



## Growing Our Endowment Fund



Friends of Marquette Park's dream of having an Endowment Fund is now a reality! Having this Endowment Fund will ensure our future with the Legacy Foundation. The **Friends of Marquette Park 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 always, the **original Friends of Marquette Park Fund** provides revenue for our projects. Our donors have been very generous in the past. We hope our donors will continue their generosity. As donors, whether you give on

line or write a check, please designate if you want to give to the:

- Friends of Marquette Park Endowment Fund or
- Friends of Marquette Park Fund of Miller Citizens Shoreline Committee. (original fund)

Friends of Marquette Park will continue to do our best to implement projects; to preserve, protect and improve Marquette Park now and forever.

Thank you to the Legacy Foundation for giving us the opportunity to initiate our Endowment Fund which will outlive all of us.

Please give generously.



### **FMP 10-Year Celebration - 2016 to 2026!** **Wednesday, June 3, 2026** **Historic Marquette Park Pavilion Ballroom**

Believe it or not, Friends of Marquette Park was founded in June of 2016. We will be ten years old in 2026. This calls for a celebration! We are excited about partnering with the City and Park Department to bring you a memorable event. We have plans for a delicious dinner, music by Gary Civic Symphony Quartet, auctions, cash bar and entertainment. Brush up on your Marquette Park history. Our planning committee has surprising things in store for you! Dress will be "Summer Chic" (meaning no jeans or t-shirts.) Watch for tickets to go on sale after January. 2026. More information will be coming in the spring. Contact us at [friendsofmarquettelpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmarquettelpark@gmail.com) if you would like to be a sponsor for this event.

### **Memorial Bench Project Phase III**

Five of the original 2012 black benches have become memorial or honorary benches. There are fifteen (15) more benches available. Both stone and metal benches are available throughout the park. We can change the coating of the benches to a beautiful 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. Once these fifteen benches have sponsors, we will have reached the limit of memorial benches in Marquette Park. Consider a gift of a memorial or commemorative bench in 2026.





### **Northern Lights Visits Marquette Park**

Where were you the nights of November 10th and 11th? Just in case you missed it, the northern lights were brightly visible over the Lagoon in Marquette Park. Many of our neighbors posted photos of this incredible light show using their cell phones. And no one had to go to Canada. Marquette Park brings so many beautiful natural sights. We have the peaceful lagoon, Lake Michigan shoreline, sandy dunes, oak savannah, herds of deer, rafters of wild turkeys, gaggles of Canadian geese, awesome sunsets, peaceful natural areas and historic buildings, and wonderful community of people to share these sights with. We are very fortunate to be here. Photo was provided by Genel Thompson.

### **Marquette Park's Trees Replenished**

The Nature Conservancy created an Urban Forest Plan and Tree Inventory for the City of Gary's parks in 2020. Friends of Marquette Park (FMP) and the Miller Garden Club played a major role in this project. We funded six days of tree trimming and removal to make room for new trees. Susan MiHalo of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Leo Sawyers of the Student Conservation Association (SCA) provided us with copies of the plan and maps. We hired a local tree cutter to do the work. A total of 82 trees were planted around Marquette Park. TNC and SCA have secured funding to water and re-mulch the trees for two more years. FMP was instrumental in bringing all of these entities together with the Parks Department in order to make this happen.



Times photo published November 20, 2025, of native trees planted with Miller volunteers on November 7 & 8, 2025

### **Students Volunteer in Marquette Park . . . Residents Too**

On October 25th, Marcella Gregory and Carol Smith of the Shoreline Committee arranged for IU Medical Students to gather at Marquette Park and clean up along Marquette Drive and near the entrance at Grand Blvd. The young women had no problem venturing into the woods to grab the farthest pieces of litter. These energetic volunteers were great to work with. One of them is a Miller resident! On November 7 & 8, eleven student volunteers from Bishop Noll High School Service Club helped plant the trees in the park. Altogether, we had 20 people on Friday and 30 volunteers on Saturday.





## Miller Beach Water Safety Social Group

### Second Season of Life Jacket Loaner Success

We're proud to announce that we've completed our second full season of offering loaner life jackets for daily use. Once again, it was a tremendous success! On the busiest days, every jacket was in use, proving just how valuable this resource is for our beach community. The loaner station has now been moved off the beach for the off-season and carefully covered to protect it from the elements until we reopen next year.

**4,000 Water Safety Flyers Delivered with Pizza!** In a fantastic partnership with Miller Pizza Station, more than 4,000 water safety education flyers were stapled to pizza boxes and distributed throughout the summer. This simple and delicious outreach effort helped bring lifesaving information straight to households all across the community.



Water Safety Social Board Members at Fest in the First

### Fest in the First - Safety & Smiles

We were thrilled to participate in Fest in the First, where over 100 youth and families learned how to choose the proper lifejacket size and how to wear one safely. Plus, handing out ice cream on a sunny day on Lake Street sparked so many great conversations about keeping families safe near the water. Moments like these truly build a safer, more connected community.

### Life Rings Installed Along the Beach

The City has installed the mandated life rings and protective cases along the length of the beach. To support this important safety infrastructure, our team relocated each of the Safety Station posts and will continue maintaining the instructional signage and ensuring a life vest is available for potential rescues. Together, we're strengthening the safety network that protects our shoreline.

### Save the Date: March 7 Fundraiser at 18th Street Brewery

We're excited to announce a March 7 Fundraiser at 18th Street Brewery, with the goal of supporting the addition of a second loaner life jacket station next season. Come enjoy live music from Funky Mojo Daddy, connect with your neighbors, and be part of expanding this vital community program. Your presence and support will help us grow our impact.

**Thank you** for helping make Miller Beach a safer place for everyone - whether you volunteered, donated, offered a kind word or simply spread the message. Your support has made a tremendous difference. Thank you for being a part of this water safety initiative. We can't wait to continue this work with you.

**THANK YOU!**



Dr. Bill Ramos with Safety Station

## FMP Projects

### Completed Projects:

**Lighting of Shelters 2, 3 and 4** - The shelter are now lit during the night for public safety. The fixtures have been replaced.

**Erosion Control Fencing** - The Rain Gardens near the Aquatorium have post and rope fencing, along with erosion control tubes to prevent sand from filling in the rain garden at the curb cuts.

**Natural Areas Restoration** - Our naturalist is identifying and herbiciding invasive plants and trees. She has done several controlled burns to revitalize the grounds and eliminate pests.

**Spring Plantings at the Statue Garden** - Our volunteer native garden landscaper provided us with a plan, and we added several new plants to the north and south beds. We will do an additional planting in the spring of 2026.

### Unfinished Projects:

**Erosion Control Fencing** - Additional fencing to prevent overflow parking near the disc golf course and protect the lawn and young trees will be installed with Park Department approval.

**Speed Tables** - We are working with the Gary Police Dept., Parks Dept. and City Administration to develop a plan and funding for speed tables around Marquette Park before pedestrian crossings, especially where children play.

**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. October of 2025 was the target date. Still waiting.

**Public Sculpture** - We have three more payments to fully purchase Tall Ship III and keep it in our park. June 1, 2026, our next payment is due. Please consider designating your donation for public art. The final payment is due June 1, 2028.

### Long-Term Projects:

**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.

**Honoring Marquette Park's Indigenous People** - We are researching the history of Indigenous people this year.

## 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](http://www.friendsofmarquettepark.org).

Or

Donate online to Legacy Foundation: [www.legacyfdn.org](http://www.legacyfdn.org)., click on DONATE, Go to the Category, Community Development and search for Friends of Marquette Park Fund of Miller Citizens Shoreline Committee

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 [pancdsmith@comcast.net](mailto:pancdsmith@comcast.net)

## FRIENDS OF MARQUETTE PARK LEADERS

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