President’s Message

The board of the Friends of Loring Park would like to thank all of the garden volunteers who have come to our twice-a-month gardening days. All the gardens in the park are evidence of the dedication and hard work of volunteer and MPRB gardeners.

I would like to give special recognition to volunteer Ray Bell for the efforts that have made the garden across from Booth Manor look beautifully lush. He has taken over responsibility for this garden, and has even paid for some of the plants on his own.

In regard to the replacement of the Loring Park tennis courts, there is bad news. At this time, the project is on hold because construction bids opened up on August 15, 2019 came in at double the allotted budget. The project may have to be re-bid. The neighborhood has spent many years trying to get this recreation project going, and it is discouraging to look at an uncertain future for this project we have worked so hard to accomplish.

There is, however, progress with the Berger Fountain Reconstruction. Members of the Berger Fountain Workgroup Committee (BFWG) met with MPRB planning staff about how to proceed with the project. As a result, the committee will be developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for project management services, with MPRB staff providing technical assistance. The project manager will develop plans and cost estimates to rehabilitate the fountain, construct a new plaza, and create the artistically-inspired winter cover.

Fundraising for the improvements has already begun: the “Bucks for Berger” campaign was launched by Mary Bujold, BFWG chair, at the Pride Festival and the Loring Park Art Fair this summer.

Fundraising will begin in earnest when we get firmer project cost estimates from the project manager.

Remember, to get up to date information on park events visit www.loring-park.org, or visit our Facebook page. Have a wonderful autumn and winter. See you in our beautiful Loring Park!

—Dave Hile, FLP President

Summer Highlights in Loring Park: Fun, Food, Film, and Community!

As we bid farewell to summer, let’s take a look back at a just few of the season’s program highlights.

Over 325 people enjoyed canoeing on Loring Pond this summer. Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Neighborhood Naturalist staff provided canoes and instruction to participants every Monday from 5:00-7:00PM. People of all ages and skill levels enjoyed paddling around the pond, some of whom were first time canoeers. We received numerous positive comments and will bring the program back again next summer.

The MPRB partnered with Minneapolis Public Schools’ Nutrition Center to provide free summer meals to youth ages 18 and younger at recreation centers throughout the city. Loring Park served dinner from 4:00-6:00, Monday through Thursday from June 10th – August 30th. A total of 1,345 dinners were served to youth during the summer session.

Outdoor yoga was a hit again this summer. Classes were held next to the pond, which provided a serene setting. Mats, blocks and belts were provided. Each session averaged about 8-10 yogis, and there was a total of 121 total participants for the summer.

Outdoor Movie Nights are back at Loring Park! Best in Show opened with Loring’s first ever dog show. Prizes were awarded for waggiest tail, best walk, most talented trick, best howl and best in show. FLOWTUS provided live musical entertainment before the showing of Drop Dead Gorgeous. Attendees also enjoyed crown making, a photo booth and the Big Bell Ice Cream truck. Both nights saw large crowds and were a huge success.

—Julie Sandin, Loring Park Director
The Ecology of Loring Pond

Loring Pond was once a wetland and pond lined with tamarack, with water stained brown by a floating mat of moss. A big transition occurred in the 1880s, when the wetland was converted into an open-water pond at the direction of landscape architect and designer of the Minneapolis Grand Rounds parks, Horace Cleveland. A trajectory of additional changes has continued to the current time, including disturbing watershed drainage patterns by building streets in the neighborhood and the Lowry Hill Tunnel, draining the pond in 1997 to place a clay liner around its edge to stop water from leaking out, changing the nutrient regime of the watershed, and an onslaught of invasive species.

In its native state, nutrient additions into the water in Loring Pond were low; any nutrients from overland flow during heavy rain in the watershed were absorbed by the surrounding oak savanna with tall grasses and hundreds of plants species throughout the park. A ring of shrubby vegetation lined the edge of the pond, likely with dogwoods, poison sumac, alders, and willows. A spongy moss mat floated in the water, covering the entire north arm and ringing the south arm. Tamarack and ash trees grew in the moss. It was a wetland complex of many vegetation types, with a balance of nature set by low nutrient levels, and constantly fluctuating water levels that never allowed any one group of wetland plant species to take over.

Loring Pond today is out of balance in several ways. Overfertilization is perhaps biggest issue—hence the condition of the pond is referred to as ‘eutrophic’. Artificial sources of nutrients are plentiful, for example, the many dogs living in the neighborhood, and planted tree species with nutrient-rich leaves compared to the original bur oak. So called ‘rain bombs’ that result from a warming climate cause street flooding and wash nutrients from throughout the watershed into the pond. Sediment at the pond bottom is full of phosphorus that can come back into solution when the water is warm during summer.

Water level in the pond no longer fluctuates with the seasons and wet or dry years; these natural fluctuations are very important to ecological function of wetlands. Instead, nowadays there is a flash of high water for a few hours after heavy rain and then water level returns to exactly the same level as before, set by the outlet in the southwest corner of the pond.

Conditions today are steady water levels, and stagnant water (neither much flow of water nor large waves) at high nutrient levels. These are ideal conditions for overgrowth of invasive hybrid cattails and several native duckweed species. This was especially evident after the mid-July 2019 rain bomb that filled Loring park with water for several hours, that was followed by duckweed overgrowth within a few weeks. The pond is now a novel ecosystem made of invasive and native species—invasive species (in addition to hybrid cattail) include Chinese mystery snail, curly leaf pondweed and goldfish in the water and Canada thistle on the shore. In addition, the pond has impaired status for high chloride concentrations, due to use of road and sidewalk salt to melt ice.

It is tricky to restore balance to the nutrient budget and vegetation of urban ponds. Can we take excess nutrients out of the pond as fast as they enter, or even better, faster than they enter for a few years, returning the pond to a more natural nutrient status? Can we restore native plants that will compete with the hybrid cattails long term? Yes, but active management will be required to accomplish these two goals—not enough is known to set up the ecosystem to take care of itself in a downtown urban setting. We will have to mine the nutrients out of the pond by skimming the duckweed and removing the resulting organic material from the watershed. We can’t stop the rain bombs that are a part of climate change, and they will continually counteract our efforts to balance the nutrient cycle. Similarly, the native plants around the shoreline will require help by removing hybrid cattails every summer, although reducing the nutrient contents of the pond will also help, because cattails are high-nutrient specialists.

It is amazing how resilient the native plants and wildlife have been through all of the changes in Loring Pond over the last 140 years. The native plants never completely disappeared, and wildlife species including egrets, herons, turtles, ducks, and geese have continued to use the pond. They can continue to thrive if we can learn to restore balance to this ecosystem.

–Lee E. Frelich, Director, University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology

Visit us on the web at www.friendsofloringpark.org
See the latest photos! Follow us on Facebook: Friends of Loring Park
In the Berger Fountain beds, an elegant classic combination of red roses and purple catmint have replaced the overgrown perennials. The new plants were chosen for ease of care and their long bloom period.

Miracle on the Hudson rose (Rosa 'Miracle on the Hudson') features dark red, semi double 4” flowers with a yellow eye. Foliage emerges deep red and changes to a rich, glossy green, offering continuous blooms all season long. It was named in honor Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger, the crew, and passengers of U.S. Airways Flight 1549, which landed on the Hudson River in 2009.

Walker’s Low catmint (Nepeta x faassenii ‘Walkers Low’) is covered in lovely lavender-blue flower spikes from late spring to fall. If the flowers don’t draw you in, the mint-scented, finely textured foliage will. Drought tolerant, low maintenance, and a pollinator magnet! And, as the name implies—cats love this plant too. Meow!

Many thanks to Loring Park garden volunteer Betty Heefner, Conservation Corps MN and YouthCARE volunteers for assisting with the garden renovation.

—Sherry Brooks, MPRB Horticulturist & Coordinator
Garden & Environmental Volunteers

Out With the Old, In With the New: Berger Fountain Beds Get a Redo

Volunteer Betty Heefner and Minnesota Conservation Corps participants take a quick break.

The gardening season isn’t over yet!

Summer may be winding down, but the gardens still need care. Help to get the beds prepared for autumn visitors and winter’s long sleep. Newcomers are warmly welcomed, and tools and instruction are provided.

Please join us at 9AM on the remaining gardening days: Sat., 9/14, Weds., 9/25, and finally on Sat., 10/12 with garden work and our end of year potluck at 11.

Bring a tasty dish to share, main entree is provided.

Behind the Scenes: Changes in Park’s Garden of the Seasons

The Garden of the Seasons is comprised of three unique concentric layers. While the outer and central layers of the garden are focused on displays of greenery for the bulk of the year, the middle layer, known as the Wheel of Color, is just that, a series of evolving color stories. The Wheel of Color consists of eight wedges flowing from warm whites around to pinks, reds, oranges, yellows, blues, violets, and connecting again with cool white tones. As the garden has aged, many beds began to show some wear and tear. Paver restraint has moved over time, soil levels have built up, and certain plants have spread out of their desired areas while other have been lost.

Through this aging process, the story shown through this display of color has become muddled. The project of resetting the Wheel began in the Fall of 2018 with the red and yellow wedges, followed by the violet and warm white wedges in the Spring of 2019. The plan is to continue to work on two beds each shoulder season until all eight beds have been rehabbed.

The rehab work includes removing overgrown or aggressive plants, transplanting plants to create stronger color palettes and groupings, lowering the soil line to improve water retention, and adjusting paver restraint placement. New plants are being added as well as dividing and transplanting of many existing ones.

The new plantings are strongly focused varying tones of a single color in each bed. Once the base color palette is established, pops of contrast will be added in seasons to come. These contrasting colors will reflect the original garden design intent and add some needed dimension to the new design.

The horticulture team with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and Friends of Loring Park continues to welcome plant suggestions and ideas as we work through these improvements.

—Kaitlin E. Ryan, MPRB Horticulture Supervisor

YouthCARE volunteers made the Berger Fountain beds shine this summer. Volunteers make our gardens grow!
Donate a brick…
to the Garden of the Seasons. The ongoing personalized brick campaign seeks to replace the asphalt outer walkway of the Garden of the Seasons with a beautiful brick pathway.

$75 donation—a 4x8 brick
with three lines of print (14 characters and blank spaces per line)

$120 donation— 8x8 brick
with six lines of print (12 characters and blank spaces per line)

Special characters (bell, star, heart) are available for $10 per symbol. Custom logos: call for quote.

Sponsor a native tree...
Friends of Loring Park is working closely with the MPRB to support the master plan that will create a vibrant canopy of hardy native trees in Loring Park.

$250 donation

Dedicate a Bench
to a friend, a loved one, your company or family, or perhaps to remember a special event. Your dedication or message (up to 37 characters) can be forged on the cast iron armrest.

Bench with personalization — $3,000
Anonymous sponsorship — $2,500

Please consider a tax-deductible donation
For further information, call 612-673-5395
or visit www.friendsofloringpark.org
Support Loring Park Today!

Yes! I’d like to support Loring Park with my tax deductible donation!
Bench Sponsorship: $3000 with inscription, $2500 without inscription
Inscription - 37 characters including blank spaces:

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Bench is being donated ___ in honor of ___ in memory of:

4x8 Brick Donation: $75.00
Inscription - 3 lines, 14 characters per line including blank spaces:

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Brick is being donated ___ in honor of ___ in memory of:

8x8 Brick Donation: $120
Inscription - 6 lines, 12 characters per line including blank spaces:

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Brick is being donated ___ in honor of ___ in memory of:

Awakening Notecards ($12.00 per 5 pack) Qty: ___ Total: ___
Loring Scenes Notecards ($12.00 per 5 pack) Qty: ___ Total: ___
Loring Scenes Postcards ($12.00 per 10 pack) Qty: ___ Total: ___

To sponsor the trees or perennials for the park entrance improvements, please call 612 673-5395.

Your Name _________________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________________
Telephone ___________________ E-mail ________________________

Please send notification of my gift to (name and address):
_________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________

Total Donation enclosed: ________

Mail this form with your check to: Friends of Loring Park, P.O. Box 52074, Mpls, MN 55402

Mission The Friends of Loring Park was formed to develop financial and programming support for Loring Park. Its purpose is to implement the vision and master plan adopted by the Loring Park community and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The Friends of Loring Park, a tax-deductible Minnesota nonprofit organization, administers the Loring Park Restoration Fund.

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Morning Meditation in The Garden of the Season

We’re still here, still sitting, still going strong. It’s always the same, always different, always a pleasure.

Please come join our group if you are so inclined. No experience at meditation is necessary, and instruction is available upon request. The park speaks for itself; we just listen.

Everyone is welcome. Great way to start your day. Coffee and comradery included. We’ll be here until Old Man Winter kicks us out in late October. Fridays, 7–7:45AM.

Visit our new website: friendsofloringpark.org! Explore the tabs to learn more about park events, news, donating, volunteering!

—Bill Tresch, Friends Board Member

More Things to Do in Loring Park This Fall

Garden: Please join us at 9AM on the remaining gardening days of the season: Wednesday, September 25, and Saturday October 12. Ready the gardens for winter while enjoying the warmth of community! 

Watch: Pop-Up Movie Nights at the Loring Community Arts Center, Tuesdays at dusk, September 24–October 22.

Shiver with Delight: Halloween bonfire, s’mores, fun. October 31, 6-8PM. Loring Park Community Arts Center.

Sing: With Dan Chouinard, piano; Bob White, violin; and Brian Peterson, guitar. The Sing-along atmosphere is always warm and sunny! All are welcome! Third Tuesdays, 7–8:30 PM, Loring Community Arts Center. Visit www.minneapolisparks.org for more information, or call 612-370-4929!

A Picnic Operetta returns

Sunday Sept 29, 2:00PM

The Clemency of Tito's Tennis Club

A Mozart and 80s New Wave mash-up! Classic arias and duets from Mozart’s La Clemenza di Tito soar across the garden alongside new wave and synth-pop hits by Devo, Berlin, Yaz, and Pat Benatar. Mixed Precipitation is at it again bringing their musical mania, theatricals, topical politics and joy back to Loring for the final performance of their 11th season.

Get this date on to your calendar. Not to be missed. Suggested donation of $15-30. RSVP: mixedprecipitation.org

Soundscape by 2019 Guest Artist Kelsey Bosch, Sept. 26

For several months, artist Kelsey Bosch has been recording the sound environment of Loring Park, exploring time of day, location and season. “I sought to observe the sonic intersection of urban and wild environments—how the rhythms and marks of each meld together into Loring Park’s unique soundscape. I wondered how much of this soundscape goes unheard or unnoticed. What aspects of place are we missing as we walk around connected to headphones in our personal sonic environments?”

Bosch, who is also an adjunct faculty member at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and Moving Image Department Coordinator at the Walker Art Center, notes that she recorded “everything from the drone of traffic and city noise, birds and rain, bits of conversation, music and games, to the unheard sounds under water,” to create the sonic installation that will cap her residency in Loring Park.

Please join us Thursday, September 26 from 6–8:00 PM in the Loring Park Community Arts Building for this remarkable event. Admission is free.