As you can imagine, this is a very difficult article to write considering the present day situation facing our park system, city, country, and world. I’m going to write in some detail about the impact on Loring Park. In addition, Fourth District Park Board Commissioner and President of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Jono Cowgill outlines the broader effects on our parks on page three.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, recreational programming, including upcoming events like Holidazzle, Singalongs, classes, and ice skating, will be cancelled until further notice. Summer passed without the Picnic Operetta, the music festival, art fair, Pride, or resident artist programs. Berger Fountain was not turned on, and the tennis courts were not reconstructed.

Due to the budget crisis in the park system, the park building was closed in March and is probably closed until next spring. The building recreation staff were laid off, and Recreation Director Julie Sandin reassigned to Harrison Park in North Minneapolis. If that were the whole story, it would be a sad one. But many hopeful and helpful things also took place in the park over the summer months.

As Commissioner Jono notes in his article, the Garden of Seasons and the new Community Garden had a very successful season bringing lush growth and beauty to the park. Also, due to the hard work of Board Member Todd Miller and his helpers, the new circle garden west of the footbridge now has over one hundred plants and shrubs, plus hundreds of spring bulbs. Thanks to Board Member Bill Tresch, Morning Meditation, one of a few park programs not cancelled, provided an oasis of peace and community. A concerted effort to remove the invasive Canada thistles from the shoreline of the two lakes will enable native plants to thrive. Special thanks are due to Tom Arneson, Betty Heefner, Miriam Karmel and Bill Tresch for all their hard work on this prickly project.

The garden shed has a new set of cement stairs and will soon have a new roof, and Friends has a new information kiosk in the garden of seasons.

Looking Forward: Cherry Blossoms, Wood Ducks, Flowering Bulbs, and New Play Equipment

In an exciting development, the Soka Gakkai International Minnesota Buddhism Center (SGI-USA) at 12th and Harmon in Minneapolis donated twenty trees for a Cherry Tree Peace Grove colonnade. It is located along the entrance path at the intersection of Willow Avenue and 15th Street. These are the same cherry trees that are on the National Mall in Washington DC. I want to thank Ethan Gelbaum from SGI-USA who proposed this Peace Grove to celebrate the 60th anniversary of World Peace Day on October 2nd. I also want to thank Friends Board Member Lee Frelich and MPRB Director of Forestry, Ralph Sievert for expediting the planting of the Peace Grove when the offer of the tree donation was only received just this summer. Enjoy the blooming colonnade of cherry trees next spring.

It is going to be an amazing spring: Kait Ryan, MPRB Horticulture Supervisor, reports that many new bulbs were planted by volunteers, illustrated below. There are bulbs in the beds from past seasons so expect to see things that aren’t on the list bloom next spring as well. “We will continue to focus on building the spring show each fall by adding bulbs that perennialize and naturalize (and that are more rodent resistant) in hopes that the spring bloom gets bigger, longer, and more colorful each year,” Kait notes. “After winter, park visitors deserve to enjoy as much color in the garden as possible!”

The reconstruction of the playground with all new equipment is in the public input stage. The $360,000 for this project was budgeted some years ago, and it is exciting to see it moving forward. There is also progress being made on the installation of a live camera feed from a wood duck nesting box to a monitor in the park building so that next spring’s hatch can be observed.

The gardens are resting, and will bloom again. Stay well. See you in the spring!

—David Hile, Friends Board President

### BULB PLANTING GUIDE

**LORING PARKS GARDEN OF THE SEASONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm White Wedge</th>
<th>Orange Wedge</th>
<th>Yellow Wedge</th>
<th>Red Wedge</th>
<th>Cool White Wedge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golden Echo Daffodil</td>
<td>Daydream Tulip</td>
<td>Fandant Hyacinth</td>
<td>Amazon Tulip</td>
<td>Drumstick Allium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivory Florida Tulip</td>
<td>Glowy Queen Hyacinth</td>
<td>Autumn Tulip</td>
<td>Best Red Tulip</td>
<td>Tomatoes/Crocus</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Avonish Tulip</td>
<td></td>
<td>Best Purple Tulip</td>
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<td>Beat Yellow Tulip</td>
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</tbody>
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**Looking Forward:**

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—David Hile, Friends Board President
The most recent invasive species in Minnesota, the so-called jumping worms, have made a number of TV, radio and newspaper headlines lately in Minnesota, as well as the *New York Times*. At the end of this article, please see links below to a story by Minnesota Public Radio and a YouTube video from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, both of which aired on August 31, 2020.

Earthworms in the genera *Amynthas* and *Metaphire* native to Japan, South Korea and China, are generally referred to as ‘jumping worms’. Fourteen species are known as invasives in North America north of Mexico. So far three species are known in Minnesota, with *Amynthas agrestis* by far the most common species. Jumping worms differ from the more common European earthworms (highlighted in a previous article in this newsletter), in a number of ways. European earthworms arrived at the time of European settlement, move about slowly, have many species, survive for several years, go deep in the soil (up to six feet for nightcrawlers, *Lumbricus terrestris*), occupy almost all of the soils in Minnesota including lawns, and have spread to the most remote parts of the state because they are used as fishing bait. In contrast, jumping worms arrived within the last 10 years or so, and are thus far mainly found in urban areas, much more active, thrashing around like small snakes when disturbed (hence their name), short lived, dwell only in the top layer of soil, prefer mulched garden beds and shady habitats, and are spread from place to place in mulch.

Jumping worms are annual species—they lay eggs during summer and fall which survive the winter—while the adults die as soon as the soil freezes. In the spring they hatch as tiny thread-like worms that grow rapidly to lengths of about six inches. They occupy the top two inches of the soil, which they turn into granules that look like coffee grounds or cat litter. These granules are detached from one another, so that they can easily wash away during heavy thunderstorm downpours, giving this invasion importance because of the vast potential for soil erosion. Invaded forest slopes are so soft that one can slide downslope on the loose soil. These earthworms have been known to gather around roots of plants during dry spells and cause severe root damage, and wilting or death of plants. This happened to some hostas in Loring Park’s Garden of the Seasons several years ago. Jumping worms apparently outcompete European earthworms. Nightcrawlers—the most visible and emblematic of the several species of European earthworms found in Minnesota—disappear shortly after jumping worms invade.

I am the principal investigator of a study that just got underway in January of this year, funded by the Minnesota Invasive Terrestrial Plants and Pests Center (MITPPC), at the University of Minnesota. The purpose of the research is to learn as much as possible about the incipient jumping invasion in Minnesota. We will answer questions such as: At how many locations do jumping worms already occur? How do they move across the landscape and how fast do they move? What are the long-term consequences of the granules they create on soil health and erosion? How do they impact native plants? What chemicals might reduce their abundance while doing minimal harm to the many native species that are necessary for soil health?

While it will take two to three years to answer these questions more broadly, what I can tell you now is that these invasive earthworms are very common throughout the Twin Cities, and are very abundant on the Loring Greenway, the University of Minnesota Campus, and Minneapolis parks, where they occupy soils in shady areas where the top layer of soil stays cool and moist throughout the summer.

—Lee Frelich, Director,
*University of Minnesota Center for Forest Ecology*


Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, August 31, 2020, “Invasive Jumping Worms: Impacts and Prevention”: tinyurl.com/dnrworms

### Jumping Worms

- Bodies are sleek, dry, smooth and firm
- Thrash when disturbed, snake-like movements
- Mature worm is 4-5” long
- Light colored, smooth band (clitellum) is flush with body, relatively close to head.

### Earthworms

- Bodies are thick, slimy, floppy
- Wiggle and stretch when disturbed.
- Mature worm is 6-8” long
- Reddish or pink clitellum, slightly raised from body.

*Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources*
Everyone is welcome to join. For now, though, it’s back to Zoom.

support in silence. Thank you Loring Park. We’ll be back next spring.

everyone - volunteer, neighbor, park user, or staff member - to collaborate in solving problems we didn’t think we’d have to address. I know that the bonds built during this year will serve us well for years to come as we face new challenges. Creating safe and welcoming public spaces isn’t something that gets checked off a list. It is constant work and care. I thank the Friends of Loring Park and all neighbors for doing their part in that critical work, and I look forward to working shoulder-to-shoulder as we move into 2021.

—Jono Cowgill
District 4 Park Board Commissioner, MPRB President

‘Tis the Season: Morning Meditation in Loring Park’s Garden of the Seasons Continues

What a summer. Morning Meditation has just finished its tenth year in the park, and not surprising to anyone, what an unusual year this has been.

Winter saw us meeting at the Unitarian Society, where Covid ended our stay. We continued sitting on Zoom until finally to returning to Loring (socially distanced) in June, right as the city’s civil disruption broke out. Typically we have sat in the center of the Garden of the Seasons, enjoying nature’s show, but this year, masked and six feet apart, we had to move to open spaces; exposed, the experience changed. Chairs had to be sanitized before use and the chitchat coffee start was muted. People stayed separated. The intimacy of meditation became coupled with urgency. It was an opportunity to leave our apartments. Our interiority became a shared space with the political, the pandemic and consequences, reinforced by the omnipresence of unhoused people. Living up to it’s moniker of being Minneapolis’ “Central Park”, uses are diverse and sometimes at odds with each other. But amidst all of this, I am struck by how now, more than ever, the work of the Friends is so deeply needed.

Perhaps no other park in the fourth district has been so impacted by this confluence of circumstances as Loring Park. Loring Park has weathered the loss of beloved summer rituals like the Pride Festival, been the site of protests for racial justice, and confronted a very visible presence of unhoused people. Living up to it’s moniker of being Minneapolis’ “Central Park”, uses are diverse and sometimes at odds with each other. But amidst all of this, I am struck by how now, more than ever, the work of the Friends is so deeply needed.

In the middle of the pandemic, being able to walk along the brick paths through the meticulous flower gardens or stop by the brand new community garden in the horshoe pits has given me and countless others a sense of calm, a moment of normalcy. No matter if you’re housed or unhoused, protesting injustice or just taking a morning stroll, the beauty of the park is there in its seemingly infinite permutations. It has been a challenging year, to be sure. But looking forward I am hopeful. I am hopeful because I’ve seen how our staff have adapted, creating socially distant programming at the drop of a hat. I am hopeful because I have seen community members stand up, building connections to keep our parks safe. The challenges of this year have required everyone - volunteer, neighbor, park user, or staff member - to collaborate in solving problems we didn’t think we’d have to address. I know that the bonds built during this year will serve us well for years to come as we face new challenges. Creating safe and welcoming public spaces isn’t something that gets checked off a list. It is constant work and care. I thank the Friends of Loring Park and all neighbors for doing their part in that critical work, and I look forward to working shoulder-to-shoulder as we move into 2021.

—Todd Miller, Friends Board Member

The West Circle Garden comes of age

A new Loring Park garden is born! Ladies and gentlemen, may we present the West Circle Garden. Across the bridge from the Garden of the Seasons as you head toward the Walker Art Center, is a young and promising new point of interest and leisure.

Part of the Loring Park Master Plan since the late nineties, you’ll now find the round, symmetrical garden has been fully realized: complete with its own water source, the West Circle Garden boasts a newly installed arched rebar border, as well as four benches from which to leisurely enjoy this magical new setting. Rhododendrons grow beside each bench, along with cranberry bush (donated through a Walker renovation) that blaze red in autumn; blue arctic willow and amber jubilee ninebark; Karl Foerster reed grass and echinacea, along with daffodils planted last fall by volunteers from Daughters of the American Revolution.

With regular watering & weeding, this new addition to our inner city park will look more and more impressive in years to come. I’d like to thank all of the people who stopped to say hello and to comment during this process. And most important, THANK YOU to the MPRB staff and fellow volunteers who helped make this happen. It’s been a labor of love!

—Bill Tresch, Friends Board Member

—Todd Miller, Friends Board Member
Unique Opportunities to Support Loring Park

The Friends of Loring Park works with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to provide financial and volunteer support for Loring Park so that it will continue to serve the recreational and leisure needs of the public.

Friends offers three unique opportunities to honor, remember, or recognize a special person, event or place.

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.

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

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.

$500 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
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:

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

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.

President Pat Davies
David Hile Marcia Stout
Vice President Bill Tresch
Todd Miller Nicholas Deacon
Treasurer Kate E. Olender
Richard Anderson Past Presidents
Ede Holmen Lee Frelich
Secretary Ione Siegel

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Visit Friends on the internet
www.friendsofloringpark.org

Who Knew? The Underground Story of Loring Lake’s Levels

Underneath the paths, trees and grass at Loring Park is a water pipe system and a pump that maintain the water levels of Loring Lake. The water comes from a well that is 218 feet deep, drilled in 1911. The pump reliably pushes out 230 gallons a minute and is turned on by one MPRB employee with special access.

Minnesota’s Department of Natural Resources controls all usage of ground water in the state. Loring Park is allocated 12 million gallons a year. Under certain circumstances, permission to pump more can be requested from the DNR, but being granted more water is not guaranteed. The lake loses water from evaporation, and through the lake bottom itself, which sits perched above the groundwater table.

Figuring out how much to pump is a delicate dance with nature. The goal is to use as little of a non-renewable resource as possible, while keeping water in the channel between the bays. Water is also saved for later in the year, when it is needed to keep mudflats at the edge of the pond covered to prevent new cattails from sprouting. Depending on weather and predicted rainfall, the pump could be run for several days to a week at a time. It takes about three days of pumping to raise the lake level 2 to 3 inches.

Decisions to turn on the pump depend on what is going on in Loring Lake. For example, because cattail seeds sprout on exposed mud, water levels are raised in the fall to try to prevent a resurgence. When the cattail elimination project began, the invasive plants were cut in the fall, and, since being sealed off from air inhibits their future growth, the water level was raised so that the remaining stems were under ice after freeze-up. (It is possible that cattail proliferation began during a time in the late 90s to early 2000s when water levels were low due lack of rainfall.)

The water pumped into the lake emerges from a nearly hidden pipe on the shore by the park building. There once were two pumps. The second one, no longer operable, was by the shuffleboard courts. There is an outlet on the west side of the big bay, and the overflow water goes into a huge underground tunnel, flows beneath downtown, and ends up in the Mississippi River.

Pat Davies,
Friends of Loring Park board member