr. David Bloom

Dr. William Isham
Harry D. Parkhurst, Jr.
Louise Sauer

Bob Schweitzer

Gift Recipient (if any)
Mrs. J.W. Truesdale
Mr. & Mrs. Charles A. Cleveland
Mrs. Richard Vaughn

Holly Elizabeth Nelson

Earl Holmberg
Norma Holmberg

2nd Annual Clean-Up

Mark June 5th on your calendar. June is Mississippi River Month and this year's river clean-up is part of a Statewide effort to improve area rivers and streams. Save Cedar Lake Park is combining efforts with the Mississippi River Clean-up project, which is sponsored by the City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Mississippi River Revival.

Save Cedar Lake Park is helping to organize volunteers for all the focus clean-up areas: Bassett's Creek, Cedar Lake Park, Mississippi River, and Spring Lake. All volunteers who sign up through the SCLP office (377-9522) will receive a free SCLP cap and a chance to receive a free T-shirt. Gloves and garbage bags will be provided. Wear old clothes and bring drinking water and a bag lunch.

Volunteers specifically wanting to clean up Cedar Lake Park will be so assigned, receive a free hat and will have a chance to win a free SCLP T-Shirt. Five T-shirts will be given away at a drawing that day.

Volunteers wanting to work in the other focus areas will receive a free hat by pre-registering through the SCLP office (377-9522) and a chance to receive a Mississippi River Clean-Up T-Shirt. The first 200 pre-registered people to arrive for the 9:15 a.m. check-in at Boom Island Park will receive a free T-shirt. After assignments are made, volunteers will be bussed to the clean-up sites.

Refreshments and entertainment will be provided for both groups after the event at 2:00 p.m. at Boom Island.

Call 377-9522 to volunteer.



As James J. Hill's new "Minnetonka Cut-off" actually crossed the lake as it approached what is today the Cedar Lake Parkway bridge.

THE HISTORY CORNER

Cedar Lake Park's History Has Been Shaped by Railroads

by Neil Trembley

The years following the Civil War saw a tremendous surge of railroad-building in which all of Minnesota was opened to the rails. The first ten miles of track in Minnesota were laid in 1862 by the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad between St. Paul and St. Anthony Village. The SP&P's plan was to connect the Mississippi and Red River Valley, opening up a trade route to Canada. Eventually the St. Paul & Pacific would become James J. Hill's Great Northern Railroad, and its rails would extend all the way to the Pacific Northwest. But that was to happen decades later. For now, our history begins after the war in 1867, when the SP&P laid the first tracks through the Cedar Lake vicinity.

The SP&P rails extended from downtown Minneapolis westward to Cedar Lake. After

skirting the Kenwood hills, the rails originally turned southward through the Kenilworth corridor and went around Cedar Lake before turning north and westward again. Why did the SP&P choose this route rather than following the Burlington Northern's present route? The topography of the land tells the story.

The waters of Cedar Lake originally lapped at the base of the Bryn Mawr bluffs. Except for a small peninsula jutting out of the north shore of the lake, most of what we now think of a Cedar Lake Park was underwater. Further west, Brownie Lake was much larger, extending into today's rail corridor. Beyond Brownie to the west was a vast marsh, the remnants of which can still be seen today west of Highway 100. It was undoubtedly faster and cheaper for the SP&P to avoid these wetlands. But by 1883



Nurture Nature



Earth Walk '93

Sunday, April 25, 1993

Celebrating Children, Families, And A Healthy Urban Environment.

Be an Earth Walker (or sponsor one) and join with family, friends and classmates on a beautiful spring walk along the Mississippi River in downtown Minneapolis. Experience the rich heritage of historic Main Street, the original milling district, and new development along the river where Minneapolis was born.

Earth Walk will begin at 1:00 p.m. at the Nicollet Island Pavilion. Registration begins at noon with warm-up activities by the Fitness King and music before the walk starts.

Walkers may choose a 4 km "city stroll" or a 10 km "urban excursion." Along each route will be interpretive "Earth Stations" to provide historical, cultural and environmental information. Upon completion, walkers can attend the Earth Festival where folk singer, Larry Long and storyteller, Carol McCormick will provide entertainment.

The event is being put together by Al Singer and a committee coordinated by Renee Pardello. Al Singer, a sensitive naturalist for the Park Board is also a committed member of SCLP. Thanks, Al.

Earth Walk '93 is a pledge walk with proceeds benefiting Cedar Lake Park and Trail, Urban P.L.A.C.E. (People Learning About Community and Environment) Program, and the new Longfellow Interpretive Center at Minnehaha Park. Individuals and/or walk teams can also donate a portion of their pledges to an environmentally-oriented, community-based, nonprofit organization of their choice. (Hmmm. That sounds like a description of Save Cedar Lake Park.) What a Great Idea! All contributions are tax deductible.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is sponsoring this fun and innovative event with special support from Dowling and Shingle Creek Environmental Learning Centers (Minneapolis Public Schools) and Crib Diaper Service.

For Earth Walk '93 pledge kits, volunteer opportunities or information, please call the SCLP office, 377-9522.



To create fill for the wetlands below, James J. Hill's railroad builders pulled down soil from the Bryn Mawr Bluffs.

Three Views of Cedar Lake in the 1890s



This, if you can believe it, is where Hidden Beach is today. The lake level fell twelve feet when the Kenilworth Canal was opened in the early part of this century. In the subsequent decades many tons of fill were then imported. So today there are woods and hillocks where in the 1890s people used to fish!

company report explaining the new route, Hill stated that double-tracking of the line was necessary to handle the increased summer traffic, and that "the savings in time and distance with the improvement in grade and alignment....fully justifies the expense."

James J. Hill's railroad company would dominate and shape Cedar Lake Park for the next hundred years. In the 1890s Hill reorganized his expanding railroad empire, naming it the Great Northern Railroad. After a merger in the 1950s, the Great Northern became the Burlington Northern Railroad, the name it operates under today. And it was from Burlington Northern's land holding company, Glacier Park Development Co., that the area we now call Cedar Lake Park was purchased in 1991.

the situation had changed.

In 1879 the SP&P had gone bankrupt and was purchased by James J. Hill and renamed the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railroad. Under Hill's direction, it was decided to build a new, more direct main line (called the "Minnetonka cut-off") from Minneapolis to Wayzata — across the north end of Cedar Lake. A compelling reason for the new line was the growth of resorts on Lake Minnetonka. The 1870s and 1880s were a tremendous boom time for Lake Minnetonka, and the need to service the railroad's plush new lakeshore Hotel Lafayette led Mr. Hill to double-track his new main line. In a

Cedar Lake Park Supper Club?

by Natalie Westreich

Hooray for the Cedar Lake Park Supper Club! Now, you are asking, "What is the Cedar Lake Supper Club?" Well, it's a spaghetti supper or an elegant beef Wellington dinner; it's a Minnesota meal of Northern Pike and wild rice, a backyard barbeque, a Tuesday afternoon tea, a Sunday brunch, or whatever you want it to be.

It is a fund raising project involving folks interested in supporting Save Cedar Lake Park. Here is how it works: Hosts select the event, date, time, menu and guests from the greater Cedar Lake Park Community, which includes anyone who might be interested in Cedar Lake Park, regardless of where they live. Hosts set a price for the event or ask for donations. Literature on the park and our organization will be provided, and a speaker will be available upon request.

Host expenses, as well as all guests' contributions are tax deductible. Some events have already occurred. It has been reported that they were a lot of fun, and the dollars are rolling in. Several more events are scheduled. If you would like more information about hosting an event as part of the Cedar Lake Park Supper Club, please call Natalie Westreich, at 377-9798. This can be a party with a purpose. Happy partying!

1993 Osprey Reintroduction at Cedar Lake

The Raptor Center will again transfer Osprey chicks from Northern Minnesota to hack boxes in Cedar Lake. This year the nestlings will be released from two side-by-side hack boxes. As a result, we will be able to release more Osprey, but still use the same number of volunteers. Last year Save Cedar Lake Park garnered more Osprey observer volunteers than all the other release sites put together. Equally important, the volunteers truly enjoyed their shifts. To volunteer for the Osprey release this summer, see insert from The Raptor Center or call 377-9522.

Bluebird Return

Dorene Scriven reported that the Bluebirds should be returning any day now. "In fact," she said, "they probably will be back before the newsletter arrives." They will be a welcome sight. Maybe we can top last year's number of 17 baby Bluebirds.



Laurie Lundy Is Honored With 1993 Environmental Woman of Action Award

Save Cedar Lake Park project coordinator Laurie Lundy was selected as the 1993 Environmental Woman of Action for the state of Minnesota. The program is sponsored by Tambrands Inc. of White Plains, N.Y.

Laurie was selected based on her years of environmental activities, begun in the early 1970's. She began recycling long before it was an accepted practice. While living in the San Francisco bay area, she helped organize the first U.S. Recycling Center and initiated a recycling education program, actively promoted a recycling program for the 77-unit townhouse complex where she and her family lived, reacted to an oil spill crisis in San Francisco Bay by organizing water fowl clean-up efforts and taught environmental awareness programs as a leader and director of Campfire and PTA groups.

Within two weeks after moving to Minneapolis from Eau Claire in mid 1989, Laurie volunteered as SCLP's membership chair. In 1991 she became the Project Coordinator for SCLP, and has been involved around the clock ever since.

Her ongoing efforts earned her an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to the awards ceremony and a \$1,000 donation to the school of her choice to further environmental education. She will be working with Al Singer, Minneapolis Park Board, on the Urban Ranger Program through the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Anwatin School and Scherer Bros Lumber Team Up to Help SCLP

Over a year ago, member Bob Beugen called the SCLP office with an offer of help. He had an idea! Bob said, "I have these wonderful plans for Wood Duck houses. Wouldn't it be great if we could put up some houses for Wood Ducks at Cedar and Brownie Lakes?" Then he went on to say, "I'll provide the plans and expertise if we can get lumber and someone to build them."

Coincidentally, Keith O'Brien, the Environmental Coordinator teacher at Anwatin School, was looking for a SCLP project for about 100 students. "But," he said, "I would like the project to be a 'learning experience' for the kids—not just a clean-up, for example." Wow, what a coincidence! Later, Bob called and said, "I just talked to Greg Scherer at Scherer Bros Lumber, and he will provide ALL the materials for 40 Wood Duck houses."

Now, it is spring. Scherer Bros. Lumber delivered the materials; Bob Beugen helped with the plans; And, Keith O'Brien's students are feverishly trying to get the Wood Duck houses ready for nesting season.

Armed with advice from Jeff Lee, Minneapolis Park Board, the Anwatin students not only will install the duck nesting boxes, but they will care for them on an ongoing basis. Is this a fun learning experience, Keith? The extra boxes will be given to SCLP.

A big Thank You to Bob Beugen, Greg Scherer, Keith O'Brien and all the wonderful students making this remarkable project happen.

Excerpt from a Thank You Letter

"I appreciate . . . the lively can-do attitude you shared with us. The people in our city need to catch on to such enthusiasm and grasp the greenway/open-space vision for the future. The Save Cedar Lake Park effort and success will inspire many to keep trying and hope for the same dedicated leadership.

"Please continue to reach out and inspire others to jump in and work to improve our quality of life in this growing urban environment. We can have a balance of nature and development if we visualize the concept and help others see how we'll all benefit now and in the future. thank you very much."

Sincerely yours, Scott Wallace

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Save Cedar Lake Park

There's Still Time to 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 participate in this extraordinary opportunity,
please use the enclosed envelope.

