



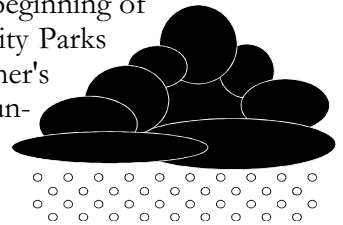
HIGHLIGHTING CROTONA PARK: A SUCCESS STORY FOR THE NEW YEAR

Crotona Park, located in the Bronx, serves as a model for other parks throughout the City, proving that even in the most challenged urban communities, parks can serve as catalysts for community renewal. The park's current revitalization has a significant chance of long-term success because the City and the community are working together in an established partnership.

In the 1970s and 80s, Crotona Park and neighboring communities in the South Bronx were the nation's symbol of urban decay. People were reluctant to go into the park and it seemed a near-impossible task to bring about its recovery. The City, in the midst of an unprecedented fiscal crisis, was unable to provide the assistance needed for park rehabilitation. Yet, in recent years neighborhood organizations (including local development corporations, housing groups, civic associations, churches) elected officials and *Partnerships for Parks* have been working together to build energy and impetus for changing conditions in the park.

They chose to start by organizing an event that would draw hundreds of people into this previously abandoned space and plant the seed of the idea that Crotona Park could be a positive force and place in the community. The first Crotona Park Family Day was held in June of 1996 and was a huge success. Deciding to make the Family Day an annual event, the group became the Friends of Crotona Park. For three years the Friends' activity ebbed and flowed around Family Day, and each year the festival grew bigger. Their commitment to the park was strong and in 1999 they worked to build on the success of Family Day to help the group define its structure and its role with regular meetings and a more long-term plan.

Today, Crotona Park festivals organized in collaboration with the City of New York/Parks & Recreation, the Urban Park Rangers, and community-based organizations have drawn thousands of people to the park. Last May, the reopening of the Crotona Park Nature Center, with more than 200 area school children, marked the beginning of summer days filled with fishing, canoeing, arts, and environmental science. Then came the City Parks Foundation Concerts in the Parks festival, the GHI Tennis Classic, and the annual Old Timer's Day which reunites thousands of South Bronx residents with the park they grew up in. Volunteers showed their support by participating in neighborhood clean-ups and helped plant over 10,000 bulbs for the Daffodil Project. As cool weather took over, so did the Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas festivals, as well as weekly after-school activities (*Continued*)



COFFEY PARK GETS A JUMPSTART ON 2002



The Friends of Coffey Park is a newly formed volunteer group in Red Hook, Brooklyn. Each monthly meeting held by Friends of Coffey Park has more than doubled in size as knowledge of the groups' intentions for the park grows. Members of the group have participated in several park beautification projects including Fall Clean Up Day, and were one of the volunteer organizations involved in the Daffodil Project.

On November 28th, *Partnerships* held a workshop for the Friends of Coffey Park offering tools for getting new parks groups off and running. The objective of the workshop was to ensure that everyone in the room was committed to the idea of working together to achieve a single goal. To make this happen it was important to foster a sense of openness and sharing so that everyone's views and concerns would be heard. Then the group members were able to come to a consensus about their goals and share responsibility for achieving them.

The workshop began with each participant describing a memory he or she had of the park -- something about the park that was inspiring. Then the participants shared a concern he or she had about the park. With different residents participating, it reinforced the park as an intergenerational gathering place. For example, one attendee spoke about the impact that talent shows organized in Coffey Park had on young people in the community. At the same time, though, there was concern about adequate police enforcement and safety issues for all park users. Another group member addressed Coffey Park's unmet potential, citing that as the reason he was committed to being an active member of the community. Once

all voices had been heard, workshop participants consolidated the list of thoughts and concerns into a single paragraph, which will form the mission of the group. With that accomplished and a few short term goals for 2002 identified, the group's next steps include electing leadership. "Everyone in this room had something to say about Coffey Park," said one group member during the workshop, while another summed up the day by saying, "I feel like I can definitely be part of a great cause."

For more information on having a workshop for your parks group, or on starting a Friends of the Parks group, go to www.itsmypark.org, or call 212.360.1310.

PARTNERSHIPS NEWS & NOTES 2001

Clean-Up Day Many thanks to Eastern Mountain Sports and the *Not For Tourists Guide to Manhattan* for their generous raffle prize donations for Clean-Up Day 2001.

The Daffodil Project The citywide initiative to create a recurring memorial to lives lost at the World Trade Center on September 11 was one of many ways New Yorkers chose to get involved. Over 10,000 volunteers from 500 groups planted over 1,000,000 daffodils in 400 sites across the city. Their dedication resulted in an overwhelming success. The project was chosen as "New Yorker of the Week" on *NY 1 News*. The bulbs have been planted. Next Spring, the City will bloom again.

Bronx River Alliance In November, the Bronx River Alliance was launched at a reception at the Bronx Zoo co-sponsored by the Wildlife Conservation Society and Con Edison. The Alliance's mission is to work to protect, improve, and restore the Bronx River corridor and greenway so that they can be healthy, ecological, recreational, (*Continued*)

CROTONA PARK (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

involving films and natural crafts. This season, Urban Park Rangers, as part of the Natural Classroom Program, have been popular at local schools, sparking partnerships with several of those that border Crotona Park.

In 2002, Crotona is looking forward to a rich calendar of events. In addition to repeating the successful programs of last year, they are gearing up for their first annual Film Festival in late summer and are getting ready to reorganize the Crotona Park Community Garden for a bountiful, blossoming summer.

To learn more about Crotona Park, call Samantha Stone, Crotona Park Administrator, at **718.430.4675** or, visit the Crotona Park website at www.crotonapark.org. To read more park success stories, or to share your own, check out www.itsmypark.org.

NEWS & NOTES 2001 (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

educational, and economic resources for the communities through which the river flows. *Partnerships* and Bronx River staff thank everyone who worked tirelessly to restore the river in the past, as we look ahead in 2002.

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 Allysen Kearsley



CITY PARKS FOUNDATION



City of New York
Parks & Recreation

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

FREE WORKSHOPS FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

Partnerships workshops are offered citywide in 2002. To register, call **212.360.8180**.

Building Alliances: Working with Elected Officials

Park groups are most effective when they have the aid and support of elected officials, Parks, the Police, the Community Board, neighboring block and merchant associations, and others. Learn tips on building these types of alliances.
Tues., Mar. 19; 6-8pm, St. James Rec. Center, 25-30 Jerome Ave., Bronx

Money Matters: Fundraising for Park Groups

Learn how to approach businesses, individuals, and foundations for support, and get tips on writing grant proposals. Hear a presentation by a group that has successfully raised money for a neighborhood park. Parks groups only, please.
Thurs., Feb. 28; 6-8pm, The Overlook, 80-30 Park Ln., Queens

Looking Ahead in 2002: Event Planning and Fundraising

What's next for your group? How can you keep people engaged over the winter? Discuss ideas for developing a twelve-month calendar, planning events, and securing project funding and resources. Join a discussion with a community member whose group has successfully held regular events.
Tues., Mar. 12; 6-8pm; Litchfield Villa, Prospect Park, Brooklyn

Making Your Park Safer: Fighting Crime in Parks

Learn how to form anti-crime alliances with key community members and drive out negative activity by organizing small actions with a big impact. Also, hear from a group member who has effectively made his park a safer place.
Tues., Mar. 5; 6-8pm, The Overlook, 80-30 Park Ln., Queens

CITIZENS COMMITTEE WORKSHOPS

The Citizens Committee offers free workshops for community organizations which run through the spring. Topics include *Public Speaking*, *Conflict Resolution*, and *How to Set Up a Website*. Registration is required. For more information call the Citizens Committee at **212.989.0909**.

8TH ANNUAL BRONX PARKS SPEAK UP

The 8th Annual Bronx Parks Speak Up will be held Saturday, February 23rd from 1-5pm at Lehman College. Open to all supporters and friends who want to learn the best methods for advocating, preserving and maintaining them, it will focus on getting resources for parks and greenspaces. Space is limited. Write bxspeakup@aol.com or call **718.367.3200 ext. 27**.



"I prefer winter and fall, when you feel the bone structure in the landscape...Something waits beneath it; the whole story doesn't show." *Andrew Wyeth*

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

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CITY PARKS FOUNDATION
Partnerships for Parks

