



LAKE
PARK
FRIENDS

Looking Back, Looking Forward

A Letter from LPF President Anne Hamilton

The headline of this article, “Looking Back, Looking Forward,” was the theme of a Founders Lunch put on by Lake Park Friends on November 15, 2023. At a panel discussion preceding the luncheon, panelists Diane Buck and Virginia Small offered valuable insights into the lessons learned over LPF’s 30-year history and expressed their ideas about where we should devote our attention going forward.

Seventy LPF members attended the luncheon, including Founders Joanne Barndt, Diane Buck, Margarete Harvey, Mary Kamps and Mary Stearns, along with many former and current board members. It was a reunion of old friends and co-workers celebrating 30 years of dedicated work and achievements.

I offered this toast to the Founders: “Over the last 30 years, our community has benefited from your foresight, your wisdom, your love of Lake Park, and your continued commitment to maintaining and improving the park for all to enjoy. You have been amazing stewards of this beautiful piece of land and we are eternally grateful to you.”

Hear, hear!

Another way in which we are “looking back” is through our archiving project, led by the History Committee, with the able assistance of archivist Leigh Albritton. We are working to develop a record-keeping system that will be accessible and useful to future constituents.

Looking forward, the board has now turned its attention to strategic planning. Our goal is to have the plan adopted by our annual



Anne Hamilton (far left) moderates a discussion featuring panelists Diane Buck, Joanne Barndt and Virginia Small.



Lake Park Friends Founders are seated together to enjoy a Lake Park Bistro lunch and to share stories.

meeting on May 7, 2024. Under the direction of Sara Wilson (Mayes, Wilson & Associates), we have sought and

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Looking Back, Looking Forward, continued from page 1



Staff from Vanguard Sculpture Services restored the bronze bust in their foundry and installed it back on its granite plinth in Lake Park.



During a conference dinner at Milwaukee School of Engineering, Joanne Barndt accepts an award of appreciation on behalf of Lake Park Friends from Olmsted Network Board of Directors Treasurer William Bell.

Photo by
Phil Schultz.



LPF celebrated its 25th year of Monday concerts in 2023 with record attendance. Photo by Jeff Bentoff.

analyzed input from former board members and longtime supporters and are in the process of establishing goals for the next three years. We are optimistic that this work will help us agree on the future direction of LPF and establish priorities as we move forward.

Other highlights of 2023 included:

- The return of the Christian Wahl monument from Harriet Tubman Park (previously Wahl Park). It is now placed at the southern entrance to Lake Park (near the intersection of Bellevue and Wahl). The dedication took place on September 11 with several donors to the project in attendance.
- The Olmsted Network held its annual conference, "The Olmsteds in Wisconsin," in Milwaukee and Lake Geneva from September 20-22; one of the days was hosted by Lake Park Friends in Lake Park. LPF received one of the Olmsted Network's five annual awards at the conference, a certificate of appreciation for our work in Lake Park.
- The Ravine Road controversy, which has consumed much of our time. The status of the road is set out in a separate article.

Along with these one-time events, LPF has continued all of our regular activities - stewardship of the park (especially by the Nature Committee members), Musical Mondays concerts, Wonderful Wednesdays concerts, Cirque planning and execution, tennis lessons, management of the ice skating rink, membership drives, etc. Ann Wollmer, the LPF administrator, handles all of this, with volunteer help, year-round.

In short, we are a small board and an even smaller staff and we are very busy. 2023 was a good year and 2024 promises to be even better!

With much appreciation to LPF members and volunteers for all you do to make the park a better place for all Milwaukeeans!

Ravine Road Remains Closed

LPF Seeks Compromise

Issue to be presented to Historic Preservation Commission

Lake Park Friends has been advocating for the reopening of Ravine Road to automobile traffic since the Concrete Footbridge ribbon-cutting in November 2022. Our 2019 resolution on the road and more recent communications on the issue are on our website, at www.lakeparkfriends.org/news.

We initiated a petition supporting our position on opening the road to cars in 2019. To date, we have 4,315 who have signed on! And, in the last six months, the number has increased by more than 500.

The issue appears to be at a stalemate now. The County has indicated that the road is subject to a five-year planning process. They have published estimates ranging from \$2.5 million to \$4.5 million for the various options they are considering. These numbers are three times more than the numbers published in 2019. What this suggests is that the September 2023 numbers are likely to increase as the years pass. LPF would like to fund the interim reopening of the road during the period while the County reviews its options, but this suggestion has been rejected.

To date the issue has not been considered by the Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission. In the coming year we will be pushing to get the issue before the commission. Our mission statement highlights the importance of Olmsted's vision, and we are committed to ensuring that everything that happens in the park is consistent with that vision. We will also be pushing hard for a compromise on the road. The compromise we are offering addresses environmental issues and traffic concerns during times in summer when the lakefront is most crowded, as well as allowing for use by pedestrians, cyclists and cars.



Ravine Road and Concrete Footbridge, March 2024.

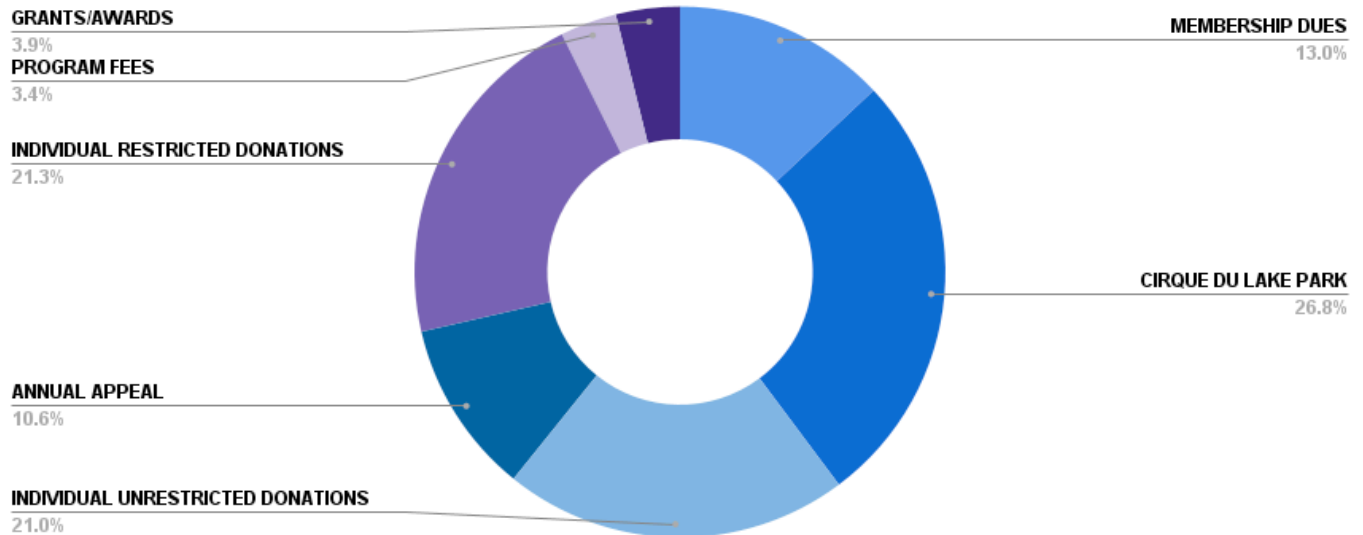
Compromise on road:

- o 15 mph speed limit
- o Textured pavement
- o No trucks
- o July 1-Labor Day: open to pedestrians as of noon on Saturdays and Sundays, as well as July 3 and Labor Day. Open to car and bicycle traffic midnight to noon on those days.
- o The rest of the year it would be open to cars and bicycles, except for weather-related closures during the winter (to be determined by the County during snow emergencies).

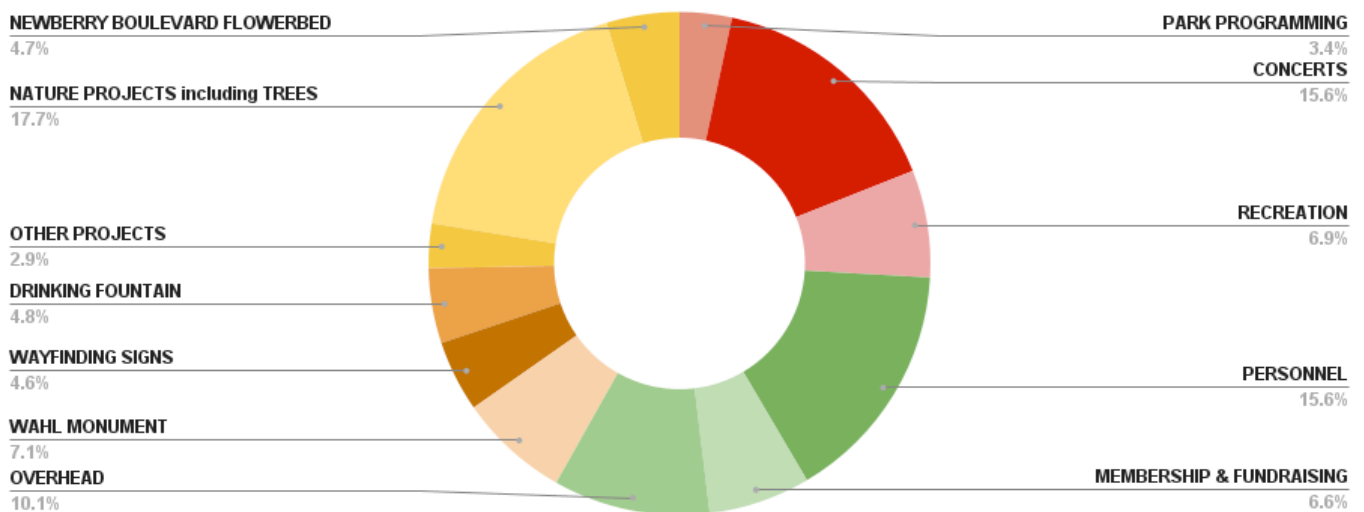
These points are consistent with the compromise set out in LPF's 2019 Resolution on Ravine Road. It is a proposal; we're open to discussion on the details. We are convinced that a "win-win" compromise is possible.

Financial Highlights

OPERATING REVENUES



OPERATING EXPENSES



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WE ARE GRATEFUL for the support of these foundations, corporations and individuals who contributed to support our mission and programs. Donor levels reflect total given for the year, including membership dues, which were recorded on or before December 31, 2023. The following list includes gifts of \$150 or more.

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SAVE THE DATE!
2024 Cirque du Lake Park
Saturday, September 7



OUR MISSION

Lake Park Friends is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the preservation and enjoyment of Lake Park, to sponsor educational, recreational and cultural events in the park, and to raise funds for the restoration and enhancement of the park in the spirit of Frederick Law Olmsted.

2022 Conservator Award



Jim Rowen was the recipient of the 2022 Conservator Award. He posts wonderful, artistic and interesting photos of Lake Park on his Facebook page and tags the Lake Park Friends account.

No one has done more to showcase the beauty – both natural and manmade – of Lake Park. Through his photos, and social media, he has made the park accessible to all – very much in keeping with the spirit and principles of Frederick Law Olmsted.

His photos offer a different perspective and help people see things that they may not have caught on their own. Hopefully they may cause people to interact differently with the park in search of something discovered in one of his pictures.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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