

PARKSIDE

HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

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in the park



Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads

Heads are turning on Hermann Park's Lake Plaza as delighted visitors catch a glimpse of a dozen 800-pound bronze animal heads gazing across McGovern Lake from McGovern Promenade.

The 12 sculptures by contemporary Chinese artist Ai Weiwei represent the animals of the Chinese Zodiac. The Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads arrived in March and will be on display through early June.

A popular urban park that celebrates Houston's diverse communities, Hermann Park is an ideal location to explore public art, international culture, and history. Since the sculptures' arrival, Park visitors have enjoyed posing for pictures with their particular Zodiac animal after learning about the Chinese Zodiac cycle on temporary signage.

The spectacular, larger-than-life creations (they stand 10 feet tall on their pedestals) are reproductions of 18th century bronze Zodiac animal heads that surrounded a fountain clock at the Old Summer Palace near Beijing, China. In 1860 the heads were looted by French and British troops. Since that time, only seven have been recovered.

Ai Weiwei is renowned worldwide. The acclaimed Zodiac exhibition is on a multi-year international tour. Its stop in Hermann Park is one of only six in the U.S. and is the only place to view them in the South or Midwest. The sculptures have been displayed in Brazil, England, and Taiwan, and will travel to Israel this fall.

The Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads is presented by the Houston Arts Alliance in partnership with the City of Houston, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Hermann Park Conservancy, and AW Asia.



HATS IN THE PARK
see pages 4-5

MISSION

Hermann Park Conservancy is a citizens' organization dedicated to the stewardship and improvement of Hermann Park—today and for generations to come.



from the executive director



Bobby, Margaret, Harry, Caroline, and Phoebe Tudor

Doug Hoerr of Hoerr Schaudt, the landscape architecture firm charged with the Centennial Gardens design, and Doreen Stoller take a

Exciting progress continues on centennial projects as the Park's 100th birthday in 2014 approaches!

Thanks to generous donations, including lead gifts from the John P. McGovern Foundation and Phoebe and Bobby Tudor, the Conservancy has raised \$12.7 million toward its goal of \$30 million for the Centennial Gardens. This project involves the extensive redesign of the 15-acre Garden Center site. The Centennial Gardens will include a traditional rose garden, meandering paths, arbors of blossoming flowers, interactive children's garden, football-field-sized event lawn, and much more. Its varied elevations, color palates, and textures will create a transformative experience as visitors wander from garden to garden. Unlike any other public space in Houston, this urban paradise will quickly become a favorite Hermann Park destination.

We are immensely grateful to the McGovern Foundation and the Tudors for believing in the importance of this project and understanding the value Hermann Park and its beautiful amenities bring to Houston. Public gardens can be a community gathering spot, a learning environment where children can commune with nature, and a place to showcase the beauty of our inter-national city. The Centennial Gardens will be an unprecedented community resource.

Meanwhile, the Grand Gateway project, the Conservancy's other major endeavor, is coming closer to a reality as well. Only \$68,000 stands left to be raised toward the \$5 million budget. The Grand Gateway refers to the historic main entrance to the Park from the Sam Houston Monument to the Mecom Fountain and along the esplanade between Fannin and Main streets from the Mecom Fountain all the way to the Texas Medical Center. The restoration will include new features like extensive landscaping with seasonal plantings, pedestrian paths, benches and bike racks, and drainage and irrigation to support the area's historic Live Oaks.

It's an incredible time to be a part of the Conservancy, and we thank you for your ongoing support as we work toward completing the master plan for Hermann Park.

See you in the Park,

Doreen

Doreen Stoller
Executive Director



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Hats in the Park Luncheon

All gifts in honor of Ernest H. Cockrell, honoree, and chair Donna Bruni

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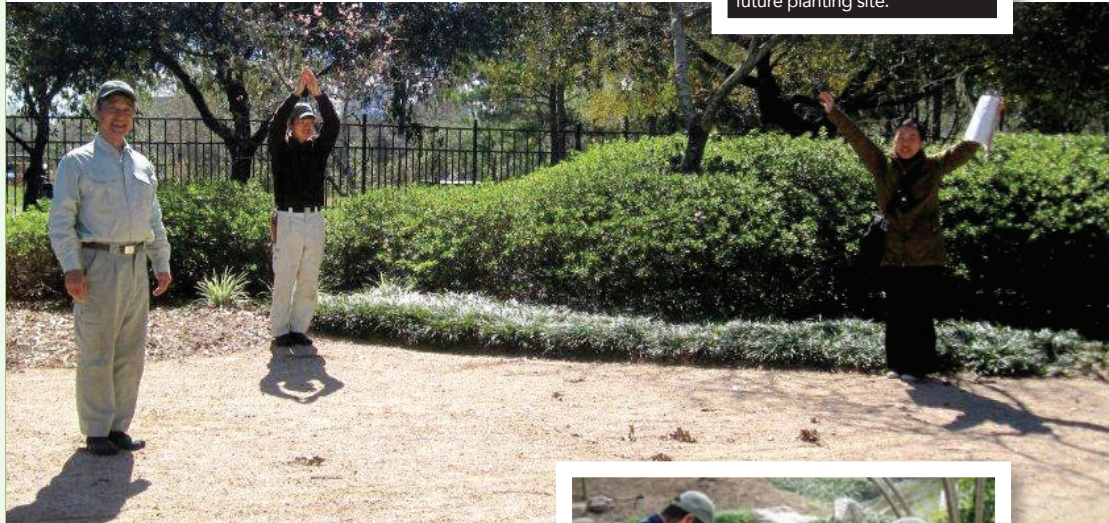
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continued on page 6

Team from Japan Revisits Japanese Garden

The Japan team mimics human cherry trees as they designate a future planting site.



The annual visit from the landscaping team from Japan occurred in early February, sadly without Mr. Terunobu Nakai due to his passing in January 2012. However, his design assistant, Ms. Aya Nakamura Hashimoto, stepped in to continue his vision for the renovation of the Garden, which until a few years ago, looked more like an American-style Japanese Garden than one that adhered to authentic Japanese gardening principles. Renowned Japanese gardener Mr. Hiroshi Iwasaki returned for his fifth visit, accompanied by his apprentice son Taiki, to assist the Houston Parks and Recreation Department gardeners with plant maintenance, new plantings, and Japanese-style tree pruning.



Hiroshi and Taiki Iwasaki construct a split bamboo fence along the stepping stone path leading to the tea house.



In anticipation of a possible second entrance into the Garden from the Fannin edge of the Park, Ms. Hashimoto also met with local landscape architect Jim Patterson of White Oak Studio to address the design of the area outside of the Japanese Garden fence along the Fannin side of the Garden. They discussed ideas for the locations of

new plantings, elevations, and trails to be placed throughout the new Sunset Meadow, which sits between the wide gravel path and the Garden fence line from the Jones Reflection Pool to the southwest corner of the Garden. Jim and Ms. Hashimoto agreed that the design and plant materials for the Meadow should reflect a seamless blending of hardscapes and plantings with those inside the Garden, as well as removal or pruning of existing plant materials along the fence line that currently prevent sightlines into the Garden from the Fannin edge.

Additionally, Ms. Hashimoto considered the design of a small event lawn inside the Garden, the renovation of specific planting beds, and the addition of shrub beds per Mr. Nakai's plan. The Conservancy looks

Aya Hashimoto continues the design work begun in the Japanese Garden by her mentor Mr. Nakai in 2006.



Hats in the Park
Tuesday, March 6, 2012



From wide brimmed hats to fanciful fascinators, the fashions were a sight to behold at the Conservancy's 5th annual *Hats in the Park* luncheon on March 6. Chair Donna Bruni greeted the 250 guests who enjoyed an al fresco luncheon on the Historic Clubhouse lawn.

Mayor Annise Parker presented long time Park friend and honoree Ernie Cockrell with the 2012 Bob and Elyse Lanier Award. Ernie is president and director of The Cockrell Foundation, which has made generous contributions to the Conservancy's efforts, from the Heart of the Park restoration to the upcoming renovation of the Grand Gateway, the Park's historic main entrance. As he accepted the honor, Ernie reminisced about his childhood memories of time well spent in Hermann Park.

Thank you to everyone who supported *Hats in the Park*, which raised \$206,000 for the Conservancy's programs. A big thank you goes to Saks Fifth Avenue, numerous fashion designers, and Hotel Granduca for donating thousands of dollars' worth of fabulous raffle prizes. Congratulations to the lucky winners.

The crowd was ecstatic to learn that next year's chairs will be Ellie Francisco and Kim Tutcher. Hope to see everyone next year!



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1 Bob and chair Donna Bruni 2 Lynn Wyatt 3 Sandy Godfrey and Karen Bradshaw 4 Jana Arnoldy, Ulrike Natus, Leslye Weaver, Ann Short, and Susan Hansen 5 Estela Cockrell, honoree Ernie Cockrell, Stephanie Cockrell, and Janet Cockrell 6 Phoebe Tudor, Mayor Annise Parker, and Soraya McClelland 7 Kelli Blanton, Doreen Stoller, and Kim Tutcher 8 Merele Yarborough and Winell Herron 9 Mary D'Andrea and Gina Bhatia 10 Susie and Sanford Criner 11 Irene Bourke, Brenda Harvey-Traylor, and Birgitt Van Wijk 12 Veronica Curran, Sylvie Crum, Elizabeth Stein, and Denise Monteleone 13 Bobbie Nau, Barbara Van Postman, and Leisa Holland-Nelson 14 Diann Lewter and Council Member Wanda Adams 15 Valerie Palmquist, Audrey Cochran, and Isabel David 16 Yvonne Cormier and Keisha Cohen Phillips 17 Ellie Francisco and Albert Rubio 18 Pat Breen, Joanne Herring, and Philamena Baird 19 Beth Sanders Moore, Linda Hunsaker, chair Donna Bruni, and Kelly Hunsaker Leonard 20 Danielle Ellis, Mary Ann McKeithan, and Rini Ziegler 21 Denise Bush Bahr and Olga Bush 22 Karen Rozzell, Jennifer Niedermeyer, Sandra Moffet, and Rachel Bristow 23 Betty Tutor and Susan Fine 24 C. C. Conner and Ann Kennedy



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New Bridge to Make Connections in Hermann Park this Summer



The Bill Coats Bike Bridge spanning across Brays Bayou is scheduled to open to bicyclists and pedestrians this summer.

Art and architecture are coming together to bridge the banks of Brays Bayou. Spanning 290 feet, the modern, double-arch Bill Coats Bike Bridge will soon connect Hermann Park's bicycle and walking trails on both sides of the bayou.

Great progress has been made on this coordinated effort, which has included the widening of the bayou and the creation of new trails. Existing trails will connect to the bridge and new trails will lead walkers and cyclists to those on the golf course side of the Park. A fresh coat of green paint covers the stylish bridge and its deck is complete. A grand opening will be planned for this September.

The bridge is named for a Hermann Park Conservancy founder who fought avidly for improvements around Houston. Along with the pedestrian underpass beneath North and South MacGregor streets, the bridge will connect the Bayou Parkland area to the heart of the Park with increased convenience and safety for walkers and cyclists. Funding for the Bill Coats Bike Bridge was provided by a federal bikeways program, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the City of Houston.



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Hats in the Park

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The names listed above and on the preceding pages include donors who made gifts or pledges of \$100 or more between January 1 and March 31, 2012, as well as all *Hats in the Park* luncheon donors and George Hermann Society members. Please note that gifts to the *Evening in the Park* gala and *Urban Green* spring event will be recognized in the next issue. In compliance with IRS standards, commitments paid over time in installments are recognized once in full at the time of the pledge. Please contact the Conservancy if we inadvertently have not included your name or if you would like to be listed differently in future listings.

Ongoing/ Upcoming Events

Courtesy of Houston Arts Alliance

**Ai Weiwei Temporary
Public Art Exhibition**

On display through June 2012
McGovern Promenade

**Evening in the Park
Gala**

Wednesday, April 25, 2012
at 6:30pm

Heart of the Park

Chaired by
Ileana and Michael Treviño,
Susan Krohn and Patrick Gehm

Honoring Rice University

Tickets from \$500;
tables from \$5,000

**Come Sail Away with
Urban Green**

Thursday, May 10, 2012
at 7:00pm

Lake Plaza

Chaired by
Catherine Bradley,
Amy and David Doherty,
Mary and Ben Patton,
and Sarahbeth Pipkin

Tickets
\$25 members
\$35 non-members

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Series**

Check www.hermannpark.org
for a list of upcoming perfor-
mances by Houston area
students.

Second Saturdays

Members of Hermann Park
Conservancy are welcome to ride
the Hermann Park Railroad for
free from 9am to 10am on the
second Saturday of every month.

Visit

www.hermannpark.org
for up-to-date event
details or to purchase
tickets online.



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PARKSIDE / SPRING 2012

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