

Park Pride Press

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Former Denver Mayor Wellington Webb will give the keynote address

Energize. Organize. Mobilize.

Park Pride's Fourth Annual Park and Greenspace Conference

Park Pride is proud to announce our Fourth Annual Parks and Greenspace Conference, featuring keynote speaker Wellington Webb, former Mayor of Denver. During his three terms, Mayor Webb created more park space than any other Denver mayor, including fifteen new parks along the South Platte River and the transformation of the city's old airport into a mixed-use development that will include over 1,400 acres of greenspace.

The conference also will include remarks by Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin (invited), a presentation on what opportunities the BeltLine provides Atlanta and your community (by the Trust for Public Land and Friends of the BeltLine), and a "call to action" by Atlanta Councilman Ceasar Mitchell.

In addition, the conference will include breakout sessions designed to educate and empower residents as they help create a world-class system of parks. Breakout sessions include:

- Getting Organized in Your Park
- How Parks Promote Public Health
- Can Parks and Affordable Housing Coexist?
- How Parks Promote an Environmental Ethic

By sharing successful, practical experiences, the conference will enable participants to translate energy into action, providing tangible benefits for our parks and communities.

We invite you to join us for what promises to be an exciting, enjoyable and highly educational conference. For more information, or to register, visit www.parkpride.com/confe.html.

Register today and save up to \$25!

Monday, April 11

8:30AM-5:00PM

**Atlanta Botanical
Garden**

Blank Foundation Provides \$150K Grant to Park Pride

Funds Will Help Communities Develop Visions for Their Parks and Greenspaces

Park Pride is excited to have received a grant of \$150,000 from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation in December, 2004. These funds will allow Park Pride to hire a landscape architect to work with communities to develop a conceptual master plan for their park.

Hiring a landscape architect is part of Park Pride's comprehensive plan to engage communities in their parks, help them organize, and improve their quality of life. In August, Park Pride launched Community Micro Grants, which provide seed money for groups taking the first step toward improving their parks and green spaces. In November, Park Pride hosted a series of "Friends Raising" seminars, bringing local experts into communities to talk to residents about how to get involved, get organized and take back their park.

The landscape architect will work with these

"Friends of the Park" groups and the larger community to create a conceptual master plan for their park. This process, known as 'Park Visioning,' will enable communities to transform their needs and desires into an inspiring park vision, and help them build relationships with schools, businesses, religious organizations, and others centered on their parks and green spaces.

In addition to allowing Park Pride to hire a landscape architect, the grant will fund the acquisition of a new truck, the upgrading of Park Pride's database, and the continuing operations of the organization.

The Blank Foundation made its grant as part of a broader strategy called Inspiring Spaces, which is aimed at developing a system of great parks in Atlanta through planning, land acquisition, maintenance and public support.

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Park Pride
Congratulates
Guido Sacchi,
Georgia's 2004
Chief Information
Officer of the year!

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www.ParkPride.Org

Park Budget Gets Boost

Across the United States, cities have resorted to cutting funding for parks to balance the budget. Too often, the Parks Department is one of the first to suffer during difficult economic times. Here at home, the story was remarkably different.

For the second year in a row, the Parks Bureau saw its budget increase. In December, the Atlanta City Council passed legislation that would allow the City to hire an additional forestry crew, get seasonal workers on the job two weeks earlier, and provide nearly twice as much funding for desperately-needed equipment.

While a lot of this good news is due to a Mayor and City Council who appreciate parks, much credit goes to the park activists who helped them see the light.

Wearing red "Save Our Parks" buttons, dozens of residents from across Atlanta spoke up for parks and greenspace at public hearings on the budget. As the Council debated long into the night, trying to find funding for other priorities, Council Members told DPRCA Commissioner Dianne Harnell Cohen that she could "go home, parks are safe."

Thanks to all who showed up and had their voices heard. You truly made a difference!

BeltLine Goes Green

In December, 2004, the Trust for Public Land released an extensive report outlining a vision for creating an emerald necklace of parks centered on the Atlanta BeltLine. The proposal would expand five existing parks and create eight new ones. A linear park with a biking/walking trail and transit would join them, creating a continuous BeltLine Park System of over 2000 acres, serving all four quadrants of the City.

For this vision to come to fruition will require significant federal and local funding. To help raise these funds, Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin created a steering committee to explore the feasibility of raising local funds by creating a tax allocation district (TAD) along the BeltLine.

A TAD, which requires the approval of the City of Atlanta, Fulton County and the Atlanta School Board, essentially leverages future property tax revenue to pay for current improvements.

Help the BeltLine become a reality. Let your

local elected officials know that you support the BeltLine and the TAD. Visit our BeltLine web page at www.ParkPride.org/atlan.html to learn more about the TAD and how you can help.

Council Group Studies Parks

In early 2004, the Atlanta City Council began a heated debate on the management of Atlanta's park system. Tempers flared over the specifics of a proposal to create an Atlanta Parks Authority.

Afterward, the Council decided that there may be merit to reviewing the management structure for Atlanta's parks and greenspaces. To this end, the

Council passed Councilman Ceasar Mitchell's legislation creating a Parks Technical Advisory Group (TAG) consisting of fifteen members, mostly appointed by the Council and Mayor. Park Pride is fortunate to be in this group.

The mission of the Parks TAG is to determine "how to best acquire future greenspace, maintain and

improve the Atlanta Parks, and to determine whether a Park Authority is in the public interest to achieve the goal of a greener Atlanta."

The TAG has its work cut out for it. Among the nation's 25 largest cities, Atlanta ranks dead last in the percentage of acreage dedicated to parks. Our City also lags far behind comparable cities in terms of parks funding and acreage per resident.

To learn more about the Parks TAG's work, visit our web site at www.parkpride.org/parc.html.

Become a Park Inspector

The Atlanta Bureau of Parks uses a Park Quality Control Inspection form to monitor the condition of Atlanta's parks. While the Bureau uses the form to review the work of its staff, any Atlanta resident can fill out and submit the form.

Park Pride and the Bureau are encouraging residents to take the time to inspect the park(s) in their community. Filling out the form provides valuable feedback to the City and creates a record of what needs to be addressed in your park.

We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to speak up for your park. For more information, and to download the form, visit the "Take Back Your Park" page on our web site, www.ParkPride.Org/takeb.html.

BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION!

* Join the Park Atlanta Rescue Campaign

* Attend one of our meetings

* Sign up to receive PARC e-mail updates.

* Visit the PARC web page at: www.ParkPride.org/parc.html

Community Micro Grants Help Beautify Atlanta

Park Pride successfully launched its Community Micro Grants Program last fall. Working with our neighborhood planning unit (NPU) partners, we provide matching grants of up to \$500 to encourage small beautification projects in the City of Atlanta's public parks and greenspaces.

In October, Park Pride awarded 18 grants ranging from \$150-\$500 to community groups in 12 NPUs. We were delighted with the wide ranging scope of the projects, including:

- Reclaim vacant land as public greenspace
- Conduct a tree survey
- Build a new playground
- Kudzu eradication
- Erosion control
- Beautification
- Park clean-up

We look forward to highlighting a few of these successful projects at Park Pride's Park and Greenspace Conference on April 11, 2005.

Now Accepting Applications!

The next deadline for submission of Community Micro Grant applications is March 15th. We will announce awards on April 11th at Park Pride's Annual Park and Greenspace Conference.

NPUs A, G, I, J, K, M, P, T, V, X, Y and Z have not allocated their \$500 for the current funding cycle. If you live in one of these NPUs and have a project idea, contact your NPU chair to get on the agenda to present your proposal at the next NPU meeting. If you have a project in an NPU which has already allocated funds, you can submit your project in the citywide category.

Community Micro Grants are possible through the generosity of the Cecil B. Day Family. For more information, and to print an application, visit www.parkpride.org/micro.html, or call Allison Barnett at (404) 817-6760.



Adamsville residents show off their new fountain, purchased with the help of a Park Pride Community Micro Grant.

SUPPORT YOUR PARKS—JOIN PARK PRIDE

Improving Atlanta's parks is a lot of work—and we need all the help that we can get. Members of Park Pride support our programs and the many community groups with whom we work. Members receive our newsletter and invitations to Park Pride events, and most membership levels include additional benefits (which are noted on our web site). Membership levels are listed below, but **any donation is welcome!!**

I want to help protect and increase Atlanta's parks and greenspace by becoming a member of Park Pride!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Supporter \$35

Supporter Family \$50

Friend of the Park \$100

Park Advocate \$250

Park Patron \$500

Enclosed is my check for \$_____

Please circle desired membership level and mail to:

Park Pride
 675 Ponce de Leon Ave.
 8th Floor
 Atlanta, GA 30308



www.ParkPride.Org

EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS!

\$10

A spade for our tool bank

\$25

A flat of flowers

\$50

A tree

\$100

A load of mulch

\$500

Community Micro Grant

\$1000

Friends Raising Seminar

Special Thanks To:

THE ARTHUR M. BLANK
FAMILY FOUNDATION



Taking Back Woodruff Park

Park Pride is reaching out to communities, looking for people who love their parks as much as we do. Park Pride hosts seminars on how to start a friends of the park group – and gladly will host one in your community. We developed a twenty-eight page “how-to” guide on such topics as setting goals, planning events and getting support from business. Our sign campaign has taken outreach to the streets – or at least the park paths – educating residents about their parks and looking for a few activists ready to change their little corner of the world.

People like the Downtown Neighbors Association’s Cooper Holland. Cooper loves Woodruff Park but felt that it could be a lot better. She organized, partnered with Central Atlanta Progress and the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District, and got to work.

The first thing they did was to survey park users – an excellent place for a friends of the park group to start. Cooper learned that Woodruff Park is known as “one of the best places in the country to pick up a professional chess match.” The survey not only helped Cooper learn what others loved (and hated)

about Woodruff Park, it involved the community and let them know that good things were happening in their park.

Thanks to Cooper and her business partners, Woodruff Park is now undergoing a major renovation. When it reopens, it will have newly-installed, outdoor chess tables ready for action.

Park Pride is looking for people like Cooper Holland to get involved, get organized, and take back your park! To learn more, contact Nicholas Williams (nicholas@ParkPride.org/404-853-7471).



Parks and Greenspace Pot Luck Dinner

Join Park Pride and a host of others for a casual evening of food and fun. Meet fellow Atlanta residents who are doing a little dirty work to make our parks beautiful. Learn about other parks and get new ideas for the park in your own back yard. There will be no formal program.

Thursday, March 3, 2005, 5:30-7:30
Cabbagetown Community Center
177 Estoria Avenue



Please RSVP to Nicholas Williams at (404) 853-7471 or Nicholas@parkpride.org



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