



CROWD OUT CRIME

When **Sandi Lusk** and the rest of the **Westchester Square - Zerega Improvement Association** began working in **Westchester Playground** over seven years ago, the park was a center of drug and gang activity, where teenagers gathered in the evenings to party and drink and where the benches were filled with the homeless every morning. After the playground was renovated with funding from the City Council, Sandi's organization decided to fight back.

The first thing the group did was paint over graffiti and clean up the park. They maintained a constant presence in the park and got keys to the park house where they stored equipment for their regular cleanups. They began to hold events in the park and built close relationships with their beat cop, police precinct, Community Board, and Parks personnel. They organized basketball and handball tournaments and, to discourage overnight vandalism and misuse, they convinced the City to leave the floodlights on overnight.

Today many of the park's users take part in caring for the park. Concerned neighbors constantly walk by to scan for illegal activity, and when they see something they call Sandi's group, the police, or the Community Board. Though it is a constant struggle, the Westchester Square-Zerega Improvement Association has successfully taken back the park from crime.

DRIVE OUT THE NEGATIVE WITH THE POSITIVE

As the above example illustrates, **the key to a safe and vibrant park is creating a buzz of sustained, positive activity.** Events are one of the best ways to do this. Those who misuse your park go there because they think it is an anonymous place for illegal activities. They take over when they think that no one is watching and no one cares what they do. "Take it back" and show them that the neighborhood cares. When people have a good time in the park because you've drawn them in and staged a good event, they'll feel better about the park and be more likely to respect it and help it in the future. By providing a steady stream of events, you can bring in the good and drive out the bad.

WORK WITH THE POLICE

Your police precinct is your most important resource for fighting crime, but developing relationships with the police takes time and work. Get to know the **beat cops**, your precinct's **community affairs officer**, and your **precinct commander**. Go to the monthly meeting of your local **Precinct Community Council**, and let them know about the issues that matter to you. Observe the illegal activities in your park and report on what you see to the police. Be as specific and accurate as possible. If the problem is serious, keep calling. The police allocate more resources to the areas that receive the highest number of formal complaints. For best results, have all of your neighbors and group members call too. And remember, **don't put yourself in danger**. Drug dealers and other criminals who inhabit your park can be dangerous. Please do not unnecessarily risk your safety by confronting them directly.

SMALL ACTIONS MAKE A BIG IMPACT

Negative users move into parks that nobody else cares about. Therefore, **the most important thing you can do is send a message that you do care.** Small actions can turn your park into a place that is no longer inviting to negative elements. Your group can make a big difference by cleaning up -- getting rid of the broken glass, litter, and weeds. Parks workers should and will clean, but any help you can give, especially on the weekends when Parks has a smaller staff, can make a tremendous difference. Even better, schedule regular clean ups, because litter has a way of coming back.

Your group can also make sure graffiti is painted over. Parks & Recreation has a zero-tolerance policy for graffiti: it must be cleaned off or painted over within 24 hours. Whenever you see graffiti, report it to 1-800-201-PARK or to your park's Supervisor or Manager. You can also keep paint on hand (which Parks will provide) to cover up graffiti immediately. If you have information about regular graffiti painters, report it to Mayor Giuliani's Graffiti Hotline at 212-374-5914.

PUTTING PARKSCARDS TO WORK

For the past seven years, the **Friends of Ten Eyck Plaza** have spent almost every summer weekend cleaning up their small park in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Now **Ricky Alicea**, the group's founder, has thought up a creative way of using ParksCards to encourage new membership and to reward his loyal volunteers. Working with his outreach coordinator, he obtained ParksCards for his most active volunteers. He then approached local businesses and asked them to give back to the community by offering discounts to those frequent volunteers in Ten Eyck Plaza who have been given ParksCards.

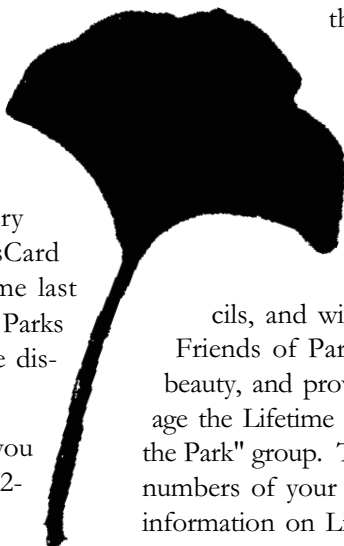
These discounts have encouraged volunteers to put in more time in the park so that they, too, will be eligible for ParksCards. So far Ricky has approached three businesses, including a pizza parlor and a grocery store, and all have agreed to offer discounts to ParksCard holders. "One of the members of my group called me last week," says Ricky, "to tell me that he had just used his Parks Card to get a discount on a pizza. I was so happy the discounts worked!"

To work with us on putting ParksCards to work for you and your group, call your Outreach Coordinator or 212-360-1310.

WELCOME LIFETIME FRIENDS OF PARKS!

The *Leaflet* is happy to welcome over 8,000 new readers, including the Lifetime Friends of Parks, former employees of Parks & Recreation. The *Leaflet*, the monthly bulletin of *Partnerships for Parks*, serves to inform people about volunteer activities and other issues concerning New York City's parks. *Partnerships* is a joint initiative of the City Parks Foundation and Parks & Recreation that works to increase community support for parks throughout New York City. Partnerships strengthens groups that care for local parks, links these groups so they are stronger collectively, and promotes citywide appreciation of parks.

Hundreds of volunteer groups across the city are taking care of their neighborhood parks by filling the parks with positive activities, clean ups, and events; and by advocating for their parks at Community Board meetings, Precinct Community Councils, and with elected officials. The mission of Lifetime Friends of Parks is to protect open space, promote natural beauty, and provide park and recreation services. We encourage the Lifetime Friends of Parks to join their local "Friends of the Park" group. To get involved, call 212-360-1357 for the phone numbers of your borough's Outreach Coordinators. For more information on Lifetime Friends of Parks, call 212-360-1378.



CONNECT TO THE URBAN OUTDOORS

The **Neighborhood Open Space Coalition (NOSC)** is a non-profit organization committed to raising the city's consciousness about the value of open space and the need to care for it. Their newsletter, the *Urban Outdoors Bulletin*, covers the work of organizations and individuals that put time into caring for public spaces and gives credit to the people that do the work. They keep thousands of New Yorkers abreast of issues, because, they believe, the care and nurturing of our public common space is our collective responsibility.

Urban Outdoors also includes information on public urban hikes, public service days, and events that highlight the best of New York City. *Urban Outdoors* is available by e-mail and fax and is FREE by e-mail. Leave a subscription request with your name, address, and e-mail-address at: nosc@treebranch.com. To receive the bulletin by fax you need to become a member of NOSC. Contact them at 212-352-9330.

GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINES

January 1: City Parks Foundation Quarterly Grants Program. Grants for community groups that take care of parks and playgrounds. 212-360-8181.

January 31: Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Re-grant Program. Funds projects of artists and arts groups in Manhattan. 212-432-0900.

FREE RESOURCE PACKETS AVAILABLE

If you would like to receive any or all of our information packets on Starting a Friends of the Park Group, Making Your Park Safer, Fund-raising, Event Planning, and Alliance Building, call Bodi Luse at 212-360-8186.

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:	212-360-3456
To report graffiti, vandalism, or crime:	800-201-PARK

Partnerships for Parks works to increase community support for parks throughout New York City. Founded in 1995 as a joint initiative of the City Parks Foundation and Parks & Recreation, *Partnerships* strengthens groups that care for local parks, links these groups so they are stronger collectively, and promotes citywide appreciation of our parks.

Tim Tompkins, Director

This issue of the Leaflet was written by Bodi (Sunlight) Luse.



CITY PARKS FOUNDATION



City of New York
Parks & Recreation

Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mayor
Henry J. Stern, Commissioner

MUIR FOR YOUR MONEY

The writings of John Muir, the father of the national park system, are being offered at a 20% discount by The Library of America to ParksCard holders and *Leaflet* recipients. To order this hardcover edition for \$28 (regular price \$35) plus \$2 shipping and handling, or to request The Library of America's catalogue, please call 212-308-3360. Among the Muir classics included are favorites such as *My First Summer in the Sierra* and *The Mountains of California*.

The Library of America works to publish and preserve timeless classics that have become emblematic of this nation's rich cultural history. The Library of America is a great friend of New York City's parks, sponsoring events at historic sites in the system, such as the Bronx's Poe Cottage. Authors in The Library of America's catalogue include Flannery O'Connor, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Walt Whitman. For more information on discounts, call *Partnerships* at 212-360-1310.

WALKING THE WEST (AND EAST) SIDE

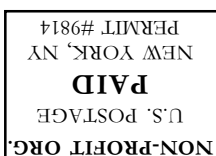
Another discount for ParksCard holders and *Leaflet* recipients: *East Side, West Side: A Guide to New York City's Parks in all Five Boroughs*. The publisher is offering a discount of 20% on this guide to many of New York City's parks. The book is filled with photos, history, and descriptions of parks. It also includes directions to the parks by public transportation and a full-size New York City map. Author **Lee Ann Levinson** provides information on volunteer activities in individual parks, as well as a section on "What You Can Do" that gives information and phone numbers for readers interested in volunteering in parks. To obtain *East Side, West Side* for the discount price of \$15.16 (regular price \$18.95) plus \$4.50 shipping and handling, call Two Bytes Publishing toll-free at 1-888-588-7171.

ROMANTIC CORRECTION

In September, we announced that ParksCard holders would be offered a discount on **Marilyn Appleberg's** *Romantic N.Y.* This charming book, which offers tips on romantic things to see and do in our city, is still available. Unfortunately, in that issue the address of the publisher was incorrect. Those who want a copy sent to them should send a check for \$8.95 (made out to Apple Ink, Ltd.) to: Apple Ink, Ltd., 111 E 10th St., New York, NY 10003. Or you can purchase a copy by stopping by *Partnerships* at 830 Fifth Avenue with a check for \$7.95 made out to the City Parks Foundation.

The smallest patch of green to arrest the monotony of asphalt and concrete is as important to the value of real estate as streets, sewers and convenient shopping.

--James Felt, Chairman, New York City
Planning Commission, 1960



Partnerships for Parks



CITY PARKS FOUNDATION

830 Fifth Avenue
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Address Correction Requested

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