



BUILDING BRIDGES IN COLUMBUS PARK

THE ABILITY TO NETWORK WITH OTHER COMMUNITY LEADERS AND NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS IS KEY TO MAINTAINING A GREEN SPACE THAT FLOURISHES. Just ask Paul Gong and the Friends of Columbus Park.

It was in September of 2000 that Gong started the Friends with a core group of four or five volunteers in an effort to preserve the cultural and natural elements of this popular, historic public space in the heart of Chinatown. Gong tapped into his own personal network of friends, acquaintances and business connections. These people were already active members in the community and had made an investment in standing up for public space in Lower Manhattan. By focusing on the power of networking within the community and establishing a presence, the group signed on other community groups who were eager to work with the Friends of Columbus Park.

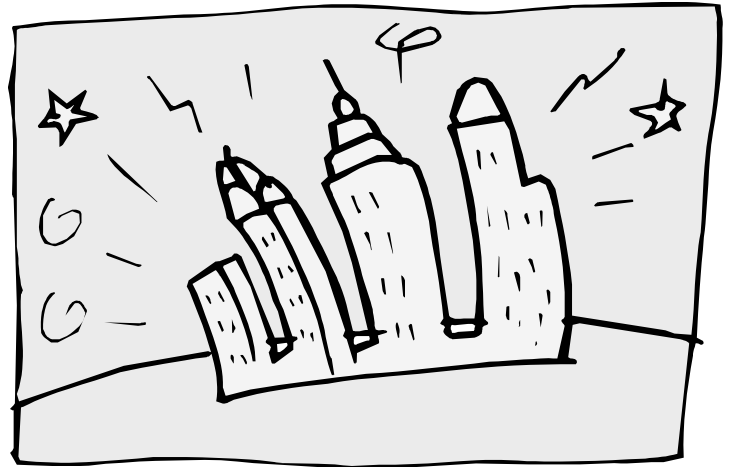
Building these alliances quickly proved to be beneficial. Group members were able to attend pertinent meetings regularly to keep up on the political landscape of the neighborhood and reach out to elected officials about their park. This enabled the group to grow and gain additional park support.

Thanks to Gong's straightforward and collaborative approach and the resulting council member lobbying, the Friends of Columbus Park have been able to procure grants from the City, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, and the National Park Service, among others.

These funds will be used to renovate the park beginning with the restoration of the historic grand pavilion, originally built in 1897. The pavilion had been in a state of disrepair and was finally closed to the public five years ago. But it carries with it a tradition of being the center of cultural events in Chinatown and more recently was a meeting place for New Yorkers in the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center. It is important to the Friends and other members of the community that the pavilion become a space that will help revive downtown New York.

Next spring and summer, Columbus Park will host a film festival and a series of cultural events that hark back to the old days when the pavilion was open and at the height of its popularity with residents and tourists alike. With all of the successful outreach that the Friends have been engaged in, this year is certain to bring forth an even stronger, more vibrant Columbus Park.

To find out more about Columbus Park and the Friends call 718.672.9299. Or, contact Partnerships for Parks' Lower Manhattan Outreach Coordinator Nate Harris, at 212.408.0282. □



WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

IT'S NOT JUST PARK GROUP LEADERS WHO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF NETWORKING. Deputy Investigator Chuck Sholz of the 60th Precinct in Brooklyn, who has worked with the Friends of Kaiser Park, will tell you that a group can hardly flourish without allies. Sholz says the best piece of advice he could offer a group looking to connect with local officials and high powered community members is not to be apprehensive about asking folks to get involved.

Making friends and allies can bring resources to your group in multiple forms. They can recruit other park users, volunteers, or community leaders that may have been difficult to engage otherwise. They can attract support from individual community members by spreading the word about opportunities with your group. Finally, they can encourage elected officials to help you obtain funding. Of course, the more people you can attract for your group, the more credibility your group will have.

Sholz suggests that you go right to the local precinct, and visit the community affairs office. Find out who the other groups are and get the names of elected leaders. And be sure to talk to the commanding officer, Sholz adds. "Don't be intimidated. No commanding officer will say no to neighborhood improvement."

For more networking and alliance-building advice, see the tip sheets in the "Resources for You" section of our website at www.itsmypark.org. Or, better yet, attend one of our hands-on free workshops on the same subject this winter and spring. See the back page for workshop information and resources. To find the Police Precinct nearest you, call 646.610.5000 or visit www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/phbone.html. □



GOT A QUESTION ABOUT PARKS OR PARKS GROUPS? Not sure how to find the answer? Visit www.itsmypark.org for the Q&A feature where you can send an inquiry or read answers to previous ones. You may find just the answer you've been looking for.

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR PARK WARDENS

WARDEN APPRECIATION NIGHT AT WOLLMAN RINK WILL TAKE PLACE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20 FROM 6 TO 10PM. Pay one admission at the regular price (\$8.50) and get one free. Skate rentals (\$4.75) not included. No need to register, but Park Wardens must wear their 2002 pin. For more information call Eileen Remor at **212.360.8126**.

A Late Winter Tree Identification Nature Walk is being held for Wardens and their guests at the Blue Heron Nature Center on Sunday, March 9 from 1 to 3. The walk and tour will be given by the Urban Park Rangers. Limited to 30 attendees. Registration is required. Please call Eileen Remor at **212.360.8126**.

NINTH ANNUAL BRONX PARKS SPEAK-UP

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2003; 12:30PM - 5PM
LEHMAN COLLEGE MUSIC HALL, FACULTY DINING ROOM

This year's Speak-Up will focus on making connections to the network of green space resources and organizations. Write bxspeakup@aol.com or call Rosanna Viera at **718.367.3200**.

HELPFUL NUMBERS

<i>Partnerships for Parks</i>	212.360.1310
To volunteer or to join your local parks group:	212.360.1357
For recorded information about special events:	888.NY.PARKS
To report graffiti, vandalism, or crime:	800.201.PARK

www.itsmypark.org
www.nyc.gov/parks

Partnerships for Parks, a joint program of City Parks Foundation and City of New York/Parks & Recreation, believes that parks are essential to the life of New York City, and that community involvement is essential to the life of a park. We work to start, strengthen, and support neighborhood park groups; to link them together so that they can learn from each other and be stronger collectively; and to promote parks in general so that people will be more likely to join in efforts to restore and preserve them.

Peter Crumlish, Director

Dana Litvack, Director of Operations

This issue of the Leaflet was edited by Blaise Alhysen Kearsley

cityparks  foundation

 City of New York
Parks & Recreation

FREE WORKSHOPS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

MEMBERS OF PARK GROUPS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND FREE PARTNERSHIPS WORKSHOPS BEING HELD THIS SEASON CITYWIDE.

To receive a complete Calendar of Events including workshop descriptions and exact locations, and to register or receive workshop materials, please call the Technical Assistance Program at **212.360.8180**.

The Buck Stops Where?
Fostering Leadership Skills for Community Groups
Thursday, February 13, 6-8pm, Central Park

Money Matters: Fundraising for Parks Groups
Wednesday, February 26, 6-8pm, Staten Island

People Power: Building Community Campaigns
Thursday, February 27, 6-8pm, Central Park
Wednesday, March 12, 6-8pm, The Bronx
Thursday, March 20, 6-8pm, Queens

Grantwriting 101
Wednesday, March 19, 6-8pm, Staten Island

Parks & Recreation 101
Tuesday, March 18, 6-8pm, Central Park

Strength in Numbers:
Partnering with Parks' Operations
Tuesday, March 18, 6-8pm, Central Park

Making Friends: Working with Elected Officials
Thursday, March 6, 6-8, Central Park
Tuesday, March 11, 6-8pm, Brooklyn

Creating Publications That Work for Parks
Thursday, March 27, 6-8pm, Lower Manhattan

The sun, with all those planets revolving
around it and dependent on it,
can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had
nothing else in the universe to do.

-Galileo

Know any nature related quotes that would be perfect for the *Leaflet*? Write to blaise@partnershipsforparks.org.

ATTENTION: FOR ADDRESS CORRECTIONS CALL 212-360-1357.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT #9814



Partnerships for Parks
CITY PARKS FOUNDATION
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

