



**Madison Parks  
2007-2008 Annual Report**

# Generating Support

## Madison Parks Values

The Madison Park System believes that our success is based on the following values:

- We encourage public participation through outreach and community relations.
  - We accept our roles as stewards of our natural environment.
  - We recognize the contributions that volunteers make to our success.
  - We believe in demonstrating fiscal responsibility.
  - We recognize the added benefits of inter-agency and community partnerships.
- Elver Park on Madison's south west side will be Madison's winter wonderland now and in years to come whether the snow falls from the sky or two Areco Snow Systems cannons. Elver Park received snow making guns to ensure winter-long snow on the popular sledding hill. This project was made possible by a \$150,000 grant from Madison Community Foundation with additional \$20,000 from the Madison Nordic Ski Club and \$50,000 from the Madison Parks Matching Fund. Madison Community Foundation approached the City with the idea for the project as a way to provide healthy outdoor winter activities for all ages. Elver Park was chosen for its access and proximity to low income family and youth on Madison's south west side. The project was a way to provide healthy neighborhood activity for kids who didn't have much experience with winter sports.
  - Annually, over 34,000 hours were donated by volunteers in Madison Parks and Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Olbrich Botanical Gardens volunteers give an average of 25,000 hours per year compared to an average of 14,920 hours at other gardens.
  - The following is an example of the power of one Friends Group. The Friends of Monona Bay have held monthly clean up days for the last 5 years. In 2007, 184 people volunteered and picked up 162 bags of trash. In 2008, 211 people volunteered and picked up 195 bags of trash.
  - The People for Parks Matching Fund is a popular program for neighborhoods raising money to improve their park. The Matching Fund can match dollar for dollar donations for capital improvements in parks. In 2007, \$57,435 was donated by citizens and organizations to support their neighborhood park. Specific parks improvements in 2007 were a shelter in Swallowtail Park, play equipment in North Star Park and Eastmorland Park, 3 benches in Hoyt Park, 2 benches in Penn Park and a generous citizen donated \$3,000 for the planting of trees in any of our parks. In 2008, \$133,000 was donated for Elver Snowmaking, benches at Veterans' Memorial Park, play equipment at Thut Park, custom-made benches at BB Clarke Beach, numerous memorial trees and benches, and a generous citizen donated \$4,000 in support of the Madison Parks Arbor Week program.



Volunteers planting trees at Tenney Park

# *Celebrating* Community

## Awards

- One of the Top Ten Greenest Cities  
*Yahoo! Real Estate*, May 2007
- One of the top Ten best Outdoor-Oriented Towns  
*Yahoo! Real Estate*, Fall 2007
- #1 Walking City  
*Prevention*, April 2007
- #8 in 100 Best Places to Raise a Family  
*Best Life*, May 2008
- One of the 10 Best Weekend Family Trips  
*Nick Jr. Family Magazine*, April 2007
- One of the 5 Friendliest Cities in America  
*The Today Show*, May 2008
- Olbrich Botanical Gardens was voted #1 Garden and Horticultural attraction in Wisconsin in the People's Choice "Wonders of Wisconsin" contest, 2007

Madison is a city that loves to celebrate. Madison Parks is proud to annually host over 300 special events a year. Whether the event is a small neighborhood festival, charity run/walk, large sporting event or concert, Madison Parks and the State Street area are popular venues for special events. In 2007 and 2008, Madison Parks once again hosted many of our community's largest events: Rhythm and Booms in Warner Park, Ironman Wisconsin in various parks including downtown streets and venues, Art Fair ON and OFF the Square, Blooming Butterflies in Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Paddle and Portage in James Madison Park & Olin Park, just to name a few.

- Not only are Madison's parks host to large community events, but they are used heavily for small family outings and recreation-oriented sporting events. The numbers are impressive. In 2008 Madison Parks hosted 330 special events in Parks, on the State Street/Mall Concourse area and other city streets. There were 1237 Park Shelter reservations, 241 were for Gates of Heaven, 1854 soccer games, 1628 softball games, 2478 tennis matches, 408 ultimate frisbee games, 210 kickball games, 131 football games and practices, 34 rugby games, 72 lacrosse games, 38 cricket match dates, 258 baseball games, 36 t-ball/coach pitch games, 139 playgrounds and day camps, 2 basketball tournaments, and 1 Australian rules football game.

- Warner Park Community Recreation Center remains a popular site for adult and youth recreation and programs, senior lunches and special events. In 2007 there were 282,321 and in 2008, 292,977 hourly participations.

- Olbrich Botanical Gardens continues to demonstrate its regional draw by annually attracting over a quarter of a million visitors.

- Glenway, Monona, Odana Hills and Yahara Hills Golf Courses remain the best value in the Madison area. In 2008, 84,676 rounds of golf were played, and 197 season, 50 restricted, 28 Junior, 171 summer junior passes were sold.



Rhythm & Booms, Warner Park

# Strengthening Our Legacy

## Madison Parks History

- 1850 Madison buys the land for its first park - Orton Park, a 3.6 acres piece of land that was the town's first cemetery.

- 1892 the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive began.

- In 1900, Tenney Park development began.

- In 1931 the Madison Parks Division created.

- In 2008, Madison has over 260 parks and 6000 acres.

- In the spring of 2008, city, county and state officials marked Earth Day with an announcement regarding their joint acquisition of 259 acres in Cherokee Marsh wetlands and adjacent Yahara uplands. The City of Madison contributed \$779,000 towards the purchase. The Natural Heritage Land Trust was instrumental in coordinating the \$779,000 City of Madison contribution, a Dane County Conservation Fund grant of \$794,000 and a \$1.5 million DNR grant from Wisconsin's Knowles/Nelson Stewardship Fund. This joint venture was the largest conservation land purchase in Madison history.

- Olbrich Botanical Gardens built a new accessible tram service in summer 2008. The tram provided rides to 14,483 visitors who otherwise may not have enjoyed the entire garden due to mobility issues.

- In 2007, Madison Parks opened Cypress Spray Park, the city's first public spray park. For many years, neighborhood leaders and city officials had meetings about the need for the revitalization of Madison's southside neighborhood near Badger Road and Park Street. One of the many items that came from these discussions was the fact that the neighborhood had a large number of young children but was rather park deficient. The location of the spray park is one block from a police station, a school with summer programming and within walking distance of many day care centers.

City and School officials were able to arrange a land exchange, enabling the city to purchase an adjacent lot to the school property and the residential building on the lot. The building was known for drug deals and prostitution. The city tore down the building in order to build the city's first spray park.

The Cypress SprayPark construction cost was \$435,000; over half of which privately funded by the McClellan-Dodge Trust Fund, the Herfurth Foundation, the Madison Community Foundation, Jerome Frautschi, and CUNA Mutual Foundation. The Public Arts Commission granted \$10,000 for an art piece to be created and installed in the park in 2008.

- Phase I construction on Door Creek Park began in 2008. Ten years of planning have gone into this park. Door Creek Park, together with the adjacent county-owned parcel, will make this 200 acre park a unique and diverse mix of natural and recreational areas. In 2008, Madison Parks received a \$35,000 Fighting Obesity Grant to help purchase and install the play equipment in this park. Looking to the future, Door Creek Park will have bike trails, hiking/ski trails, soccer fields, tennis courts, reservable shelter, tennis courts, prairie restoration, marshland, and ponds.



Cypress SprayPark

## Breese Stevens History

- Opening Day of Breese Stevens Field was May 5, 1926.
- The Madison Blues baseball team lost to the Beliot Fairies, 7 to 5.
- The stone walls around Breese Stevens Field were constructed by the Civil Works Administration (CWA).
- The stadium has hosted activities including high school football, midget car racing, circuses, ice skating, concerts, boxing and wrestling events.
- In 1995, the City of Madison landmarks commission named Breese Stevens Field a historic site.

### Reconstruction costs

- Phase I  
\$1,600,000
- Phase II  
\$800,000

# Preserving Our History

In 2008, the Madison Parks Division received a \$100,000 grant from Dane County and Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) Sports Venue Development Fund. The grant will help fund the Phase 2 renovation of Breese Stevens Stadium. Breese Stevens Stadium, 917 E. Mifflin Street, is an historic landmark. The stadium is owned and operated by the City of Madison Parks Division and is used primarily as a soccer facility.

While over the years, the turf and premiere playing condition have remained top-notch; the 1926 facility was showing its age. In 2007, the \$1.6 million Phase 1 renovation addressed many of the structural issues in the facility: major concrete decking repair, replacement of the storm sewer system for better field and bleacher drainage, and renovation work to get the building up to ADA code by adding accessible seating, an internal accessible entrance to the bleachers and a new accessible restroom. The \$800,000 Phase 2 construction is scheduled to begin March 2009. Phase 2 consists of a new press box, pa system, painting/cleaning the old locker room areas, referee lock rooms, tuck pointing the walls, inside and out and repair/painting the existing canopy along Paterson St.

### In Pursuit of State Tournaments and Events

The goal of the GMCVB Sports Venue Development Fund is to increase the economic opportunity generated by attracting sports events to the area by helping private or public sports venue operators enhance or create new facilities for sports tournaments and events. And the City of Madison Parks Division intends to do just that.

“Breese Stevens Field really is a field of dreams for young soccer players and fans inspired by the historic setting.” says Dane County Board Chair Scott McDonell. “Restoring the stadium to its full potential not only allows future generations to enjoy the amazing setting just blocks from the Capitol, but it will allow the venue to compete for regional events that help support Madison and Dane County as a sports tourism destination.”

“The GMCVB applauds the County’s vision in funding this grant program, which underscores the value of investing in our destination’s sports infrastructure and driving the economic stimulus that sporting events generate for the region.” says Deb Archer, President of GMCVB. “This program supports the sales efforts of the Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau to both attract national sporting events like the U.S. Transplant Games and retain important annual sporting events like WIAA Tournaments and Ford Ironman Wisconsin.”



## Madison Parks Vision

- To provide the ideal system of parks, natural resources and recreational opportunities which will enhance the quality of life for everyone.

## Madison Parks Mission

- Provide an exceptional system of safe, accessible, well-planned and maintained parks, facilities, public cemetery, natural areas and public shorelines.
- Preserve and expand our urban forest resources through a well-planned and systematic approach to tree maintenance, planting and natural area management.
- Preserve and promote parks' historic legacy.

## Madison Parks Values

- We accept our roles as stewards of our natural environment.

# Preserving Environment

- In 2008, Olbrich Botanical Gardens proudly reaches the top 5% of Travel Green Wisconsin businesses with a score of 100 or more. Travel Green is a voluntary program that reviews and certifies tourism organizations that have made a commitment to reduce their environmental impact. Some of the things Olbrich has done to reduce its environmental impact are: installed new rain garden in the Rose Garden, installed a rain barrel in the Herb Garden, and created new internal systems for recycling hard plastic pots and Styrofoam.

- In 2007, staff built 3 stormwater/wildlife ponds in the southwest corner of Owen Park. The ponds replaced an eroded channel that carried tons of sediment to Lake Mendota every year. The first 2 ponds trap nearly 70% of the sediment. The third pond functions chiefly as additional wildlife habitat. For the 2008 Earth Day Challenge, over 50 community volunteers planted native prairie plants, trees and shrubs around the ponds. Not only do the ponds provide storm water filtration, but they also attract additional and diverse wildlife to the area.

- The Forestry Section continued its innovative urban forest program. The City of Madison was awarded the Tree City USA designation in both 2007 and 2008. In 2007, 2,980 trees were planted; 10,963 trees were pruned; and 2,149 trees required removal. In 2008, 1,968 trees were planted; 11,142 trees were pruned; and 2,000 trees required removal.

- Madison Parks was honored to receive the inaugural 2008 Wetland Enjoyment Award given by the Wisconsin Wetlands Association. WWA is a statewide organization, the only one focused solely on wetland protection. WWA cited Parks' work to "restore 80 acres of wetlands along the shoreline of the upper Yahara by establishing native wetland plants that serve as a breakwater and prevent erosion as well as provide habitat along the shoreline." They cite the work as "exceptional" due to Parks' tremendous effort to involve the public in the effort.



Cherokee Marsh Restoration Work

## Inside the Numbers

Not all snow is created equal. After a heavy snowfall, packing the popular trails at Elver Park takes up to 8 passes. That requires the groomer to travel 80 KM in one day to get the 10 KM of trails ready for the public.

Every snow event required staff to plow a total of 69 miles of sidewalks, bike paths and parking lots.

*"If this has not been a winter for the ages, it's been a winter we'll all remember for the rest of our lives". – David Medaris, **The Isthmus**, March 2008*

# Surviving The Winter of 07-08

A Winter for the Ages...

The winter of 2007-2008 won't soon be forgotten. Snow fall for the season was 101 inches, shattering the previous record of 76.1 inches in 1978-1979. During this winter season, it snowed 60 separate days. During each snow fall, Madison Parks staff's first priority was public safety. Parks maintenance staff - which included East Parks, West Parks, Construction, Forestry and the Mall/Concourse Staff - was responsible for the snow removal along the bike paths, along all of the park sidewalks, and park facility parking lots. After the public safety issues were addressed, staff then turned their attention to 9 outdoor ice rinks and 30 KM of ski trails.

A natural result of the 101 inches of snow was the very wet spring melt. Saturated ground conditions were difficult to contend with in every operation of parks maintenance. The athletic fields required more time and care to be ready for play, boulevards were in disrepair and full of debris, high water levels in the Yahara River caused damage to Cherokee Marsh, and many street trees were damaged due to snowplows and snow piles.

While the winter of 2007-2008 was hard on snow plows and commuting, it was the best of conditions for outdoor sports. Winter enthusiasts enjoyed the longest and best conditions for cross-country skiing and outdoor ice skating. In 2008, Madison Parks sold 1,329 annual ski passes, up from the previous year's recording-setting total of 924. Staff is very proud of the high quality conditions they were able to achieve on the outdoor skating rinks and ski trails in these challenging conditions.



### *Madison Parks Overview*

Madison is a unique city, built on an isthmus between Lakes Monona and Mendota. With over 260 parks and 6000 acres of parkland, Madison is known not only for its natural beauty but also for its abundance of outdoor activities.

The recreational opportunities are plentiful: championship golf courses, an award-winning public pool, soccer and softball fields, bike paths, a botanical garden, conservation parks, a community-recreation center, and, of course, the lakes – complete with beaches and boat launch/storage areas.

We invite you to enjoy our scenic parks from dawn to dusk year round. You will discover why Madison is one of the top cities in the nation to live, work and play.

### *Diverse Responsibilities*

The City of Madison Parks Division operates and maintains public park areas and facilities, city forestry, median strips and greenways, Forest Hill Cemetery, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Irwin A. And Robert D. Goodman Swimming Pool, 4 public golf courses, 13 public beaches, 18 reservable park shelters, Warner Park Community Recreation Center, public boat launches and boat storage/mooring facilities, dog parks, conservation parks, athletic facilities, and the downtown Mall/Concourse facilities and events.

### *Contact Us:*

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### *2007 Retirements*

Charles Krueger, Forestry Maintenance, 15 years Service  
George Mather, Parks Maintenance, 34 years service  
Kenneth Peters, Construction Supervisor, 20 years service  
Dennis Rodefield, Parks Facility Maintenance Supervisor, 40 years service

### *2008 Retirements*

Rodney Annen, East Parks Supervisor, 32 years service  
George Flatman, Parks Maintenance Mechanic, 30 years service  
Kathleen Lange, Forest Hill Cemetery Admin Clerk, 33 years service  
James Morgan, Parks Superintendent, 8 years service  
Elinor Riley, Parks Community Service Manager, 24 years service  
Dennis Schattschneider, Parks Maintenance, 22 years service

### *Madison Officials*

Dave Cieslewicz, Mayor  
Kevin Briski, Parks Superintendent

### *2007-2008 Board of Park Commissioners*

Bill Barker  
Emanuel Scarbrough  
Betty MacDonald  
Betty Chewning  
David Wallner  
Ald. Michael Schumacher  
Ald. Joe Clausius

Summer concerts at Olbrich

