



2008 conference: a vision of sustainability

Monday, March 31.

National experts in the fields of sustainability, parks and greenspace will meet in Atlanta this year with state and regional leaders for Park Pride's **7th Annual Parks and Greenspace Conference – A Vision of Sustainability**.

Park Pride's annual conference began in 2001 as a local effort to educate Atlanta residents about parks and to raise the profile of parks and greenspace among civic and elected officials discussing the environmental, social and quality of life issues that confront our city and our region. Since that time it has grown in size, stature and influence to become one of the foremost park conferences in the nation.

This year, speakers will come from Chicago, New York, Toronto, Washington-DC, and Berkeley, CA, as well as Georgia and metro Atlanta. We will hear from national experts representing organizations including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Project for Public Spaces, the Center for City Parks Excellence, the Chicago Parks District, Smart Growth America, American Rivers, and Atlanta's very own Piedmont Park Conservancy and Southface.

Galen Cranz, professor of architecture at the University of California, Berkeley and author of the seminal book "The Politics of Parks," will deliver our keynote address.

Sessions will explore the vital role that parks and greenspace play in creating sustainable cities and environments spanning from the scale of individual developments and communities to regional and statewide planning. Attendees will learn how their parks sustain them, and how they can sustain their parks in return.



Parks & Greenspace Conference,
Parks Tour & Placemaking Workshop
Register today at www.parkpride.org

placemaking workshop

Sunday, March 30.

Of particular interest to planners, and landscape architects who may receive up to 3 CEUs, is a special "Placemaking Workshop" being conducted on **Sunday, March 30** by the Project for Public Spaces. This internationally renowned organization will work with a small group (up to 35 people) in an Atlanta park to explore the principles that make a public space succeed – or fail.

The **Placemaking Workshop** is just one example of how the conference weekend takes national resources and focuses them on Atlanta issues. We have not forgotten that, above all, Park Pride's conference serves as a resource for Atlanta's community, business and elected leaders. So while park advocates from across the country will find the conference informative and valuable, Atlanta residents will find it even more so.

the parks tour

Saturday, March 29.

Of course, we also recognize that our leading park experts can be found volunteering their time and energy to improve the parks and greenspace in their community. So on **Saturday, March 29**, Park Pride will partner with the Atlanta Office of Parks to present our second annual **Parks Tour**. This is a wonderful opportunity for residents to network with other park lovers and share ideas and resources about how to improve the park in your community. On this year's tour we will be visiting the Outdoor Activity Center, Peopletown Parks, Adams Park and Spink-Collins Park.

The three day focus on parks concludes with an informal green cocktail reception following the conference at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. The reception is an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful gardens while relaxing with old and new park friends.

We at Park Pride are excited to be able to provide Atlanta a great **Conference, Placemaking Workshop and Parks Tour**. They are three events you simply won't want to miss.

Letter from the executive director

As some of you may know, Candler Park is my park. It's where my family swims; plays touch football, baseball & tennis; runs around the playground and enjoys the annual Candler Park FallFest.

It's a great park, only two blocks from our home, and we love it. We have planted trees there, landscaped a new entrance, and spent many weekends clearing underbrush, spreading mulch and picking up trash. However, as I have dedicated more and more time to Park Pride, I have given less and less time to Candler Park.

This winter, I met Jo Jo Ross, a fairly new resident, who runs "Operation Boot Camp" in Candler Park. She is ready to take up the slack and lead the community efforts in our park. While I always focused on physical improvements, Jo Jo wants to focus on small, informal programs that bring folks into the park – bird watching, movie nights, stargazing and environmental education, especially for kids.

Our contrasting approaches highlight a choice that all friends of the park groups face: how best to direct the time and effort of its members and volunteers. Jo Jo wants to strengthen the Candler Park community by bringing residents together for fun activities in their parks. I, on the other hand, am an adherent to the Park Pride Tee Shirt motto: "Beautiful Parks Require a Little Dirty Work."

The good news is that there is room for both approaches – and both benefit your park and your community. Even better, Park Pride has programs and resources to support residents however they are engaged in their park.

To learn more about these resources, simply contact Park Pride, or attend our conference, or take our parks tour and see what other communities are doing in their park.

You probably will be surprised at all the resources, know-how and support that are there to help you make a difference.

George Dusenbury

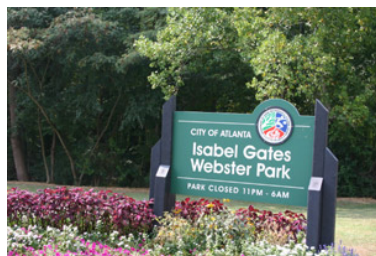
pledge to make a difference

In 2007, Park Pride introduced its **Atlanta Parks Pledge** as a tool to encourage community support for their parks. The concept is simple: we ask residents to pledge just a little bit of time to help improve our parks and greenspace, and then Park Pride works with them to make the most of their valued time.

More than 200 residents signed a parks pledge – and their commitment has been tremendous. Park Pride worked with our "pledgers" to generate hundreds of emails and more than 60 letters of support for an important increase in the City of Atlanta Parks budget. The increased manpower and resources are producing remarkable improvements in all our parks, making them cleaner, better maintained and more enjoyable for all residents.

The **Atlanta Parks Pledge** is also a commitment from Park Pride to you. Not only do we help you effectively advocate for parks and greenspace, but also we provide the resources and expertise that help you and your neighbors make tangible differences in your parks. Whether it's organizing a volunteer work day, raising money for a new playground, or designing a beauty spot in your park, Park Pride can help.

To find out how YOU can make a difference, both in your community and throughout the City, take the pledge. Get **Atlanta Parks Pledge** online at www.parkpride.org



Entrance of the beautifully manicured 2007 Park of the Year.

Group of enthusiastic Georgia State student volunteers.



Park Pride's Visioning Director Walt Ray presents the final option, Collier Heights Park.

Park Pride reaches its Visioning program to a younger audience at Collins Park.



adopt-a-park grows a gardening program

Since 1989, Park Pride has partnered with the City of Atlanta to run our **Adopt-A-Park** program. Hundreds of residents have given their time, energy and resources to improve and maintain many of the more than 250 beauty spots, medians and traffic islands under the jurisdiction of the City's Parks Department.

In 2007, our **Adopt-A-Park** program took a new twist. Responding to community interest, the City Council passed legislation allowing residents to adopt a portion of their park to create a community garden. Already, four parks have community gardens; Rosa Burney Park is the most recent addition.

For years, Habesha, Inc. had worked with the Atlanta Community Food Bank to operate a community garden at Dunbar Elementary School, adjacent to the park. Major renovations forced Habesha to find a new site for its garden, and Park Pride's **Adopt-A-Community-Garden** program allowed them to move only several hundred feet into Rosa Burney Park. Habesha continues to use the community garden as a tool for its Sustainable Seeds Project to engage and educate youth.

*For more information about **Adopt-A-Park** or **Adopt-A-Community Garden**, please contact: Gwen Burson at gwen@parkpride.org or call 404-817-7981.*

board news

Park Pride thanks five of our outstanding volunteers as they prepare to leave the Park Pride Board. Over the past several years, they have played key roles as our organization has prospered, expanding our programs and raising awareness of the vital importance that parks and greenspace play in strengthening our quality of life.

Guido Sacchi, Chief Information Office of CompuCredit, is Park Pride's outgoing President and has served on the Board since 2002. His strong sense of leadership and dry sense of humor have served the organization well through years of success.

Elaine Morgan, Environmental Chair for the Cherokee Garden Club, also has been with Park Pride since 2002. She has served as Board Secretary and Chair of our Board Development Committee, while spending four years on Park Pride's Executive Committee.

Byron Amos, President of Capacity Builders, a nonprofit organization working in the Vine City and English Avenue Communities, leaves the board after four years during which he served on the Conference and Advocacy Committees.

Alan Slothower, Solution Specialist with Microsoft, is outgoing chair of Park Pride's Communications and Strategic Planning Committees. His attention to detail and drive to measure tangible results have helped Park Pride document its many accomplishments.

Alan Richardson, Marketing Manager for Starbucks' Southeast Region, was the driving force behind Park Pride's receiving \$14,000 from sales of the Dave-FM Live: Volume 1 CD sold at Starbucks coffee houses.

"friends groups" updates & tips

All across Atlanta concerned citizens are caring for parks. In the sleet and snow on MLK Day, the Friends of **Washington Park** led volunteers in a park cleanup. The **Olmsted Linear Park Alliance** is spreading mulch to prepare its trees for the heat of summer. **Frankie Allen**, **Spink Collins** and **Adams Park** friends groups ambitiously are clearing out overgrown areas. Friends of **Collier Heights Park** is hosting events to raise money for the continued implementation of their 2006 park visioning. Friends of **Peopletown Park** and **Enota Park** are engaged with Beltline study groups to hammer out plans that reflect past visions and current opportunities. Friends of **Vine City Park** and **Perkerson Park** are rejuvenating their Friends groups.

Park Pride is proud to be working with these and dozens of other friends groups to create a world-class park system in Atlanta, one park at a time.

As you plan your next Friends of the Park event, consider these helpful tips:

1. Contact Park Pride about your event. Parks are public spaces, and the City relies on us to make sure that your hard work occurs within their guidelines.
2. Ask Park Pride about available resources including tools, volunteers and funding opportunities.
3. Include diverse elements of your community in planning for the event. Consider schools, places of worship, community leaders and families.
4. Be aware of how the City of Atlanta Tree Ordinance and Drought Policy impact your event.
5. Take pictures before, during and after the event. Share your pictures with Park Pride to celebrate your success and inspire other communities.

Planning a park work day or starting a Friends of the Park group? Contact: Ayanna Williams, at ayanna@parkpride.org or call (404) 817-7963.

visioning & design news

Park Pride's Park Visioning program will wrap up its third successful year in March. The program has successfully engaged fourteen Atlanta communities to develop Visions for their parks. These community-driven plans identify community needs and how changes to the park can address these needs. The plans have been instrumental in leveraging nearly \$4 million in funding for such park improvements.

This spring Park Pride will work with three East Side communities; **Kirkwood**, **Edgewood**, and **East Lake**; to develop a Park Vision for their communities. Residents have expressed their desire to connect **Gilliam Park**, **Coan Park**, **East Lake Park**, and the proposed **East Side Greenway** through a series of off-road trails and linear parks, creating a closer, better connected community. The key to creating a successful Park Vision will be thorough community outreach to engage residents of these diverse neighborhoods.

Meanwhile, several communities are working with Park Pride and the City of Atlanta to implement Park Visions. Plans are under way to break ground on the new **Vine City Park**. The City is investing more than \$800,000 in Park Improvement Bonds in **Emma Millican Park**. **Peopletown Parks** has funding to begin construction of their Visioning Plan. **Orme Park** and **Frankie Allen Park** are raising funds to implement Park Visions completed in the fall of 2007. With help from a Park Pride Community Grant, **Brownwood Park** has raised significant funding to construct major improvements in their park. The list goes on. Park Pride looks forward to working with our community partners to implement projects developed through Park Visioning as we work for more and better parks all over Atlanta.

If your community might benefit from Park Visioning, please submit an application by May 1, 2008. Applications are available on line at www.parkpride.org or by e-mailing Walt Ray at walt@parkpride.org.

2007 'park of the year': isabel gates webster park

Congratulations to Isabel Gates Webster Park, winner of Park Pride's third annual Park of the Year competition. The crew did an outstanding job improving and maintaining the park over the course of the 2007 park season.

The Park of the Year program acknowledges excellence in park operation and maintenance in City of Atlanta parks. The program recognizes a Park of Month from April through October, with one of these parks ultimately being recognized as Park of the Year. The well deserving crew receives our gratitude, the recognition of its peers, and a performance-based bonus from the Parks Department for a job well done.

The 2008 Park of the Month season kicks off in April. The Level Four drought is anticipated to continue well through the summer season, causing concern about the maintenance of Atlanta's park system. Proper maintenance will be more important than ever, with an emphasis on raising mowing heights to protect water-starved lawns, properly mulching trees and shrubs to save water, and planting flowers only at locations with rain barrels and other non-traditional sources of water. Removing invasive species from under tree canopies will save available water for trees. The good news is that the drought should hurt weeds, too.

We recognize that the drought will make the 2008 park season a challenge. A dry lawn color and drooping shrubbery likely are inevitable. But let's face it; we're all in this together. So while the grass may not be deep, lush and green, a grey tint to a lawn adds character.

calendar—events &

announcements

april thru june 2008

april

- 10 – PARC Meeting at Frankie Allen, 7:30-9am
- 15 – Deadline for Community Micro Grant Applications
- 22 – Earth Day (celebrate in your park!)

may

- 1 – Deadline for Park Visioning Applications
- 8 – PARC Meeting at Bitsy Grant Tennis Center, 7:30am-9am

june

- 12 – PARC Meeting at Centennial Olympic Park, 7:30am-9am

Loring Park Picnic Area



Join us for our March events!

March 29

Parks Tour

- 9am - 1pm
\$10, Includes lunch

March 30

Placemaking Workshop

presented by Park Pride and Project for Public Spaces

- 1pm - 4pm
\$65, Includes light refreshments

March 31

Park Pride's 7th Annual Parks & Greenspace Conference

- 8am *Check-in*
- 11:45am - 1:45pm *Luncheon, Keynote & Inspiration Awards*
- 5pm - 7pm *Cocktail Reception*
\$95 thru March 15, \$110 thereafter

Registration for all events at www.parkpride.org.



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