



The bulletin of Partnerships for Parks, an initiative of the City Parks Foundation and the City of New York/Parks & Recreation



## Poe Park's Ravens Swoop into Action

within the green space. Drug users were known to line its benches, and the park's lamp lights were often vandalized, leaving the recreational area dark and prone to illicit activity after sun down.

Two years ago, several local community groups started planning for bringing neighborhood residents back into the park. With the support of Parks & Recreation, they received a jungle gym, donated by a local car dealer. Realizing that the new playground equipment would be a draw only if the park itself remained clean and safe, they decided to launch their friends group, the Ravens, the same day the unassembled jungle gym arrived on Grand Concourse Avenue.

Helen Hamer, president of the Ravens, said that community organizations plastered the neighborhood with signs about the jungle gym's arrival, along with a plea for help to assemble the equipment. To their pleasant surprise, about 100 people showed up—ready to set up the gym and to join the nascent group. "We took a vow to continue to make sure that the park remains a safe haven for our kids," she said.

Ever since that first event, the Ravens have relied on publicity to develop and expand their program, as well

Poe Park, on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, was scary – even by the standards of its famous namesake, Edgar Allan Poe, whose landmarked former home lies

as to enhance their organization's presence in the neighborhood. With an early grant from *Partnerships for Parks*, they created a newsletter that is distributed to members of the Ravens and countless others. Indeed, said Ms. Hammer, their newsletter is like a calling card; members carry around extra copies and hand them out in any potential "networking" setting. With a cover letter, their newsletter is transformed into a tool to solicit donations from local merchants and corporations.



Poe Park jungle gym

Alberto "The Cowboy" Roman, vice president of the group, said he always turns to local radio stations and newspapers to publicize the Ravens' events in Poe Park, which by now are monthly. These include: a holiday tree lighting, an Easter egg hunt, a pre-Mother's Day event, clean-up and planting days, and health fairs, which are sponsored by local health-care providers. His outreach strategy includes sending out "save the date" notices to the various media outlets, in order to solicit mentions on public affairs programs, talk shows, and in print. He said that with the proper publicity—as well as a good program—hundreds now attend special events in the park in addition to using the ever-popular jungle gym.

Before the Ravens were established, said Mr. Roman, "I'd pass the park many times, and nothing was going on there." Now, with Poe Park brimming with family-oriented events that feature free refreshments donated by local merchants, he said, "you have no excuse not to show up."

## GO ON-LINE FOR PARKS GRANTS, NEWS, AND MORE!

Would you like to receive a Parks Card? Want to read about the Partners of the Month? Find out about volunteer opportunities? Attend a free workshop? For this and other information, log on to

[www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org)

### E-MAIL BULLETIN

Starting January 19, Parks & Recreation will implement a new electronic e-mail bulletin. Users can sign up for the service on both the Parks' and *Partnerships for Parks'* websites at [www.nyc.gov/parks](http://www.nyc.gov/parks) or [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org). Users will be able to customize the type of information that they would like to receive e-mail updates about. Topics will range from information about recreation and special events to new volunteer opportunities.



### RAISING FUNDS

Check out [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org) for information on new grant deadlines. For example, the Chase Volunteer Greening Awards (see reverse page for details) applications are now on line. Information on other grant opportunities includes NEAP Awards, City Parks Foundation Quarterly Grants, and more! Call Charlotte Kaiser at 212-360-8166 for the listing if you do not have WEB access.

### THE CAMPAIGN FOR PARKS

Find out about how you can join with the hundreds of civic, parks and non-profit organizations that are mounting a massive effort to educate candidates about the importance of parks in this historic election year.

## JOIN THE CAMPAIGN FOR PARKS

Due to term limits, 2001 is an historic election year. Join the thousands of volunteers and hundreds of groups banding together to educate candidates about the importance of parks to the City's quality of life and the need to invest more in them. In BROOKLYN, the Brooklyn Parks Advocates are working to advocate for improvement of Brooklyn's green spaces. In the BRONX, groups will hold the Seventh Annual Bronx Parks Speak-Up on February 25 to develop a borough-wide agenda for parks. Parks groups in other boroughs are working to form similar borough-wide advocacy groups and will be scheduling events in the near future. To get in touch with the park leaders in your borough who are coordinating this effort, contact your borough Outreach Coordinator:

Bronx: 718-430-4641  
Brooklyn: 718-965-8992  
Manhattan: 212-408-0230  
Queens: 718-520-5913  
Staten Island: 718-815-7194

Stay tuned for up-coming *Leaflet* articles and go to *Partnerships'* web site at [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org) for updates or to receive e-mail updates about this effort.

### HELPFUL NUMBERS

*Partnerships for Parks* 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.nyc.gov/parks](http://www.nyc.gov/parks)

[www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org)

*Partnerships for Parks* 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.

*Tim (Sailfish) Tompkins, Director*

*This issue of the Leaflet was edited by Dana (Violet) Litvack*



CITY PARKS FOUNDATION



City of New York  
Parks & Recreation

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

## GET MONEY

**Chase Volunteer Greening Awards** provide support to volunteers and groups with an established track record with funding for tools, equipment, plants, and materials for greening projects in City parks. Applications due March 1, 2001; for an application, please go to [www.itsmypark.org](http://www.itsmypark.org) or call 212-360-8166. Last year 1 out of 4 applicants received an award; preference is given to applicants who did not win an award last year.

## GET EXPERTISE

Members of community groups interested in learning about successful techniques practiced by other community leaders can attend *Partnerships* workshops. The following workshops are being held in January and February:

**Fundraising for Park Groups** Offers techniques for approaching businesses, individuals and foundations for support, including tips on writing grant proposals. This workshop will be held in the following locations:

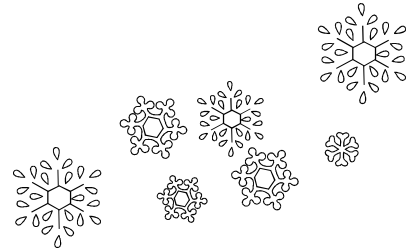
**Brooklyn:** Tuesday, January 30, 6:30 – 8 pm at Litchfield Villa.

**Queens:** Tuesday, February 6, 6:30 – 8 pm at the Overlook.

**The Bronx:** Tuesday, February 27, 6:30 – 8 pm at St. James Recreation Center.

**Staten Island:** Saturday, February 17, 11am – 12:30 pm.

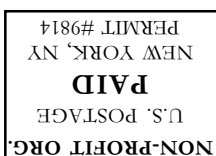
For more information and to register for a workshop call Charlotte Kaiser at 212-360-8166.



The stars that singly, then in flocks appear,  
Like jets of silver from the violet dome,  
So wonderful, so many and so near,  
And then the golden moon to light me home—  
The crunching snowshoes and the stinging air,  
And silence, frost, and beauty everywhere.

— Archibald Lampman, "Winter Uplands," 1899

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



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

