

Cedar Lake Park

UPDATE

Spring/Summer 2003

A Place for Peace Edition

Volume 15, No. 2

Cedar Lake Park Is a Place for Peace

BY NEIL TREMBLEY, SECRETARY

In these times of trouble, when the cacophony of events severs our serenity, and ideals and beliefs are cast aside or torn asunder, it is meet that our heart find a place to heal and our soul a place to rest. We seek a haven. One where communing with nature is not only an exercise in the search for a path to follow, but a guide to find what is needed to survive. Cedar Lake Park is such a place.

Among the acres of forest, prairie, and lakeshore we can find what is needed to soothe the psyche. Within this circle, life's cycle plays out. The trees creak in a sonorous language—speaking of stability and strength. The dormant meadows awaken with the blaze of verdant grasses. Bluebirds flit above the prairie lending their voice to the song of life. And the brittle piling of ice shards upon the shore turns into the gentle lapping of waves upon the beach.

Here we seek what Abraham Lincoln called “the better angels of our nature.” Here we nurture our spirit by embracing the revitalizing force of nature.

Here we are at peace.



Cedar Lake Park offers diverse opportunities to find peace, escape, and renewal, all within a short distance of downtown Minneapolis. Photos by Meredith Montgomery (unless otherwise noted).

North Mound Offers a Great, Wide View of the Lake



The mound, located near the pump on the north shore of Cedar Lake, is of uncertain origin.



On the Horizon

BY KEITH PRUSSING, CLPA PRESIDENT

It has been a wonderful spring. It is a real spring, with no lingering winter, nor early hot summer. Rains have been abundant, and it is very green. The park is beautiful. There are many places and opportunities to find peace. It is a joy to be in the park, and we are fortunate to have such a place that offers so much.

However, all is not good. Recently, there have been assaults on the Regional Trail near downtown. Elsewhere in the park, vandalism has occurred. The portable toilets are gone, due to budget constraints.. Graffiti appears on trees, and trash is scattered. It is noisy near the bridge construction, and dirt settles on the lakes. Exotics such as garlic mustard proliferate. New trails are opened by bikes in sensitive areas. The fishing dock is gone, and milfoil grows with less mowing. A train station is proposed. The canal wall deteriorates. Grass is mowed less often.

Public monies are contracting, as the demand for amenities and services increases. Many groups and facilities and programs are competing for limited funds. It will get worse before it gets better.

Now, more than ever, it is vital that people contribute to those things that are important to the quality of life in our community. Cedar Lake Park is such a place, and the park exists due to the committed actions of many people over several years. There continues to be much to do. Please contribute financially, or volunteer your time.



Gifts

BY STEVE DURRANT, TREASURER

Cedar Lake Park Association gratefully acknowledges recent contributions in the form of money, stocks, materials, volunteer time and in-kind services, memorials and gifts. Since the last *Update*, contributions have been received from:

Edward Axt
Lawrence Baker
Letitia Basford
Robert & Pamela Berkwitz
Tom Bugbee
Sharon Bunnell
Kenneth & Judy Dayton
David & Vanessa Dayton
Peretz Dworsky
Dale & Lorene Falk
Ned Foster & Laura Tiffany
Arlene Fried
Art & Joan Higinbotham
Linda Huhn
Vivian Mason

Jean McBean
Gwendolyn & Preben Mosborg
Steven & Cynthia Mueller
Gwen & Mason Myers
Michael Nystuen
Bob & Mary Peplin
Walter & Harriet Pratt
Walter & Harriet Pratt
Ed & Jan Prescott
Virginia Puzak
Ernest Reinsmith
Jean Roberts
Wiliam & Jacqueline Rudelius
Patricia & David Shirley
Margaret & Davis Shryer

Robert Silverman
Bruce & Julia Taber
Pat Thompson
Gael Thompson
Houry Vitale
Mark Wernick & Mary Entwistle
Sylvia & Dennis Wilson

Correction: Virginia Puzak—
contribution in memory of
William Holbrook, former
member of Minneapolis Park
Board

Thanks to Volunteers



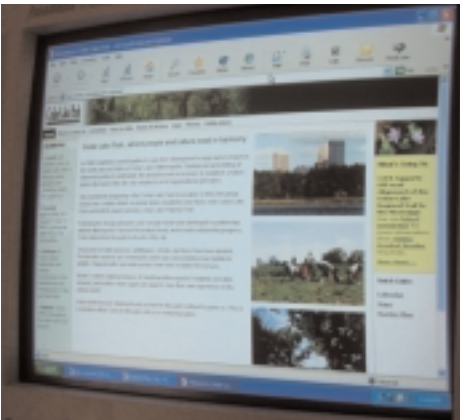
Wielding a buckthorn wrench, a volunteer worker from Bet Shalom makes short work of the invasive, non-native shrub.

Fay Atchison
Chris Carlson
Dan Dailey
Benjamin and Nicolas
Bob Day
Paul Deal
Peter Durrant
Steve Durrant
Ned Foster
Linda Huhn
Ruth Jones
David Klopp
Gregg Klopp
Bob Lazear
Laurie Lundy
Mary McGee
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John Richter
Martha Richter
Dorene Scriven
Paisley Svensson
D'Ann Topoluk
Neil Trembley
Carol White
Brian Willette
Carol White
Lloyd White

Visit Our Website: www.cedarlakepark.org

On June 17, we will be unveiling the new, improved version of the CLPA website, www.cedarlakepark.org. This resource is the repository of all that we do. The site contains maps, photos, newsletters, the concept master plan, news and events, links to other resources, and ways to participate and contribute. It is the story of the park and trail since 1850, and is used extensively. The new edition will be easier to navigate, and have many more features. Check it out.



Help Complete the Trail to the River

Discussions are ongoing with city, park, county, state and federal elected officials concerning the off-road alignment (in the railroad trench) of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail to the Mississippi River. This alignment would complete a connection between the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes and the river, a vision first conceived 100 years ago.

At present, there is federal and city funding for a connection that travels on city streets for three blocks, with crossings at three intersections. We hope to be able to utilize this concept as a local, north loop spur, and obtain funding for the preferred alignment. It is very clear that without private involvement, this will not happen.

A working group has been formed, composed of private citizens, public officials, and city staff. It is led by this Association. In June and July, we will be offering tours of the downtown area to public officials and other citizens as we build support. We continue to be hopeful of a successful outcome, and invite your financial support.



Welcome to New Board Members

Ned and his wife, Laura Tiffany, have lived “in the park” at the North end of the Hidden Beach block of Upton Avenue since 1987. Ned jogs or walks his dog in the park virtually every day and has watched the park evolve over the years. He decided it was time to serve on the board to help provide the perspective of the residents that live closest to the park.

He is a strong supporter of buckthorn removal, and not just because it improves his view of the lake! Ned worked for the Minneapolis Community Development Agency for eight years before becoming a commercial mortgage banker in 1989, and now works for Towle Financial Services, a division of Wells Fargo Bank.



New board member Ned Foster.

Linda Huhn is a freelance event/nature photographer who did some photography for CLPA back in its early days. A 25+ year resident homeowner in the Wedge neighborhood,



Watch out for poison ivy!

Poison Ivy is abundant in certain areas of the park. It does have wildlife value. And, it causes a severe, itching skin reaction in certain susceptible individuals. The oil is transmitted by contact with the plant.

You can be exposed if your dog runs through it and then touches you. You can get it on your shoes or legs. Learn to identify jewelweed, usually found nearby. Crushed and rubbed on exposed areas, it will remedy the oil.



New board member Linda Huhn.

she is an avid gardener, lifelong environmentalist, and currently on the Minnesota Native Plant Society Board.

BY KEITH PRUSSING

Buckthorn removal has taken place in the park in several areas. A group of volunteers from Benilde-St. Margaret, assisted by Park Board staff and neighbors, worked on a fine spring morning at Hidden Beach. Native plants were also installed. Also, men, women and children from Bet Shalom congregation offered mitzvah (loving service) in the Western Extension at the pedestrian bridge near the Jewish Community Center. Buckthorn was pulled using weed wrenches, and trash was gathered.. Finally, Hennepin County crews are continuing their labors, with cutting in the area of W. 21st Street as well as in the Kenilworth Canal between Cedar and Isles.

Facing **severe budget cutbacks**, MPRB has been extensively visiting with the community in various formats to determine the priorities of park users. Initially, wading pools, chemical toilets, and fountains were targeted for cuts. Due to intense public outcry, these cuts have been modified. This process does point out, however, the need for potential private funding for things that people value, such as the Berger fountain in Loring Park, which will be turned back on; or biffs, which cost approximately \$3000/season to operate. It takes about \$2000 to operate a wading pool. Cutting of milfoil from the lakes will be curtailed. Finally, a key consideration is how to capture revenue from the millions of non-resident users in light of the sharp reductions in Regional Park funding by the state through the Metropolitan Council.

Recently there was a multi-faceted reception to thank everyone, including CLPA, who helped make the inaugural **Minneapolis Loppet** a great success. It was the third largest event of its kind in the country this year, all on three inches of snow. We look forward to next year's event. In addition, there

will be a major biking extravaganza this summer, as part of the Mayor's efforts to promote silent sport, and have a major event occurring in each season.

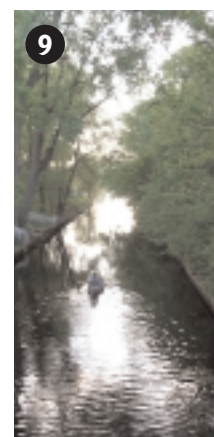
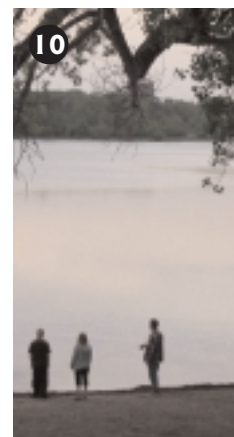
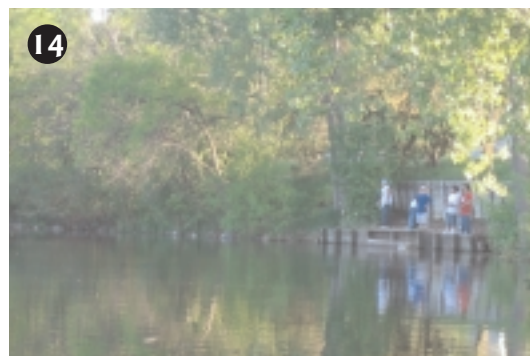
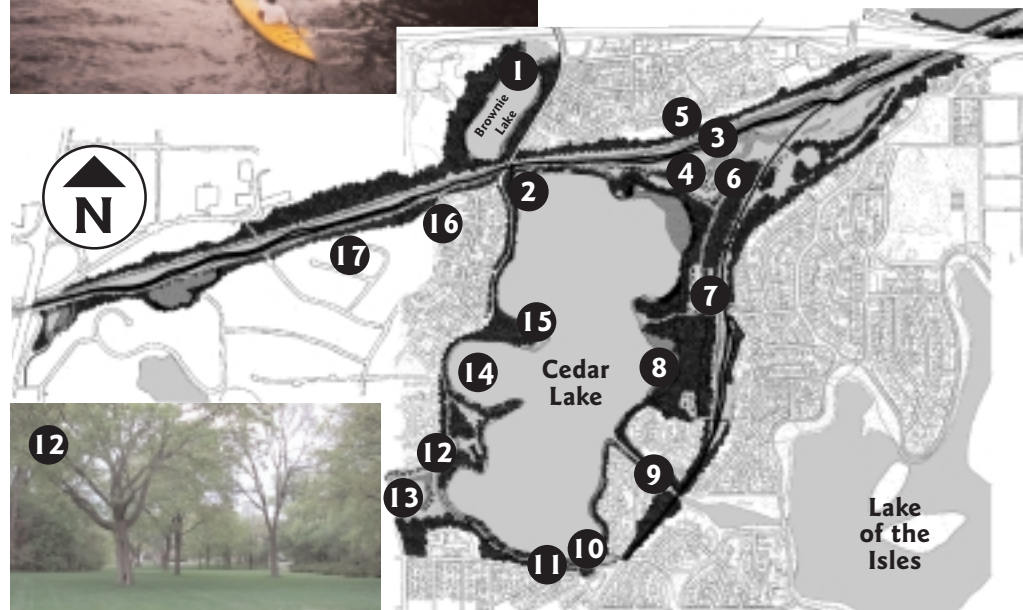
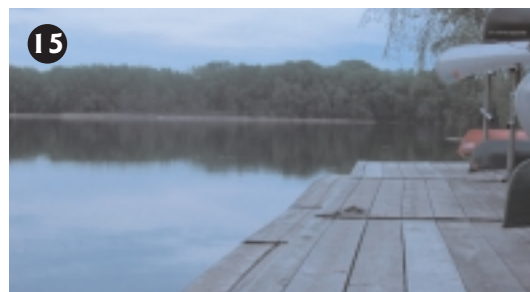
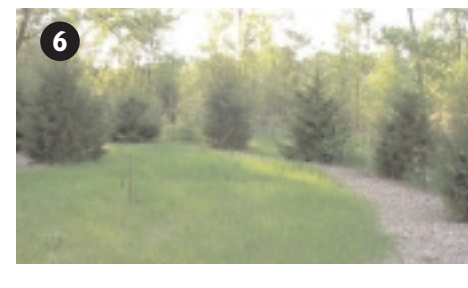
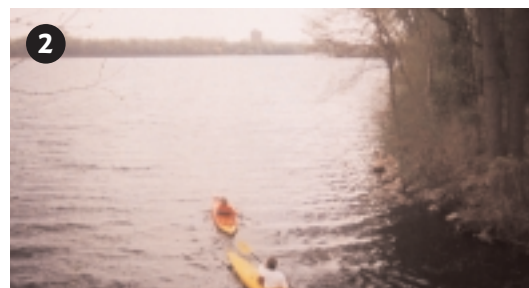
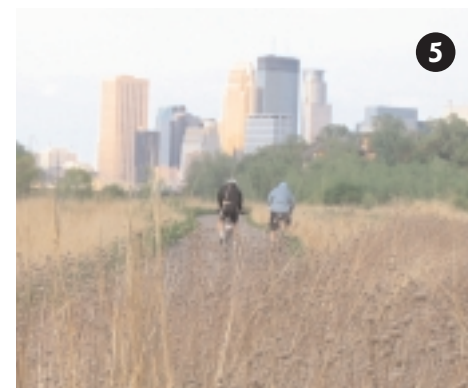
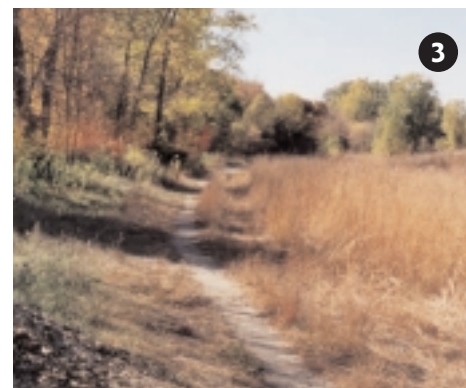
The consultants studying the **future transportation possibilities in the Southwest Corridor** have been presenting an ongoing series of neighborhood meetings. The Midtown Greenway Coalition board has gone on record as favoring streetcar/trolley access only through the Greenway, with light rail or diesel hybrid buses (on rails) for the potential routes such as Southwest, Nicollet Ave, or Lyndale Ave. into downtown Minneapolis. There is the possibility of a station near the junction of the Cedar Lake and Kenilworth trails, in close proximity to Penn Ave. and I-394. This would necessitate a bridge over the railroad.

MPRB's budget process does point out, however, the need for potential private funding for things that people value...

Animal Control officers have stepped up **enforcement of off-leash dog laws** in Cedar Lake Park in response to increased complaints. In addition, as it is against state law for dogs to be off-leash during waterfowl nesting season (now), the state DNR has also become involved. Wildlife seen in the park includes turkey, pheasant, fox, raccoon, badger, mink, and all sorts of waterfowl and other birds. City and park police are also more evident as summer approaches, especially in the Hidden Beach area. Exotic plants continue to be a problem in the park. MPRB is inviting participation in a phenology (when things happen) study. For instance, by associating garlic mustard (a pest) emergence with violet blooming, or buckthorn

continued on page 6

Peaceful Places Around Cedar Lake Park and Trail



Key to locations

- 1 Brownie Lake
- 2 Kayak near Brownie tunnel
- 3 Prairie edge path
- 4 Sunset bench
- 5 Prairie and the city
- 6 Cedar Grove
- 7 Woodland path
- 8 Linda's spiral
- 9 Canoe in Isles/Cedar canal
- 10 South Beach
- 11 St. David's Society daffodils
- 12 Picnic lawn
- 13 Cedar Meadows
- 14 Fishing
- 15 Dock at Cedar Point
- 16 Western Extension, looking east
- 17 Western Extension, looking west

PROJECTS IN THE PARK

Continued from page 4

leafout with lilacs, they hope to be better able to target treatment to the most effective times. This is necessary as the seasons have become more unpredictable as compared to the historical record.

The **annual meeting** of the Association was held in late January at the Jones-Harrison nursing home. New board members were elected, presentations were made concerning our activities of the past year as well as plans for the future. The food was wonderful, the attendees enthusiastic, and a good time was had by all. In April, the board met for its annual planning retreat. Decisions made included completing the memorial Cedar Grove this year; funding buckthorn removal in the area of the mound, pump and bench; planting native flora in several areas of the park, and studying and making recommendations concerning access to the park and lakeshore in the Hidden Beach area.

Outreach activities continue throughout the park. The annual **spring bird-watching** event took place in mid-May. The annual **Earth Day watershed cleanup** occurred in April, and **National Trails Day** is June 7. We are compiling a birding database through an ongoing series of bird counts. A mid-summer **prairie wildflower walk** will be held, as well as walks in the woods. CLPA is working with MPRB to map all of the native plant locations in and around Cedar Lake Park as part of the development of a systemwide data base that will allow for a durable record for planning, restoration, preservation, and publication purposes. In looking at this record of activity in the park, it is truly amazing how much has been done in the past eight years. Coupled with the native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers that were already present, the vision of a nature park at Cedar Lake is well on its way to becoming a reality. We continue to work with the Minnesota Native Plant Society. The park and trail has been a major case study for a U of M urban wildlands class teaching future envi-



Bet Shalom volunteers remove buckthorn in the Western Extension near the pedestrian bridge by the Jewish Community Center.

ronmental resource students how to preserve and restore land in an urban setting. CLPA guided a recent tour of the park for these students. They enjoyed the park immensely. Finally, we are participating in the Embrace Open Spaces program coordinated by the McKnight Foundation, designed to encourage neighbors to look out for the open space in their local area, so that they may be proactive in preserving it in the face of ongoing development.

At present there is only informal dirt trail **access to the CLRT** between Ewing Ave. and Highway 100 in the Western Extension section of the park. Owned by MPRB and located in St. Louis Park, this area is a well-used recreation area for neighborhoods such as Lake Forest and south Tyrol Hills, the Jewish Community Center, as well as trail uses passing through. St. Louis Park is actively pursuing a process, initiated by the neighbors, to develop access in this area. Meetings are ongoing, and there are concerns about utility easements, neighborhood security, and funding. CLPA continues to participate.

The **contest to name** the newly available 12.5-mile loop (see Winter 2003 *Update*) is

still open. Thanks to all of you who have contributed so far, and we welcome additional ideas. At least four jurisdictions are involved, which complicates things. What is simple, though, is the enjoyment of this series of trails. This map is available on our website, or on the Hennepin County bike map.

A potpourri of items happening...private donors for a **Theodore Wirth statue** and interior renovations at the Chalet in Wirth Park...wall stabilization in the **Kenilworth Canal**, postponed from last year...monthly **parkway closings** at select locations...**new housing** on the high Kenwood bluffs overlooking the park...extensive **buckthorn removal** and trail chipping at Spring Lake...MPCA grant to Friends of Birch Pond Watershed to **determine site pollution** and partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools to establish an environmental learning laboratory in their efforts to save Anwatan Woods...bicyclists continue to establish new trails throughout the park...water quality in Brownie and Cedar are challenged by the bridge demolition, and neighborhood activists are watching...water levels are more normal, and the fishing is excellent.

Work Begins on CLP Bridge

Construction began on the long-awaited Cedar Lake Parkway bridge in April, 2003. Originally scheduled to start in March, final contract negotiations pushed back the start date. According to Minneapolis Bridge Division crew chief Meseret Wolana, the contractor will revise its construction schedule to ensure that the bridge will be completed within the 2003 calendar year, as promised.

Officials have said that the section of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail underneath the bridge will need to be closed from time to time; however, they indicated it would be a high priority to keep this highly-used corridor open as much as possible. Presently, bridge traffic is confined to one lane with stoplights, and Cedar Lake Road is now dirt for several hundred feet. Vegetation, including large trees, has been removed on both sides of the bridge. Citizens are monitoring the construction daily to ensure water quality is protected. For updates, or to voice any concerns, contact CLPA.



Construction equipment deployed in the trail corridor will be used to replace the decades-old bridge, which is in the background. Walkers (inset photo) go beneath the bridge.

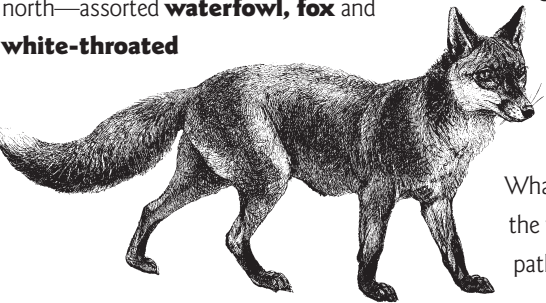
WILDLIFE NEWS

Spring in the Wildlife World

BY MARY MCGEE

After the ice went out of Cedar Lake on April 3 and the woodland paths were clear of snow, summer residents began to return to join the local winter birds. First came the **Canada geese** and then pairs of **mallards and wood ducks** followed by **herons, egrets, robins, redwing blackbirds, swallows, bluebirds** and **phoebes**.

They joined the chorus of **cardinals, downy and hairy woodpeckers, chickadees and nuthatches** who were singing, mating and building nests. Next, the earliest of the spring migrants arrived on their way north—assorted **waterfowl, fox** and **white-throated**

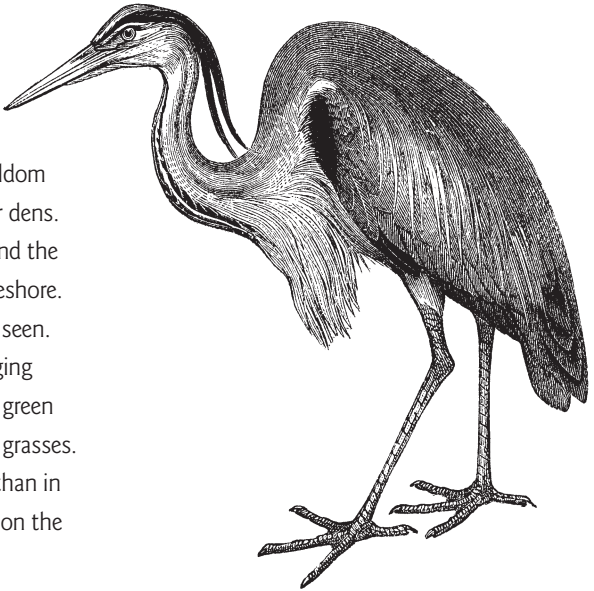


sparrows, thrushes, kinglets, and myrtle (yellow-rumped) warblers.

In the sky, **hawks** and over the lake, **gulls** and of course, always the **crows**. All of this activity will peak in May around the time Peter Neubeck leads the **annual spring bird walk** in Cedar Lake Park.

Meanwhile, the **raccoons** and **chipmunks** have reappeared to join the **red and gray squirrels**. The **foxes**, who were very visible cruising around in winter, now are seldom seen, while the young kits are in their dens. **Muskrats**, too, are raising young, and the **carp** are spawning along the lakeshore. Everywhere there is much to be seen.

Look down and spot the emerging woodland wildflowers and the green sprouts under last year's prairie grasses. What better place to be these days than in the woods and along the shore and on the paths and trails of Cedar Lake Park.



The **Bluebird Recovery Program** welcomes two new volunteers, Kurt and Barbara Klussendorf, who are helping monitor the nest boxes along the Cedar Lake Trail and at Target and Brownie Lake.



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Cedar Lake Park Update is published seasonally by the Cedar Lake Park Association (CLPA).

Since 1989, CLPA has worked with individuals, neighborhoods, corporations, foundations, churches and schools, as well as with state, regional and federal agencies.

We have successful partnerships with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and other city, county, regional, state and federal agencies.

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Layout: Triangle Park Creative

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CLPA Update, Spring/Summer 2003

*If you're seeing this CLPA Update for the first time,
contact us if you want to be added to our mailing list.*

CALENDAR

CLPA Steering Committee

Second Monday of each month, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Kenwood Recreation Center. You're invited to participate.

National Trails Day

June 7

Summer Solstice

June 21

Parade of Bikes

July 4, 12:30 p.m. Benefiting Habitat for Humanity. Ride from 5th Avenue on the Midtown Greenway, out to St. Louis Park and back on the Cedar Lake Trail.

www.paradeofbikes.org

Prairie Wildflower Walk

July—TBA

Stroll and Roll

September 13

Prairie Planting

September—TBA

Trail Chipping, Buckthorn Removal and Spring Plantings

Call for dates



Cedar Lake Park Association Mission

- 1. Create and nurture a park at Cedar Lake with a thriving nature preserve and connecting trails and greenways.**
- 2. Provide opportunities for people to learn to live in community with nature and one another.**
- 3. Continue to foster citizen leadership and private involvement in the development and management of the park and trails.**
- 4. Support similar efforts throughout the metro area and beyond.**

Your support is important—
All donations are tax-deductible.*

* To the extent allowed by law.