

# Save Cedar Lake Park

UPDATE

Winter 1993 - '94

## Groundbreaking Scheduled for Spring

An Open Letter  
by Laurie Lundy

**G**roundbreaking for the first phase of Cedar Lake Park and Trail is expected to start next spring—probably in April—depending upon the weather.

Shortly after publication of the last newsletter, which discusses the selection process of a design team for Cedar Lake Park, a young man expressed serious concern.

Perhaps you, too, have concerns or will have when you see soil and plant disruption next spring. Consequently, I share the following response in an open letter to all of you:

"Thank you for your letter last week voicing your concerns regarding "designing" Cedar Lake Park. I am pleased that you have brought your apprehensions to our attention, so that they can be addressed. Furthermore, I think many others share your concerns, and I wish they would do as you have done—write or call and express them.

Having similar concerns, SCLP and the Park Board convened a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for Cedar Lake Park and Trail August, 1992. The CAC is comprised of special interest groups such as birders, bikers, walkers, neighborhoods, and other groups such as Audubon, Sierra Club and Isaak Walton League. At the time SCLP invited everyone on the mailing list to participate in the advisory process. The committee is comprised of 54 delegates, 54 alternates and as many other citizens who wish to come.

Everyone I know associated with Save Cedar Lake Park (SCLP) feels the same way you do. We want it to feel as wild and natural as it does now. However, we have learned that if left alone, the land will not remain as we all know and love it.

Consequently, the CAC painstakingly arrived at consensus with a "Statement of Philosophy" and Design Criteria (a copy of which may be obtained by calling 377-9522). Therefore, the park and trail designers have to design to the "wild and natural feeling" that is laid out in the "Design Principles." Please look over the document, and I think your fears will be alleviated.

However, if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call or write. Moreover, you are most welcome to attend the next CAC, where members of the design team, Jones & Jones and Richard Haag will make some presentations, which will be open for discussion.

Finally, We want to assure you that this particular design team was selected because of their sensitivity to nature and the environment. They too, appreciate that we have fox, deer, bluebirds and numerous other wildlife in the park. Not only will they design to preserve wildlife habitat but they will design to enhance it as well.

Again, thanks for writing. Thanks too for your previous contributions. People like you make this whole project possible. Otherwise, we may have ended up with a few condominiums by Cedar Lake instead of wildlife and a few trails for all of us to enjoy."

### Progress from Spring to Spring

*From Designer Selection to Construction  
by Jim Preston*

**T**he spring 1993 update described the progress made at that time in the selection process of a design team for the Cedar Lake Park and Trail Partnership. Great progress has been made since then! Two of the five finalists mentioned joined forces, leaving four teams who met with the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC), which represents all abutting neighborhoods and other interested groups, on May 3 for a public presentation of their qualifications and design ideas. The committee created an informal ranking of the four teams based upon their presentations. The following day, the selection committee, consisting of two representatives from SCLP, three from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and two from the Department of Public Works, interviewed the four teams of designers and reached a consensus that matched the CAC's ranking.



*Richard Haag, design team member and Brian Willette, SCLPP President scouting one end of the trail.*

The Seattle-based team of Jones & Jones/Richard Haag Associates, in conjunction with the local engineering firm Strgar-Roscoe-Fauch Inc., was selected, a contract was submitted to and approved by the Park Board, and design work began. The design team met with the CAC regularly throughout the summer and fall, accepting input and willingly changing design features to meet the objectives of the committee.

As we go to press, the Construction Documents are being prepared for submission to the city and state government bodies that must approve them, and contracts will be let sometime in January.

The first phase of construction will create biking, jogging, and walking trails from the Cedar Lake Road pedestrian bridge (near the Jewish Community Center) to 7th Street. At the same time, parts of the north meadow will be redeveloped into a beautiful prairie.

Because the consensus is that herbicides should not be used within Cedar Lake Park, the plan calls for the topsoil of the north meadow to be bulldozed and turned four times in the spring and early summer before it is replanted with prairie grasses.

Barring unforeseen hurdles, the first-phase trails will be in use by the public before Labor Day 1994, the design process for the downtown section of the trails will be well underway, and hearty congratulations will be in order to the hundreds of people and organizations who have participated in the process!

# The 1993 Bluebird Season: Cedar Lake Park Sets Record

by Mary McGee

Overall it was not a good summer for nesting bluebirds because of the cold wet weather. The 12,171 young fledged that were reported is 2,500 down from the year before.

Nevertheless, the bluebirds in Cedar Lake Park succeeded in raising a record number of young. Out of ten nestboxes there were 17 fledglings; all were banded.

Although all the nestlings were plagued with fly larvae, cold and rain, only four died.

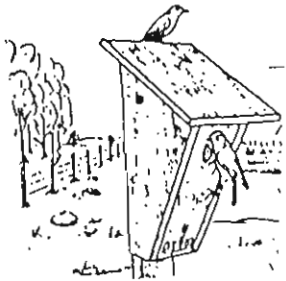
There was no vandalism to speak of, and the

small, informative signs survived both the weather and the traffic along the trails.

Competition from sparrows was not a problem partly because they rejected the two odd-looking PVC houses and left them for bluebirds and tree swallows. In mid summer, after the bluebirds had finished nesting, house wrens took over several houses, which is not good news.

Unfortunately, these cute little melodious

birds are lethal threats to bluebirds' eggs and young.



## Dorene Scriven Honored for her Bluebird Work

Dorene Scriven was recently honored as one of the 11 volunteers selected annually by TV KARE 11. She was honored by KARE 11 and the North American Bluebird Society for fifteen years of work with the Bluebird Recovery Program of the Minneapolis Chapter of National Audubon. Dorene, chief advisor for Cedar Lake's Bluebird Trail, is the author of two books on bluebird trails.

The following is an excerpt from the KARE 11 Volunteer Recognition Banquet Booklet: "Dorene grew up next to a wildlife preserve where she roamed freely. It was there that she learned to love nature, so it's entirely natural for her to be involved in wildlife and natural resources conservation here in Minnesota. Her main interest however is the bluebird.

## Earth Walk '93 Results

Environmental Planner and Earth Walk Director, Al Singer of the Minneapolis, Park Board, reported that a total of \$2,924 was raised from Earth Walk last April. The proceeds benefited Urban P.L.A.C.E. (People Learning About Community and Learning About Community and Environment) Program, the Longfellow Interpretive Center at Minnehaha Park and Save Cedar Lake Park.

Along each route, Al and his crew provided interpretive "Earth Stations" providing interesting historical, cultural and environmental information.

While munching on healthful snacks afterwards, walkers were entertained by folk singer, Larry Long and storyteller, Carol McCormick.

Al Singer said, "It is a wonderful way to celebrate children, families and a healthy environment along with raising a little money for several really good causes."

SCLP's portion of the proceeds resulted in a desperately needed copy machine for the office.

Thanks to the generous partners in the CPA firm near our office, most of SCLP's copying has been provided in the past by their firm, Lurie, Besikof, Lapidus & Co. They are probably happy about the result of the Earth Walk, too.

Thank you also to: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Dowling and Shingle Creek Environmental Learning Centers (Minneapolis Public Schools), Crib Diaper Service and all of you who walked and/or pledged money.



Dorene Scriven

As chair of the Minnesota Bluebird Recovery Program since its inception in 1979, Dorene has worked tirelessly to help bring back the beautiful Eastern Bluebird whose numbers had severely declined in the past 50 years. Her work includes the delicate bonding of baby bluebirds in order to determine migratory patterns, and presenting countless workshops, book signings, and conferences to educate people about bluebird conservation.

Dorene says, "It's personally very rewarding to know that you're doing a service to bring back some of our natural wildlife." Dorene is always quietly making progress."



Carol White, Laurie Lundy and Neil Trembley

John Kamp, Liv Munson-Benson, Susan Ruplin and Justus Allison.

1993 Earthwalkers



# The Old Railroad Loop

by Neil Tremblay

he future of abandoned railroad corridors concerns many of us. Some see them as becoming recreation trails, linear parks and wildlife bridges; others see them as becoming housing development and increased farmland. Do you know that an old corridor runs through the Cedar Lake area? Its history might provide some insight for us.

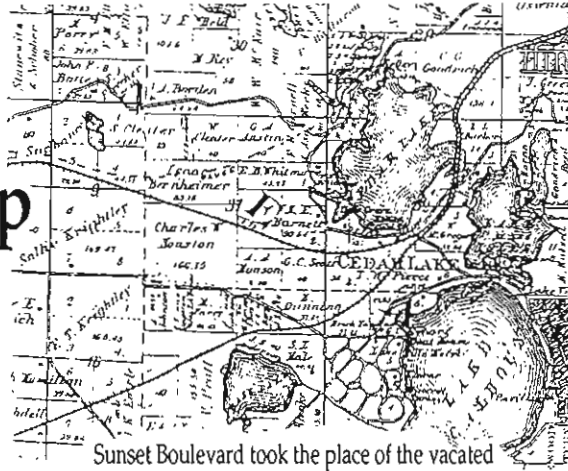
When James J. Hill took over the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad in 1879, one of his basic goals was to shorten track distances, making the railroad more efficient and profitable. The existing railroad corridor, as it left Minneapolis, looped around the south of Cedar Lake (see map) before heading west again on its way to the Lake Minnetonka resorts and the Pacific.

In 1883, Hill decided to straighten out the loop and drive the tracks north of the lake, thereby saving time and money.

So, what happened to the abandoned corridor?

During the 1870s and 80s, while the section was still in use, the area south of Cedar Lake had become an area filled with health resorts and summer homes. Indeed, notables such as W.W. Mayo, Supreme Court Justice Salmon P. Chase and Henry Thoreau frequented this "Haven for Consumptive's", as Minneapolis was known.

As in most other areas, the developers built the houses facing away from the tracks. Later,

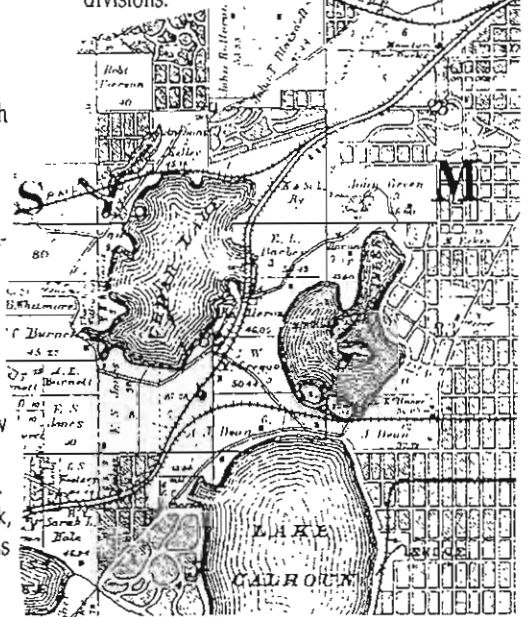


Sunset Boulevard took the place of the vacated railway. Today you can drive down the boulevard and witness the odd results — a beautiful street with all the houses turned away from it.

The old line turned due west a little past the lake and more or less down what is now 28th Street through land originally owned by Ebenezer D. Scott, who had built the area's first known permanent structure — The Oak Grove Hotel. The owner of this somewhat strange looking octagonal building catered to the aforementioned tourists looking for relief in our "healthy summer climate." The Hotel went belly-up and was eventually sold and became the original Jones-Harrison Home.

St. Louis Park's plat maps still clearly show the old "Manitoba's" right-of-way, but finding it in the real world requires a little detective work. As the old railroad corridor enters St. Louis Park, it disappears for a few blocks only to reappear as a hollow filled with trees. It is possible to walk this part of the old corridor for a good distance — until the path is obliterated by recent construction. (If you wish to walk the corridor, you can enter it just north of the Torah Academy. But be forewarned: many homeowners have encroached upon this city owned land — you get the feeling you're trespassing.)

The hollow is still there primarily because the St. Louis Park water main is located there, so no one is supposed to build on it. In reality, many homeowners have extended their backyards into the corridor. No real trail exists, but you can pick your way through. The narrow valley heads northwest until it spreads out into a marsh. Unfortunately, the water main ceases following the corridor at this point and uses the wetlands instead. (Old railroad ties — artifacts of a lost time — have been found out in this marsh from time to time.) West of the marsh the corridor is lost; the land sold off and turned into subdivisions.



Off the old "Manitoba" line by the southeast corner of the lake, one of the first railroad structures built was the Cedar Lake Station. This was constructed to cater to the burgeoning resort business springing up in the 1870's around the south part of the lake. One of these resorts was to have a varied and colorful history. In the next issue, you will hear this scandalous tale!

## Save Cedar Lake

by David Dayton  
with Penny Jacobs contributing

Save Cedar Lake. Take out one word and we have another critical mission! Part of the magic of Cedar Lake Park is in its middle name. The park and the lake have a symbiotic relationship, each one needs the other. Stand in the trees on the north shore, face a brisk wind from the south, hear the waves lapping at your feet. Lake and land form a place of nature, full of magic and mystery, woods and grasses, people and criters.

But all is not well below the surface of Cedar Lake. A long time member and worker for SCLP Penny Jacobs wrote for the newsletter, "Now that the Park has been saved, it is time to save the Lake." After listing some of the problems, Penny

urged all of us as members of SCLP to stop using phosphate fertilizers and pesticides around all the lakes. In addition, she said, "We should be the first to spread this vital message."

A Citizens Advisory Committee to the Minneapolis Park Board recently reported on the severe water quality problems facing our Chain of Lakes, especially Cedar and Calhoun. This Committee, Chaired by John Herman, worked long and hard to explain what is wrong with our lakes, and how to reverse their decline. The report explained how the lakes have been overloaded with nutrients, choking them with weeds, and how to correct this problem. The group identified ways to filter out urban pollutants with natural wetlands. With the help of Committee Member Ruth Jones, who represented SCLP, and many others, this group also showed how the park land, the

water and the surrounding neighborhoods are inter-related. They presented a vision of how it can all come together, in harmony, to create a healthy environment for the future.

SCLP owes a great deal to all who participated in the Water Quality Management Study. The volunteers, appointees, and professionals have worked hard to show us the way to bring back the magical quality of our Chain of Lakes. And, that is why SCLP will be working with this group to help make it happen. It's what parks are for — bringing us together to create the quality of life we want for future generations.

A bound copy of the 41-page report may be ordered through the SCLP office by calling 377-9522.



# SCLP Lost Three Good Friends This Fall

Memories of three women, who loved our park, will live on in a Cedar Grove in Cedar Lake Park

Friends of Cedar Lake Park will be saddened to learn of the September 6th death of Holly Ramsey, who was married to SCLP activist Dan Dailey. Holly died following a 2 1/2 year struggle with cancer.



Holly Ramsey

She was founder and publisher of The Five Owls magazine, a national review of children's books for teachers and librarians. In the final months before her death, she also established The Five Owls Reading Room, an extraordinary children's library and teacher support center at Hamline University. She was also a dedicated parent to her son Henry, and a good friend who will be missed by her neighbors and loved ones.

In the months before she died, many SCLP members donated cedar trees to be planted in her memory in the spring. Dan Dailey wishes to thank all those who so generously contributed towards the trees.

Gloria Segal, former State Representative and St. Louis Park neighbor, died October 27. She resigned from the legislature in mid-December last year after surgery for a brain tumor.



Gloria Segal

Other Representatives considered Gloria the "conscience" of the House of Representatives on mental illness, the underprivileged and women's issues.

Gloria thought the concept of an urban nature park with connecting trails was a wonderful vision not only for the metro area but for the whole state as well. In the Spring of 1991, when we worked so hard to preserve the railroad land as open space for the common good, she was most helpful at the State Capitol. Her husband, Marty, still applauds her work and the continuing work of SCLP.

Marilyn Weisgram, who happened to live next door to our office, willingly wrote hundreds of thank you notes and performed a myriad of other clerical tasks for SCLP with a smile. She and husband Larry

opened their hearts (and checkbook) for the park project. Marilyn loved to walk their dog, Tiger, in Cedar Lake Park. She also fed all the birds in the neighborhood and delighted in the antics of the fox family in their backyard.



Marilyn Weisgram Tiger

Marilyn collapsed from a brain aneurism and died suddenly September 27. SCLP certainly lost a good friend.

For more than a year now, SCLP has been suggesting to donors and members a method by which they might remember their departed family members and friends, honor a living loved one or provide a tree in their own name.



A tax-deductable gift of \$300 will provide for the purchase, planting, and nurturing of a cedar tree

within the park to be suitably marked as a memorial or honor to the person(s) designated by the donor. \$150 will provide for the planting of native wildflowers and/or prairie grasses. Gifts under \$75, as well as portions of the above gifts, will be used to fund the general work of SCLP. Gift recipients will receive acknowledgement of your thoughtful generosity.

The response to this idea has been gratifying, as a number of cedar tree designated gifts have been received and are still being made. A ceremonial planting is being planned.

Although the master plan for the Nature Conservancy portion of Cedar Lake Park is still in the planning stage, the presence of a memorial and/or honor Cedar Grove is an important part of the plan, and it is hoped that all of the trees in the grove can be provided by these purpose-specific gifts.

The three women noted above are the most recent memorialized loved ones. Other memorials and honors received in recent months are as follows:

## CEDAR TREES:

Sara & Jock Donaldson in memory of Jock's father, Frank A. Donaldson

James & Catherine Gray in memory of Catherine's father, David B. Paulson

Ruth Olive Paulson in memory of Husband, David Barr Paulson

## The Steering Committee:

David Dayton  
Janci Curiskis  
Juris Curiskis  
Frank Dosal  
Kathryn Glessing  
John Herman  
Kevin Johnson  
Ruth Jones  
Laurie Lundy  
Mary McGee  
Sara Mushlitz  
Doris Peterson  
George Puzak  
John Richter  
Dorene Scriven  
Jeanette Sobania  
Ellen Sturgis  
Brian Willette

to memorialize Holly Ramsey

## The Steering Committee

to memorialize Gloria Segal

## CEDAR GROVE:

Paul & Del Askegaard

Nancy Kallio  
Dick & Laurie Lundy  
Lolene Lundy  
Corky & Doris Peterson  
Shannon Toren  
Ronnie Weisman  
Brenda Williams  
Laurie Wyatt

to memorialize Marilyn Weisgram

## WILD FLOWERS:

Deborah Reynolds  
to honor mother & father, Juanita & Wilson Reynolds

## OTHER GIFTS AND MEMORIALS:

Nick & Virginia Puzak  
to memorializing Rene J. Hartubise

Dory & Bud Rose:

Birthday gift to: Betty Katz  
Anniversary gift to: Ronnie & Larry Greenberg

## Richter Honors SCLP Major Donors at Rotary Meeting

John Richter, a volunteer fund raiser for Save Cedar Lake Park, organized a program on bicycling for the November 12 Minneapolis Rotary meeting. Dan Buettner, leader of the 1992-93 "Africatrek" cycling expedition was the guest speaker. Major donors to Save Cedar Lake Park were honored on the program along with several major volunteers.

## The Cedar Lake Park Master Plan

# A Vision To Nature: Living In Harmony With Nature

by Dan Dailey

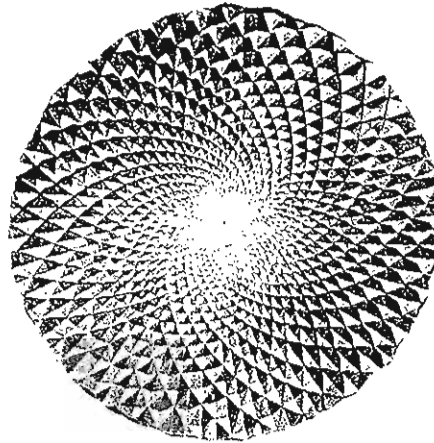
The landscape design team of Jones & Jones and Richard Haag & Associates struck a responsive chord on November 22 when they met with the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) to propose a core concept for development of the nature park and associated trails.

The design team had been requested to present a unifying concept that could integrate developments in the park and along the trails through the next one hundred years.

In order to understand the relationship of the park to trail developments, the design team asked the citizens to imagine the way a spider plant or a wild strawberry plant grows. From a central mother plant, long thin rhizomes shoot out, and along these rhizomes grow smaller versions of the mother plant. The design team described this as a good physical model for how the nature park can introduce wild green spaces and wildlife habitat into other parts of the city.

But what of the mother plant, the nature park itself? The design team found its inspiration for a unifying concept in the spiral forms which can be found at every level of creation from the atomic to the cosmic. They found the best expression of the concept in the pattern in which seeds grow in the head of a sunflower or the way that spines grow on a globe cactus. In these examples two spiral forms form a regular, harmonious, criss-crossing pattern.

This double spiral combining opposites into an harmonious whole is symbolic of the central purpose of our park — to discover how we people can live in harmony with nature and one another.



The CAC was delighted with the presentation, which included many details of how specific areas of the park would be developed. "I can see the team has listened, and that they caught the essence of what our project is about," said one CAC member. "This is the first time I have felt connected to the plan," said another. "Now I'm clear about what is going to happen in the Spring, and I feel it's in competent hands," said a third.

This last comment was in response to a description by the design team of the kind of activity that will take place in the north meadow when

ground is broken for the Cedar Lake Trail in the spring. In April, construction is scheduled to begin on the first leg of the trail, which will eventually extend from Highway 100 to the Mississippi River.

Friends of Cedar Lake Park should be aware that many volunteer opportunities will open up in the park in the spring. Now that the master plan is nearing completion, we can all look forward to seeing improvements take place in the park itself.

Such activity is, I believe, desperately needed for the health of our city. The news in recent weeks of environmental destruction and social and family violence provides graphic proof of the madness our culture is spawning. It is my belief that we are creating an urgently needed antidote that can remedy many of our culture's most serious problems. The antidote will work because our efforts and values are grounded in nature and the natural order.

As we enter this season of renewal and new light, may we all renew our dedication and commitment to nurturing nature in our beautiful new park at Cedar Lake. Spring is just around the corner!

### Neighborhood Masterplanning Meetings

Watch for notification of a Masterplan Meeting in your neighborhood in January.

## Raptor Report

10th year of Osprey reintroduction into the Twin Cities Area

A total of 18 young were relocated from nests in Cass, Crow Wing and Hubbard Counties to hack boxes at Cedar, Medicine and Vadnais Lakes. As in past years, young birds were relocated between the ages of 5 and 7 weeks.

In addition to releasing hacked Ospreys, 15 birds were wild-produced by 7 mated pairs from nests located in other lake areas of the metro area.



The Cedar Lake hack site had two boxes this year. In mid-July 6 birds arrived from Park Rapids/Crosby and Pine River areas.

One box was opened July 30 and the other August 2.

Sadly, the orange winged bird was discovered at Hidden Beach. Apparently, it was killed by an owl.

The last bird was seen at the site September 2, so the scaffolding was removed the next day.

Hopefully the males will return in three years, bringing mates from Central America; so we can watch wild-born Osprey at Cedar Lake.

## NSP Does SCLP PSAs

Did you see a public service announcement (PSA) about Save Cedar Lake Park (SCLP) on television? In October, Northern States Power (NSP) ran 75 PSAs in which Janet Anderson, NSP, thanked SCLP volunteers for their environmental work.

The NSP production crew worked miracles. The PSA looked like the sun was shining. No one knows that Dan Dailey, Laurie Lundy, George Puzak, Henry Rauenhoust and Carol White stood in the rain from 9:15 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

Thanks, NSP, for the PSA.

FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING  
See, Hear and Talk about  
*Masterplanning*  
January 27, 1993  
7 - 9:30 p.m.  
Jones Harrison Residence  
3700 Cedar Lake Avenue,  
Minneapolis  
(southwest end of Cedar Lake)

(612) 377-9522

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

Save Cedar Lake Park

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## Attention: all Save Cedar Lake Park Members

by Sara Mushlitz

Another year is drawing to a close and once again we are asking you to remember SAVE CEDAR LAKE PARK in your year-end gift giving.

1993 was a year in which a number of worthwhile individuals and organizations requested donations. The election and water quality initiatives remain in my mind and in my check-book. Precisely because so many of us found ourselves writing checks, SCLP had second thoughts about conducting the planned canvassing of our neighborhoods. However, the vision of SCLP continues and, as you can read in this newsletter, it has been a busy year and the organization is indeed achieving its goals.

SCLP does not charge a membership fee. We count on members for moral and philosophical support first. To all our members we owe another round of applause for helping to keep the vision alive.

Donations, however, have always been welcome. About half of our 2500 members have been able to contribute in the past. We need you again. We need others to join with us, at any level. We need you - NOW.

The annual operating budget of the organization is \$40,000. Operating dollars go towards communication, education, planning and volunteer and project coordination, which includes a full-time coordinator. Your donations will help keep our bare-bones administrative expenses covered.

## SCLP Receives Much Needed Office Equipment

The seeds were planted a couple of years ago. Seeds indicating that our citizens' organization needed office equipment. Like all seeds, these needed time to mature and produce. And, produce they did.

Since the last newsletter we have received a computer and printer, a copy machine and a fax. Seeds for the computer started out with a grant proposal to the Environmental Support Center in Washington, D.C. in cooperation with Apple Computer, Inc. They award computers to 50 deserving nonprofit environmental groups.

The copy machine is the fruit of the '93 Earth Walk chaired by Al Singer (see related article)

Lastly, a fax machine sprouted from seeds blown by the wind. Morton Phillips nurtured the seeds and presented us with a fax. Thanks!