

Springing into Summer

We planted 30 new low-growing junipers to surround the south bed of the Statue Garden. Volunteers helped deliver, prepare the soil, dig holes and plant the shrubs. The fall of 2024, new flowers were planted to replace the struggling red twig dogwoods in the north and south beds. Now, the flowers are flourishing. The bees and butterflies are happy. A great crew of volunteers maintains these gardens every Wednesday morning, March to November. Come join us! Take a walk or ride through the park and enjoy each season of blooms, blossoms and foliage.



Volunteers at work in May 2025
Mauro Crestani, Vicky Bernard,
Jennifer Gerber



Rattlesnake Master at Statue Garden in August 2025



Nodding Onion at Statue Garden
Photos by Tom Cera and Carol Smith

Tribute to Tall Ship Sculptor, Bruce Niemi



We are deeply saddened this year by the passing of sculptor, Bruce Niemi, the artist behind the incredible stainless steel sculpture, Tall Ship II. His vision, creativity and skills will leave a lasting impression on our community and all who visit Marquette Park. Bruce Niemi stated, "I hope you will discover the heavens, the earth, the winds and a deeper spiritual, thought-provoking, peaceful, timelessness that I wish to express as I create my works of art." Our thoughts are with his family and friends during this difficult time.



New Fencing

In 2025, FMP installed post and rope fencing by the rain garden near the Aquatorium. This protects the native plants and prevents social paths through the rain garden. The replacement fencing is appropriate for our natural park by the beach. Volunteers did the labor for this project.



Memorial Bench Project Phase III

FMP is refurbishing original 2012 benches that can become memorial benches. Both stone and metal benches are available throughout the park. We can change the coating of the benches to this beautiful blue color. Please find the Memorial Bench application form on the QR Code to sponsor a bench for a loved one or to recognize an individual or organization.



[Sponsor a Bench](#)



Pavilion Planter Found!

The FMP sleuths discovered an extra planter hiding in the weeds. Since the old planter was damaged and needed to be replaced. Luckily, with the help of many volunteers and heavy equipment, the hidden planter was moved to its new home on the patio wall facing the lagoon.



Friends of Marquette Park Endowment Fund Begins

We had a dream for several years that we could eventually create a permanent Endowment Fund to insure our future through Legacy Foundation. Without a substantial investment, we felt it was just a distant dream. When the Legacy Foundation invited us to be a part of the 1:1 Gift VIII Match Opportunity, we were honored and excited. We were challenged to raise more funds to meet our goal of \$60,000 over an 18-month period ending March 31, 2025. With the help and support of our donors, we not only reached our goal, we surpassed it and raised over \$100,000. We received \$30,000 for the FMP Endowment Fund and \$30,000 for the FMP Projects. The Endowment Fund will perpetuate Marquette Park with access to the annual account gains that fluctuate with the market. The larger the endowment means the larger the gains for Marquette Park. As donors, we have two choices: contribute to the FMP Fund to be used for projects, or contribute to the Endowment Fund. When you make a donation, please designate which fund you prefer whether giving online or writing a check. Thank you, Kelly Anoe and the Legacy Foundation, for giving us this opportunity and believing in us to exceed our usual annual giving goals. Our donors have been very generous in 2024-25. Our dream has come true! Friends of Marquette Park will continue to do our best to implement projects to preserve, protect and improve Marquette Park now and forever.

From the Friends of Marquette Leadership Team

MILLER BEACH WATER SAFETY GROUP NEWS

Summer Updates from Miller Beach Water Safety Social

Dear Miller Beach Community,

As summer winds down, we're excited to share some updates on what we've been working on—and what's ahead. It's been a busy season for safety, community, and connection!

New Yard Signs Coming Soon

We've been busy designing a fresh Miller Beach Water Safety yard sign to help spread awareness in the community. As the season comes to a close, let us know if you'd like to display one proudly at your home or business. Every sign helps remind neighbors and visitors alike that safety comes first on our shoreline.

Safety Stations & City Progress

Our team continues to maintain the safety stations you see along the beach, even as the City makes progress installing the state-mandated life rings and boxes. These additions will be a vital step forward in providing quick access to lifesaving equipment when it's needed most.

Life Jacket Loaner Program: A Big Hit!

We're thrilled to see how popular the Life Jacket Loaner Station has become this year. On many busy beach days, all 20 jackets are in use at once—a clear sign that this program is making a difference for families and kids enjoying the water.

Join Us at Fest in the First – September 20

Look for us at Fest in the First, where we'll be hosting an Ice Cream Social! Stop by, try on a life jacket, and enjoy a sweet treat—our way of thanking the community for supporting beach safety.

Fundraising Event Update

Our planned fundraising event for this fall has been rescheduled to early next year. We're looking forward to kicking off 2026 with renewed energy and community support as we raise funds to expand and strengthen our safety programs.

Stay Connected

Want to get involved, request a yard sign, or learn more about our programs?

Email us: watersafetysocial@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook: Miller Beach Water Safety

Together, we've made great strides this season—and with your continued support, the best is yet to come.

The best day at the beach is a safe day at the beach.



FMP Projects

Plants and People Indigenous to Marquette Park - FMP Leaders have met with Ezekiel Flannery, PhD who talked to us about wild edibles/medicinals, ethnobotany and the Native American history of the area. We are considering ways to share his wealth of knowledge with you. Archie Patterson has developed some podcasts about indigenous people's history here. We are seeking a platform to publicize his work. We are planning to make connections with indigenous people. A work in progress.

Street Light Replacement - The City of Gary has begun replacing street lights in the City. We are keeping in touch with the City Engineer to make sure the streets around Marquette Park are included in the project. This includes the four historic street lights that have been on our list for the City to replace since 2018. At this point, the contractors have replaced the bulbs to keep our park lit. We are still waiting for the street lights to be replaced.

Accessible Beach Walkway - A long-term goal is to fund a walkway so that everyone can experience the beach, regardless of their abilities. We will continue to pursue this project.

Park Board Meetings - FMP has a presence at Park Board of Commissioners meetings every two weeks. We advocate for our community and the needs in Marquette Park at each meeting. We seek approval for our projects through the Park Board.

Bird Yard Art Silent Auction at FMP Annual Meeting - Miller Garden Club partnered with FMP to successfully raise funds for public Art. The proud owners of bird yard art donated over \$2,700 toward the purchase of Tall Ship II.



Our Apologies - Alan is one of us - We inadvertently omitted Alan Harrell's name from our Active FMP Membership List in our Annual Meeting Program. We do apologize for this mistake. We value everyone's support for Friends of Marquette Park.

Friends of Marquette Park Membership/Donations

Annual Membership is \$100.

Donations of any amount are welcome.
Donations are tax deductible.

Please write checks to: Friends of Marquette Park
Mail to: FMP, PO Box 2645, Gary, IN 46403

Or

Donate online to FMP Website: www.friendsofmarquettepark.org.

Or

Donate online to Legacy Foundation: www.legacyfdn.org., click on DONATE and search for Friends of Marquette Park

Please include your email address with your donation. We communicate with our members by email. You may choose to do monthly donations.

Thank you for your interest and support of
Friends of Marquette Park

Additional Ways You Can Give

Monthly Donations - You can choose to make automatic monthly donations to FMP through the Legacy Foundation. Call to inquire at (219) 736-1880.

Employer Match Donations - Ask your employer if they will match your donation to FMP. Many companies offer this to their employees.

Designated Gifts

You are welcome to designate your gift to be utilized toward a specific project. Designated gifts of any amount are appreciated.

- ___ Disc Golf Tee Sponsorship - \$250 (2-year)
- ___ Statue Garden Projects - \$100
- ___ Water Safety Life Jacket for Loaner Station - \$50
- ___ Public Sculpture Donor - \$250
- ___ Website Sponsorship - \$250

Questions? Contact Carol at pandcsmith@comcast.net

FRIENDS OF MARQUETTE PARK LEADERS

Susan Cohen, Linda Halas, Archie Patterson, Joe Petras, Tom Rooney, Carol Smith