

PARKSIDE

HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

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in the park

Conservancy and Community Plan for Hermann Park's Future



Chris Matthews of MVA talked to a community member during a discussion session

Local residents viewed a presentation by the master team at the August open house



HATS IN THE PARK see page 10

MISSION

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



As Houston grows and changes, Hermann Park Conservancy's dedication to the stewardship and improvement of Hermann Park will guide new improvements over the next 20 years. A new master plan will ensure the Park adapts to changes in our community and continues to be a vital resource for recreation and relaxation in the heart of Houston.

In October of 2015, award-winning landscape architecture firm, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), was brought on board to study the Park's needs and develop a plan to guide future improvements. The focus is on underutilized areas of the Park, particularly on its edges, including Bayou Parkland and the western edge of the Park along Fannin. After observing the way visitors experience and interact with the Park on days with high visitorship, MVVA has designed plans to create beautiful landscapes on the Park's edges, improve mobility and parking and enhance wildlife habitat.

Houstonians have been an integral part of the planning process. On August 28th, the Conservancy held a community open house at the Park's Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion to share MVVA's ideas and to get input from Park users. After a presentation by the master plan team, those attending the meeting had an opportunity to ask questions and give feedback to the Conservancy, the MVVA team, mobility and transportation consultants from Nelson\Nygaard and the Houston Parks and Recreation Department. An additional community meeting was held on October 27th at Ripley House to present plans reflecting the MVVA team's observations at the Park as well as hundreds of comments from Park users. MVVA will present its full recommendations this spring at our final public meeting set for April 4 at the McGovern Centennial Gardens.

To follow the master plan process, go to hermannpark.org/masterplan. Send us your thoughts at ideas@hermannpark.org.

hermannpark.org



Doreen Stoller and members of Rice University's Houston Action Research Team, Amy Griffiths, Ivan Arizpe and Adam Krupinski

What do you love about Hermann Park? What is your favorite thing to do while visiting? These are questions we have been asking a lot as we update the Park's master plan for the next 20 years. One of my favorite things to do in the Park is wave to the families riding by on the Hermann Park Railroad. From small children to grandparents, everyone is always happy as they wave back! That ability to connect with people who come from so many different backgrounds is something I truly love about Hermann Park.

On any given day as you walk through the Park, you can see Houston's diversity reflected in the visitors you pass. A recent study by Rice University students shows that people visit from across the entire Houston region — and 11% of the visitors come from out of town. The diversity of the Park's visitors is also a near perfect reflection of the diversity of our city. Survey participants were asked what they love about the Park and what they would like to see changed. Interestingly, when the students analyzed the responses, there was almost no difference in what

people from these diverse backgrounds love about the Park or would like to see added. The Park truly is a universally shared experience we can celebrate together for generations to come.

The spring offers many community events and we hope you'll join us and share your ideas for Hermann Park by stopping by our Conservancy tent (or emailing ideas@hermannpark.org). We invite you to experience the riot of kites in the air at the *Kite Festival*. Come celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Japanese garden with our friends, here and in Japan, who have made it possible. Celebrating at a big community event is joyous but any day you visit Hermann Park you have a chance to celebrate with our vibrant Houston community. Smile and wave at your fellow visitors — whether they are riding by on the train or not!

See you in the Park,

Doreen

Doreen Stoller, President

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\$1,000 – \$4,999

Robin and Richard Brooks – In honor of
 Tommy Lott

Celebrating the Grand Gateway Revitalization



Genny Duncan, Letty Knapp, Almeria Cottingham and Conservancy president, Doreen Stoller were on hand for the dedication

On Saturday, October 29th, Conservancy members and donors to the Grand Gateway restoration project gathered to celebrate the revitalization of Hermann Park’s historic entrance at Montrose and Main Streets.

Following a light breakfast reception at Kinder Station, guests boarded the Hermann Park Railroad for a train ride to the Grand Gateway to see the colorful landscaping featuring seasonal plantings and to honor the project’s supporters. Long-time Park advocate, Tommy Lott, made the lead gift to restore the Grand Gateway and worked with a group of friends in the Warwick Towers to help raise funds.

Another generous donation toward the Grand Gateway restoration came from the children of Genevieve Lykes Duncan, a dedicated Park supporter. She and her husband, James, moved to Houston in 1925, and fell in love with Hermann Park. The garden at the top section of the Grand Gateway, closest to the Mecom Fountain, is dedicated in memory of Genevieve Lykes Duncan by her children Cameron, Genny and Bowie. Though she later moved away from Houston, she never lost her love for Hermann Park.



Grand Gateway supporters Malcolm Mazow, Tommy Lott, Jackie Mazow and Steppie Holsclaw

In addition to funds raised by the Conservancy donors, the \$5 million project’s funding included nearly \$3 million through the Texas Department of Transportation, which managed the project with the Conservancy and the City of Houston.

The project brought back the grandeur of the Park’s original landscaping while improving connectivity to nearby neighborhoods and adding irrigation for Main Street’s live oaks.

Volunteers Lend a Hand with Cassava Plants



Volunteers learn about the Cassava plant as they help in the Family Garden

On a hot December morning, McGovern Centennial Garden volunteers harvested Yuca, also known as the Cassava plant, or *Manihot esculenta*. They enjoyed learning how to harvest and propagate this edible starchy root. It's featured in many cultures' cuisines, including Brazil, Nigeria and Thailand. Native to South America and parts of the Caribbean, it is also used to make tapioca. It's a drought-resistant crop and can be prepared in many ways. Try cooking it like a potato or as a sweet cassava cake or pudding. Be sure to check out all of the varieties of plants in the Family Garden. You can visit hermannpark.org/familygarden for a guide to the trees in the garden.

Special Therapy Benefits Volunteers and the Park

A small group of patients from Mentis Neuro Health volunteered in the Park as part of their physical therapy process. Mentis provides neuro-rehabilitation for people who have sustained a brain injury and strives to help patients get back to their homes and work. According to director of volunteer programs, Diane Kerr, patients participating in the program have been dedicated, monthly volunteers since 2011.

While volunteering in the Park helps in the therapy process, it also benefits the Park. The group raked pine needles in the Japanese Garden, filling more than a dozen bags to be used throughout the Park.



Mentis volunteers enjoyed working in the Park as part of their therapy

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\$100,000 – \$249,999

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Fund for Public Art in Hermann Park

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Park User Amenities

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Academy for Lifelong Learning

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Charlotte and Larry Whaley –

In honor of Kimberly Hickson and

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In Kind

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Park to Port Bike Ride

\$5,000 – \$9,999

Port of Houston Authority

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Cece and Mack Fowler

Julia Golovko

Alex Hemsath

Mike Holloman and Tim Surratt

McGOVERN CENTENNIAL GARDENS

featured plant



Chinese Fringe Tree

Visitors to McGovern Centennial Gardens literally stop and stare when they see the Chinese Fringe Tree, *Chionanthus retusus*, in full bloom. There are two in the Woodland Garden, both on the Hermann Drive side of the pergola walk, near the Mount end of the lawn. One of these two young trees was planted in honor of Park patron Kathrine McGovern, and presented to her at the very first Hats in the Park luncheon held in the Gardens in March 2015.

The Chinese Fringe tree is native to eastern Asia, and is cultivated for its prolific and fragrant show of feathery white blossoms in springtime. It is a small deciduous tree with a rounded crown, growing between 15'-25' in height. The oblong leaves have a glossy sheen. Chinese Fringe Trees prefer deep, well-drained, acidic soils and full sun, making them an excellent choice for a smaller patio area or set against the taller backdrop of a dark green hedge. It is relatively disease-resistant as long as it has adequate drainage and healthy soils. *Chionanthus retusus* translates as "snow flower", a beautifully-evocative name for its most striking spring feature.

Paul Klein
Rebecca Mark-Jusbasche and
Michael Jusbasche
Kurt Neubek
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Park Plaza Hospital
Oscar Pena
The Propst Family
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Texas Medical Center
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In Kind

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In Kind

Clif Bar
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Picnic



Membership support helps us to continue our work to rejuvenate Hermann Park and provides vital operating funds to keep the Conservancy's programs and initiatives going strong. HPC members enjoy discounts in the Conservancy Gift Shop and Pinewood Cafe, invitations to members-only special events, free train rides on the second Saturday of each month, and much more! Members joining or renewing at the \$100 Centennial level and above will receive commemorative Play

Your Park merchandise. Please consider joining — or renewing — your membership today! When you join the Conservancy, you'll be a special part of one of Houston's most beloved and visited community treasures.

Visit hermannpark.org/membership for more information.

Urban Green Brings Gatsby to the Gardens

Gatsby in the Gardens Chairs Patrick Sheehy, Kenedy Hughes, Conner and Emily Tamlyn, and Bryce Bash



On Thursday, November 17th, Hermann Park's McGovern Centennial Gardens filled with nearly 350 young professionals dressed in their best roaring twenties attire at Urban Green's *Gatsby in the Gardens*.

Thanks to the dedication of chairs Bryce Bash, Kenedy Hughes, Patrick Sheehy, and Emily and Conner Tamlyn, the event raised more than \$20,000, which will benefit Hermann Park Conservancy's mission to improve and protect Hermann Park.

Guests dined on a fantastic spread of light bites and took their chance bidding on impressive silent auction items including a private cooking class at Four Seasons Houston, an autographed Brock Osweiler football, and a two night stay at a Caesars Entertainment property in Las Vegas. Guests danced the night away to the beats of Dj Mav and snapped pictures in a Gatsby-inspired photo booth courtesy of Ham & Cheese Photo Booth. Guests also sipped beverages provided by Saint Arnold Brewing Co., TX Whiskey, Deep Eddy Vodka, and Mighty Swell.

In addition to all the generous silent auction donors and other supporters, the Conservancy extends special thanks to Dj Mav, Butter & Company Catering, Ann Werme Group, Houston Young Lawyers Association, Antone's Famous Po Boys, Capone's Pizza Oven and Bar, Chipotle, FM Burger, and Roostar Vietnamese Grill.



Nate Wilson, Brittany Ringel Wilson, Samantha-Ann Horwich, Arthur Bryan II

Photos by Leah Wilson Photography

Urban Green

\$1,000 – \$2,499

Stuart Pace

\$500 – \$999

Sarah and Michael Beckham

Catherine Bradley

Tom Cassel

Maximiliano Degwitz

Deborah and Paolo Fronza

Nikki and Robert Hanley

Alyssa Herring

Jon Sanfelippo

Nathaniel Walton

\$100 – \$499

Kim Ballesteros

Breck and Bryce Bash

Kyla Cook

Natalie and Tommy Crawford

Jenny and Clayton Finney

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In Kind

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 The Owl Bar
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 Piada
 Relish Restaurant and Bar
 Roostar Vietnamese Grill

Special Events



13th Annual Run in the Park

Run in the Park is a fun, healthy event that brings our community together. On Saturday, November 12th, more than 650 people took to the Park's scenic trail to participate in the 5K run/walk, 3K walk, or the 1K fun run for kids. For some, the goal was winning the race, while others came to get some exercise with family and friends and to enjoy the outdoors. Afterwards, participants enjoyed a post-race party with food and music at Molly Ann Smith Plaza.

We are grateful to our sponsors, including the City of Houston, CLIF Bar, Frontier Utilities, Luby's Fuddruckers Restaurants, LLC, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Silver Eagle Distributors, Sovereign Wealth Advisors LLC, Texas Children's Hospital, Gulf States Toyota, the Friedkin Group and the Williams Companies, and Dj Mav. Special thanks to Fleet Feet Sports for providing prizes for the race winners.

Stay tuned for more information on the next *Run in the Park* on Saturday, November 11, 2017.



Park to Port Bike Ride Rolls Down Bayou Greenway Trail

More than 850 cyclists joined in the fun at the 3rd annual *Park to Port* Bike Ride. Riders pedaled down the Bayou Greenway trail enjoying the view along Brays Bayou. Families, friends and individuals cycled from Hermann Park's Bill Coats Bridge along the Brays Bayou Greenway Trail to the Port of Houston where they were treated to a mid-ride party sponsored by the Port of Houston Authority. Riders returned along the trail to Hermann Park for a post-ride party to celebrate the 20-mile ride.

Support for this event is generously provided by the Port of Houston Authority, Reliant an NRG Company, AECOM, Bayou City Cycles, Bike Houston, Brady's Landing, CLIF Bars, Dj Mav/Cut the Fader, Golf Cars of Houston, the Mayor's Office of Special Events, Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Houston Parks Board, Luby's Fuddruckers Restaurants LLC, Saint Arnold Brewing Company, Michelob Ultra/Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P., Texas Medical Center, the Williams Companies and Waste Management.

Stay tuned for information about the 2017 *Park to Port* Bike Ride scheduled for Saturday, October 7, 2017.

Visitor Services Makes the Season Merry

Youngsters enjoyed a special treat at a new Conservancy event, Breakfast with Santa held at Pinewood Cafe. Families enjoyed breakfast including pancakes, scrambled eggs and biscuits right alongside Santa. The December 10th event was a huge hit, as children enjoyed sharing their wish list while visiting on Santa's lap. The children also received a special gift afterwards.

Just after Breakfast with Santa, children celebrated the holidays in Kinder Station at our annual holiday party. Many tried their hand at arts and crafts projects, chose their favorite design to be painted on their faces, and took a fun ride on the Hermann Park Railroad.

Throughout the holiday season, visitors could enjoy the decorated Hermann Park train featuring garlands and colorful lights, sparkling into the night. Riders enjoyed the magical touch of the glowing lights as the train wound through the Park. Pinewood Cafe extended its hours, as well, giving riders a chance to get a snack or a warm drink before or after the train ride.



Santa listened to the children's wish lists

The holiday party was filled with family fun



There's a cool new way to beat the heat with the Conservancy's shaved ice cart on Lake Plaza. Located between the Houston Zoo and Kinder Station, the custom-made cart sells shaved ice in a variety of flavors. Bottled water and snacks are also available. Ask about Conservancy membership while you pick up your shaved ice treat.

DONORS

Urban Green continued

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- YogaOne Studios

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- Kathrine G. McGovern
- \$5,000 – \$9,999**
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- Kris and Jeff Tinkham
- Emily Leland Todd
- Craig Vinson
- Kirk White
- Jeffrey Whitley
- Marion and Benjamin Wilcox – In memory of Bill Coats
- Wanda Williams

In Kind

- Sprinkles Cupcakes
- Steak 48

Garden Conservancy Fund

\$100 – \$499

- Sheryl and Scott Mills
- Geri Wood

New Play Equipment for Bayou Parkland



A new swing set has been constructed near the Bayou Parkland Pavilion, between Almeda and Brays Bayou. Bayou Parkland, situated across North and South MacGregor Way from the main body of Hermann Park, offers a wide variety of activities for hikers, joggers, and wildlife watchers. Until now, this area didn't have

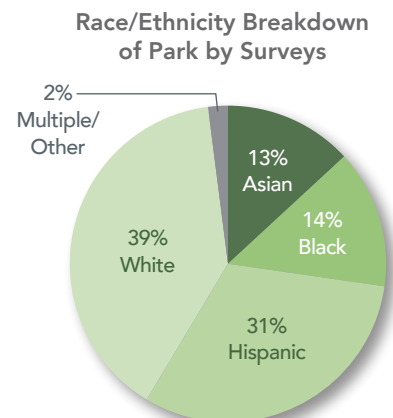
play equipment for children. The materials, wood and swings were purchased by the Conservancy and constructed by the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department. The City also added mulch and a wheelchair ramp. Groups who reserve the pavilion and families looking for picnic fun now have a place to play!

Rice Students Conduct Survey to Understand Usership in Hermann Park

In collaboration with the Conservancy, Rice University's Center for Civic Leadership's Houston Action Research Team (HART) engaged in an analysis of Hermann Park users in the fall of 2016 to better understand who uses the Park and their patterns of Park usage to help inform the Conservancy's master planning process.

In total, 307 surveys and 44 observational forms were collected by the group. Questions in the survey pertained to time spent at the Park, transportation to the Park, comparison of Hermann Park to other parks, activities at the Park, and recommended changes or improvements to the Park. A key finding from the study is that Park users are truly a demographic

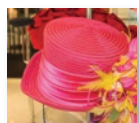
representation of Houston's diversity. Below is a sample of their statistical findings. To see the full study's findings, visit hermannpark.org/masterplan.



Save the Dates!



Hermann Park Kite Festival
Miller Hill and Jones Reflection Pool
Sunday, March 26, 2017
10 a.m.–5 p.m.



Hats in the Park Luncheon
McGovern Centennial Gardens
Thursday, March 30, 2017
11:30 a.m.



Hermann Park Public Meeting
McGovern Centennial Gardens
Thursday, April 4, 2017
6:00 p.m.



Evening in the Park
Molly Ann Smith Plaza and
Jones Reflection Pool
Friday, April 28, 2017
6:30 p.m.



**Student Performances
in the Park**
Lake Plaza
Throughout the 2016–2017
school year

*Dates and times are subject to
change; where date and time
not listed, exact time is TBD*

Details at
hermannpark.org

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Tanglewood Garden Club –
In honor of Karen and
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Membership

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