Along the Kenilworth Trail just south of the 21st Street railroad crossing, many trees and shrubs have been marked with blue paint or white flags. These markings are the first step in a planned restoration project led by the Cedar Lake Park Association (CLPA).

The Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA), owner of the 700-foot-by-100- to-120-foot tract, will use these markings when invasives are removed from the site later this spring. Blue paint identifies non-native invasives such as Siberian Elm, honeysuckle and buckthorn that will be taken out. White vinyl flags mark highly desirable native vegetation that will be preserved. On the Kenilworth Trail site, this group includes black walnut, hackberry, choke cherry, red berried elder, a few red cedars and bur oaks and a very special native juniper. The remaining unmarked trees and shrubs, primarily American Elm and Box Elder, are native “pioneer species”—those that first invade a degraded site. Though they are not targeted for removal, they are so plentiful that they do not need special protection.

In March, with the assistance of a professional forester/landscape designer and a professional prairie restoration expert, the CLPA put together a preliminary plan for developing the Kenilworth Trail site. The plan designates the southern part of the site and the most northern part closest to the trail as open prairie. The rest of the northern part near the trail would be prairie savanna. There would be a woody area near Thomas Avenue, which abuts the back of the site. As restoration moves forward, the CLPA will work carefully to preserve native vegetation already on the site.

Now that marking has been completed, the next step is to remove the invasives, treat the stumps to prevent re-sprouting, and mulch the removed trees and shrubs on site. This work can begin as soon as we have raised funds to complete the restoration process. Once the invasive trees and shrubs have been removed, we will follow a sequence of professionally sound site preparation practices before planting:

- The site will be allowed to green up.
- Herbicides will be applied to kill the new crop of undesirable invasives before they go to seed.
- The site will lie fallow at least 30 days.
- A “controlled burn” will be used to remove dead vegetation and kill new unwanted trees.
- The soil will be disked and tilled and then raked to create a firm, smooth seedbed.

We plan to re-seed the site with native prairie grasses, with shorter ones near the trail and taller ones farther back. We will mulch planted areas to protect germinating seeds and control erosion. If funding

continued on page 6
By Keith Prussing, CLPA President

There are so many things going on it is hard to know where to start. It has been a sweet spring in Cedar Lake Park. The ice went out April 6. There have been bright, blue days, and rain has been falling. Earth Day with the kids from Lake Harriet Community School was a delight.

Our efforts to push the off-road CLRT alignment to the Mississippi River are succeeding. The pending federal financial support provides a platform to continue to engage private and public interest. We think that it may take $1.5 million more, depending on the price of land acquisition. Hennepin County has been very helpful and generous in offering staff time to do key surveying and engineering studies. 90% of the corridor is county land.

We recently received a significant donation from the Minneapolis Audubon Society. Thank you to all the people who value the park for the wonderful birding.

The Association is looking for a new Treasurer. If you are interested, let us know. The position is open because Steve Durrant, treasurer for the past five years, is moving to Portland, Oregon, with Chris and Peter. We will miss them. Steve has been a key player in all that we do. Characteristically, he has agreed to continue to participate from the West Coast. You may remember that Steve was the lead designer for the Cedar Lake Trail.

Check us out on the web at www.cedarlakepark.org. The site holds the story of all that has happened since 1988, when a few people who met around a kitchen table decided to Save Cedar Lake Park. We could think of no better way to preserve our story, and make it available to the community.

I continue to be amazed at the generosity of the community in support of our vision. Thank you.

If you would like an electronic version of this newsletter instead of paper, drop us an email at info@cedarlakepark.org.

By Steve Durrant, Treasurer

Cedar Lake Park Association gratefully acknowledges recent contributions in the form of money, stocks, materials, volunteer time and in-kind services, memorials and gifts. Since the last Update, contributions have been received from:

Mary Adair
Ronald Adams
Anonymous
Paul & Dell Askegaard
Arlene Baker
Lawrence Baker
J & R Bartholomew
David Borcherdt
Arthur Bowron
Carol Chomskey & Steven Liss
Katherine Low & Joseph Cieslowski
C.G. Cohen
Tasso Coin
Brad Colehour
Jean Conroy
Bob & Marlee Cramer
David & Vanessa Dayton
Lynn & Bob Dixon
Dr Aina Dravnieks
Pere Dworsky
Thomas Erickson
David & Nancy Erpestad
Dale Falk
Mark & Lucy Rose Fischer
Nancy Gibson & Ron Sternal
Kathleen Fix & Steven Gove
Arlene Fried
PM & Barbara Gilfillan
Charles Hall
Sally Helde
David Hill & Martha Cooper
Stephen Huey
Susu Jeffrey
Mark Johnson
Ruth Jones
Phyllis Kahn
Robert Kean
Mary Keithahn
Terry Klepinski
Edward Koscolek
Duane & Mary Alyce Krohnke
Lisa Locken
Vivian Mason
Mary McGee
James & Sara Mickman
Brenner
Minneapolis Audubon Society
Patricia & Donald Moberg
Charles Moore
John & Diana Munger
Nuveen Matching
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Robbie Perl & Richard Garon
Corwin & Doris Peterson
Jay Peterson
Ann & Felix Phillips
David & Melissa Pollack
Lisa Genis & Steve Pratt
Rehael Fund—Roger L. Hale/Eleanor L. Hall of the Minneapolis Foundation
Ernest Reinsmith
Louise Ribnick
Tom Rice
John & Martha Richter
Susan Russell
John & Martha Sandbo
Susan Sanger
Michael & Ruthann Schneider
Teresa M. Schneider & Marjorie Cowmeadow
Catherine Scott
Tom & Pat Scott
Alfred Sedgewick
Al Singer
Katherine Steward
Arlene Swanson
Daniel & Laura Swartz
Pat Thompson & Mark Simonson
Laura Tiffany & Edward Foster
D’Ann Topoluk
Neil Trembley
Ron & Mary Werner
Bob & Marlee Wheeler

Thanks to Volunteers

John Richter
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David Klopp
D’Ann Topoluk
Meredith Montgomery
Keith Prussing
Dan Steinberg
Ned Foster
Mary McGee
Dorene Scriven
Paisley Svensson
Fay Atchison
Steve Durrant
Richard Arey
Peter Durrant
The students and parents of Lake Harriet Community School
Denver Kaufman
Neil Trembley
Jim McPherson
Janet Larson
Yara Borisov
Marcia Youngman
Becky Rehl
Beth Henty
Greg Lecker
Cub Scout Dens 175 and 192

New Website Content

The CLPA web site continues to grow! This spring we are adding individual project pages to the site. These pages contain photos and more information about park-related news and activities. New project pages include:

• Memorial Cedar Grove
• CLRT (Trail to the River)
• Cedar Lake Parkway Bridge
• CLPA Restoration Projects
• Saint Louis Park Trail News

Links to project pages can be found at www.cedarlakepark.org/News (see Park Issues and News box).
U.S. Congressional Support for CLR Trail to the River

"Congressman Martin Sabo deserves tremendous credit for providing $3 million for the Cedar Lake Trail in the House Transportation Bill, which thus assures its inclusion in the final legislation. I salute Martin and everyone in the Cedar Lake Park Association, who have worked so hard to make this important project a reality."

—Senator Mark Dayton

"To Cedar Lake Park Friends,

I’m especially pleased to be in a position to support important quality of life projects like the Cedar Lake Trail. Throughout my career, I’ve made it a priority to protect and preserve green space, and increase access for all Minnesotans. As part of this commitment, I’ve been working to complete the Cedar Lake Trail.

Recently, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 3550, a bill to reauthorize the nation’s highway and transit programs for six years. In this bill, I directed $3 million in federal funds for the Cedar Lake Trail project. The Cedar Lake Trail will provide residents with increased access to some of our community’s greatest natural and cultural treasures. It will also complement our area’s multi-modal transportation system."

—Martin Olav Sabo 5th District

"As mayor of St. Paul, I saw first-hand the positive impact the development of pedestrian and bike trails had on the St. Paul community. The Cedar Lake Trail will have the same positive impact on the Minneapolis community, encouraging Minnesotans to use environmentally-friendly modes of transportation and enjoy the natural beauty of our state."

—Senator Norm Coleman

"I have worked to promote bicycling and livable communities in Minnesota and throughout the nation.

Working with my friend and colleague Representative Martin Sabo, I was especially pleased to support the Cedar Lake Park and Trail project to help fulfill the vision of dedicated Minneapolis residents to link this park to the city and the river. You can count on my strong and continued support for this exciting trail project."

—Representative Jim Oberstar, 8th District

Above: The only private property to be acquired for the trail to the river is located within the rectangular shaded area. This area is shown enlarged in the next image.

Below: The pink area on the top of the diagonal is owned by Burlington Northern Railroad. The purple underside of the diagonal is owned by the Colonial Warehouse group.

Looking east along the corridor, toward the North 2nd Street bridge. The private property to be acquired is to the right, between the tracks and the Colonial Warehouse building above. (See area marked by an asterisk in the top photo.)
The prairie areas in the park were recently burned to inhibit the growth of sweet clover and other exotics, and to enhance the conditions for native prairie grasses and wildflowers.

BY KEITH PRUSSING

Ever hear of Tot Lot 40? This small park is located on the west side of Cedar Lake, near West 25th Street and Drew Avenue South in south Bryn Mawr. Thanks to a hard-working group of neighbors, MPRB has allocated over $200,000 to fix drainage problems and install new playground equipment. The park will be renamed, based on the recommendations of an advisory committee. Way to go!!!!

A design committee for the memorial Cedar grove has been formed. Its charge is to formulate design concepts and direction for the next phase of development in the Heart of the Park area. This will include native plantings. Contact us if you would like to participate.

$500,000 has been tentatively included in the state bonding bills under consideration at the Legislature for a pedestrian/bike bridge to go from the Saint Louis Park City Hall over Lake Street/Highway 7. This bridge will make a connection to the Southwest LRT trail. According to the SLP Parks and Rec department, this is part of a plan developed in 1999 along with Three Rivers Park District to connect communities to the regional trail. Elsewhere in SLP near the park, traffic studies are underway in the Cedarhurst neighborhood as part of efforts to enhance liveability and better control the commuter traffic that passes through the neighborhood. Cedarhurst is located directly north of the trail corridor, east of Hwy 100, and south of I-394.

Exotics news from the MPRB horticulturist: the spread of garlic mustard is related to furry animals spreading the seed. So, one byproduct of the many dogs that are running off leash is the spreading of this alien invader. They are not the only furry things, but if the dogs were on leash we could just manage close to the trails with a lot more success.

Remember those Asian ladybugs that are giving our more demure species a bad name because they bite and swarm in such numbers? It turns out that they over-winter exclusively in buckthorn. This is another reason to continue buckthorn control efforts. Other invaders are the earthworms and night-crawlers. These are not native. In yards and gardens they can be beneficial but in the forests they destroy the layer of duff that is needed for young tree growth.

The Bryn Mawr neighborhood is experiencing increasing development pressure. There are several larger parcels available throughout the area that could be utilized for higher density housing. Some of these projects could be multiple stories high. Moreover, if light rail comes to the Cedar Lake/Kenilworth/Southwest Corridor, there may be a drop-and-ride station down in the corridor south of the junction of Penn Ave N and I-394. In addition, a land use plan for the Bassett’s Creek valley, created with citizen involvement, has been completed. This document is a great example of how public-spirited citizens can actively participate in the vision for their communities, rather than reacting to plans already in motion.

Anwatin Woods is another example. The woods are located south of Glenwood Ave, north of Anwatin Middle School and abutting Wirth Park near the Eloise Butler Wildflower Gardens in western Bryn Mawr. At present, one section is owned privately, and the other by the public schools. On the one hand, citizens have been working for some years to develop a public schools environmental learning center on the site. On the other, there is a proposal for a 17-unit housing development. You can learn more at www.anwatinwoods.org, and www.npcr.org/neighborhoods/mpls/brynmawr.html.

In April, students from the University of Minnesota Urban Wildlands class came to the park for a guided tour. They had been using Cedar Lake Park as a case study in their class on how to save, nurture and restore lands in the urban core. We had a great time, and they were amazed to experience the wonders of the park. It is quite impressive when one experiences in one morning all of the things that have been done over all these years, as well as the 140 years of development and radical change that has taken place in the area. We have offered these walks for many years to continue on page 6

CLRT Access

Saint Louis Park will create new access to Cedar Lake in the western extension area, near Highway 100. Sue Sanger, SLP City Councilwoman, states, “I’m pleased to report that in response to many requests, St. Louis Park has initiated planning for a new access ramp to the Cedar Lake Trail, near the south end of the pedestrian bridge at Cedar Lake Road. This will permit safe access to the trail from adjacent neighborhoods. Preliminary design work, with continued input from neighborhood residents, will occur this year, and construction is tentatively planned for 2005.”

The access will be to the right, with a ramp descending west toward the viewer.
City Transforms Cedar Lake Parkway Bridge

The old Cedar Lake Parkway bridge is gone, and the project appears to be on schedule for completion in August. Presently, traffic is crossing on the pedestrian bridge while the new auto bridge is being constructed. While the removal of the old bridge is mourned by some, the new complex will result in safer conditions for non-motorists, as well as more fluid traffic flow. There will be a new entrance to the park and trail, and a new paved path from the bridge to Ewing Avenue along Cedar Lake Road. Minneapolis Public Works has some fine graphics and pictures at: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/clp/cedarlakebridge/.

Signs of Spring in the Park

BY MARY Mcgee

For the seventeenth year Eastern bluebirds have nested in the area of the Cedar Lake Trail. Volunteers Kurt and Barb Klussendorf report a nest with five eggs in the birds favorite box. Young are expected to hatch around May 10, so one can watch the parents busily feeding insects for the next few weeks until fledging, when the young fly off on their own.

Other spring highlights are the migration of songbirds and waterfowl. Among them have been loons and a great mature bald eagle. Up to a dozen woodducks have been seen at one time feeding on corn spread on the ground at McGee’s in the south park area. One evening they were joined by a wild turkey.

Two red foxes have successfully eluded the many off-leash dogs and denned along the Kenilworth Trail. Occasionally in the evening one can see an opossum or flying squirrel.

At the Cedar Lake wetland, there is a variety of activity—nesting redwing blackbirds and geese; great blue herons and white egrets feeding; and swallows swooping after insects.

This is certainly a time to rejoice in the wonders of nature.

A spring duck swims near the cattail marsh. Other birds and animals in the park include: opossum, foxes, squirrels, rabbits, owls, hawks, deer, mink, fish, badgers, pheasants, frogs, egrets, muskrats and myriad song birds.
Prairie/Woodland Restoration Project

continued from page 1

allows, we will plant “plugs” of wild flowers later this year; otherwise this step can be postponed until another season.

The HCRRA has agreed to bear the cost of cutting, stump treatment and mulching. Additional costs for landscaping, further site preparation and planting total approximately $7,125. Our forestry consultant/landscape design professional will supervise volunteer planting projects, providing opportunities for volunteers to learn about prairie restoration and native plant species.

The CLPA is currently raising funds to cover the costs of the prairie/prairie savanna restoration work on the Kenilworth site. Already underway, this high-visibility project is important to the neighborhood. We hope that the community will respond generously.

Project in the Park

continued from page 4

individuals and groups. If you are interested, please contact us. We will be doing a walk with the Minnesota Native Plant Society later this year; otherwise this step can be postponed until another season.

Projects in the Park

continued from page 4

Hello.

I bike commute from south Minneapolis to Dinkytown as often as possible. A link between Cedar Lake Trail and the River would be a most welcome addition to the cycling paths in town. What can you tell me about the timeline and status of that project? And if I could scrounge some cash for a donation, who would get that?

And the response:

The Cedar Lake Trail will be extended east to Washington Ave from its present location at 12th and Royalston, likely in 2004, certainly in 2005. Funding is in place, and everyone agrees on the alignment.

The alignment from Washington Ave. to W. River Road, favored by the city, is funded, and should go in sometime in 2005. This route will utilize a ramping bridge, to come up, out of the corridor, then run along 4th Avenue North, behind a berm. It will cross three intersections in the quickly populating North Loop area, and cross W. River Parkway.

Our preferred alignment is to stay in the railroad corridor to the river. It would join the river trails via a bridge over or along the parkway. No road crossings. We imagine that this project will cost around $4.5 million, depending on land acquisition costs. Presently $3 million is earmarked in the pending federal transportation bill, due to the efforts of Cong. Sabo, and others in the Minnesota delegation. Hennepin County owns 90 percent of the proposed route, and has been very supportive at the commissioner level, as well as with staff engineering time. 2006 may be the year.

If you want to support these efforts with a donation, the Cedar Lake Park Association has been the private, nonprofit entity that has been supporting the trail since its inception in 1995. I am glad to hear that you utilize the trails.
Reflections in the Memorial Cedar Grove

BY NEAL G.C. TREMBLEY

I went to see the bench. It was a sparkling winter morning. The snow crunched under my feet as I trod down the meandering trail through Cedar Lake Park. I turned off the path—making tracks in the new snow—and scuttled my way towards a spiral of cedar trees. I had helped to plant the trees and had participated in the blessing of the Cedar Grove.

Eight years ago, sage smoke had wafted over the part new-age, part Native-American ceremony. Speakers commemorated loved ones for whom the grove was dedicated. Lakota drummers beat a solemn rhythm as holy water from the Mississippi River and Lake Itasca was poured on the ground around the newly planted saplings. As I neared the evergreen trees that day, memories of that ceremony, and of my mother, stirred within me.

But it was not the cedars I had come to see. My journey was to find the newly installed bench, a memorial in rock we had waited and worked so long for. Eagerly my eyes swept through the low trees and hedges of sumac, searching for this latest offspring in the park. Suddenly, as I moved toward the grove, it appeared to me.

I skirted around the edge and entered the woods between the prairie and the lake. For a moment I lost sight of it; the bench was so low to the ground that the young cedars and sumac that surrounded it concealed it. Nervously I moved forward, anxious to catch sight of it again. As I wound my way into the heart of the Cedar Grove, I was vexed that I could not locate it. Then it showed itself to me again.

I knew the bench’s shape and size. It had been designed to be a simple yet compelling piece: a 12-inch slab of dolomite sandstone, slightly tapered at one end, resting on two rectangular legs. I had helped decide on the rock’s color: a soft buff. But, even though I’d seen drawings, I was not prepared for the strength and beauty of its actual form.

As I reached the bench, I took off my gloves and rubbed my hands across the curve of smooth front edge. I read the inscription etched on it: “Cedar Lake Park Memorial Grove 1996.” The top of the bench was covered with a thin layer of freshly fallen snow. I cleared the snow away and sat down on the bench for the first time.

And it spoke: “I am not of this place yet I enhance it. My color is not like that around me. It is more a reflection of the prairie beyond, yet I attend to the beauty of my surroundings. I am low-slung like the ground from which I was sculpted. Solid and graceful, rough hewn with smooth edges, I am of nature, yet shaped to please the eye and evoke memories of those honored here. My form serves as a place to rest, a place to remember, a place to become.”

The rock spoke more to me: of this I cannot say, for it spoke to my heart of my childhood and my future. It was a language that was personal to me alone, for me to hear.

As I left the place—this new place, this sacred place—I thought about the words I use so often to describe my role as steward of the park: To Nurture Nature. Then I had an epiphany: I do not nurture nature, I nurture me.

City of Lakes Loppet 2004

Volunteer hands a racer an energizing drink.

Skiers sweep through the Cedar-Isles Canal.

It was a real winter in the park. Great skating all over the lake, and good skiing and snowshoeing for several weeks. And the clear, cold quiet… The ice went out on April 6.
CLPA Update, Spring/Summer 2004
If you’re seeing this CLPA Update for the first time, contact us if you want to be added to our mailing list.

CALENDAR

CLPA Steering Committee
Second Monday of each month, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Kenwood Recreation Center. You’re invited to participate.

Baby birds come out
May and June

A Wirth While Weekend
June 18–20, Lyndale Farmstead Park (3900 Bryant Avenue South). A celebration of Minneapolis park history.

Summer Solstice
On or about June 21

Minnesota Native Plant Society Nature Walk
Summer—TBA

Stroll and Roll
September 18 at the Jones Harrison Residence

Prairie Planting
September—TBA

Autumnal Equinox
On or about September 21

Your support is important—
All donations are tax-deductible.*

* To the extent allowed by law

Cedar Lake Park Association Mission

1. Create and nurture a park at Cedar Lake with a thriving nature preserve and connecting trails and greenways.

2. Provide opportunities for people to learn to live in community with nature and one another.

3. Continue to foster citizen leadership and private involvement in the development and management of the park and trails.

4. Support similar efforts throughout the metro area and beyond.