



Beach Public Safety & Parks Community Meeting

Thursday, May 8, 2025, 6:30 pm

Marshall J Gardner Center for the Arts, 540 S. Lake Street, Gary, IN

Hear about keeping our shoreline safe and clean, and plans for park maintenance and programs

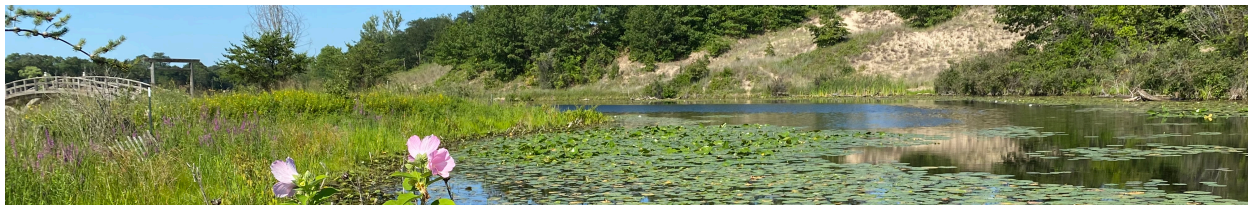
Presentations by

Gary Police, Gary Fire Departments, Lake County Sheriff's Department, & Gary Park Department

All residents are welcome. Visit Information Tables by local organizations

Doors open at 6:00 pm

Sponsored by Friends of Marquette Park, MCC Shoreline & MCC Public Safety Committees



Mark Your Calendar!

You are invited to

Friends of Marquette Park 9th Annual Meeting & Celebration

The Marquette Park Pavilion Lounge and Patio

Wednesday, June 4, 2025, 6:00 - 8:15 PM

\$20 Entrance Fee (cash or check preferred)

Prepay online at www.legacyfdn.org or pay at event

Light Hors D'oeuvres & Sweets

Cash Bar

Please renew your Friends of Marquette Park membership/donations at this time.

Come enjoy the ambiance of our historic Marquette Park Pavilion.

6:00 - 7:00 Social Hour & Bird Yard Art Silent Auction for Art in the Park

7:00 - 7:30 PM - FMP Annual Meeting

7:30-8:00 - Bird Yard Art Silent Auction Final Bids

Please **RSVP** by Friday, **May 23th** at

friendsofmarquettelpark@gmail.com or pandcsmith@comcast.net

New Fencing

In 2024, FMP has funded the post and rope natural fencing along the entire length of Area 5 along the large beach parking lot. This protects the natural areas and provides an attractive barrier between paths and nature.

In 2025, FMP is planning to install post and rope fencing by the rain garden near the Aquatorium. The will protect the native plants and prevent social paths through the rain garden.

Controlled Burns Accomplished

Thanks to all the advocates, including Friends of Marquette Park, for the most efficient and cost-effective means to control invasive species, ticks and wild fires - controlled burns. In early 2025, almost all sections of Marquette Park woods have been burned. Our expert, Sandy O'Brien and her team, plus volunteers, always do a safe and well-managed controlled burn during ideal weather conditions. Thank you to our City and State for approving the burns in Marquette Park.

New Growth

Lawn Repairs were done at the Disc Golf course, along Oak Avenue and near Tall Ship II. The Disc Golf lawn damage due to parking during the Gary Air Show was amended and reseeded in the fall of 2024. We worked with the Friends of the Gary Air Show to bring this expense to the South Shore Visitor Center's administrator. The SSVC will be reimbursing FMP for this expense, and they will hold the parking staff responsible for repairs in the future.

New shrubs will be planted along the borders of the Statue Gardens when weather permits. The soil will be amended with sand, due to the clay and rock fill that was added when the park was created. Shrubs and native plants do not like wet feet.

Maybe new trees will be planted in the park, but we're not sure. The Nature Conservancy and the City applied for an Arbor Day Grant and funding through national organizations. However, since funding sources may not be available, this project is on hold. Another challenge is finding ways to adequately water the trees as it takes three years for them to develop a root system. Trees love water and wet feet.

Illumination of Sculptures

In the fall of 2024, Great Lakes Ltd installed the infrastructure for two LED lights on pedestals at Tall Ship II and Here sculptures. As you pass through the park after dusk and before dawn, your eyes will be drawn to the beauty of the bright sculptures that adorn our park. Enjoy!

Speaking of Sculptures, FMP will be making the next annual payment toward the purchase of Tall Ship II by June 1st. Miller Garden Club is sharing half of the cost this year. We are grateful for the FMP/MGC partnership to support Art in the Park.

Pavilion Bollard Lights

Did you struggle to find your way to and from the MCC Prom on a dark sidewalk? Well, soon the bollard lights along this walkway will be replaced by Great Lakes Ltd. The Park Department and Friends of Marquette Park are sharing the cost of this project. This way their funds and ours will go farther.

Lagoon Bridge Repairs

Joe Petras found a great group of volunteers who have the expertise to fix bridges. With less than \$500 of materials, they anchored new boards with metal fasteners. The pedestrian bridges are now safe. The Park Department reimbursed FMP for the cost of materials. Job well done!

New Park Staff

The new Park Director is Ms. Mattiee Fitzgerald-Williams, and the new Pavilion Manager is Dolly Harris. We are in communication with both staff members to familiarize them with what Friends of Marquette Park is all about. We look forward to working together. On the top of our list is leveling the beach easements to help residents walk to the beach and provide easy access for first responders during an emergency.

Thank You Beach & Park Picker-Uppers!

We are grateful for all of the organizations who rally their troops for beach clean-up days and really help keep our beach clean. We have many anonymous helpers who secretly pick up litter every time they walk along the beach and the park. We are so lucky that they care about our shoreline and public park. We thank these great volunteers.

MILLER BEACH WATER SAFETY GROUP NEWS

Our Water Safety Committee has been hard at work ensuring that our beautiful beach remains a safe place for everyone to enjoy. Here are some important safety tips and updates to keep in mind:



1. **Continue to Build Your Swimming Skills:** No matter the season, it's always a good idea to work on improving your swimming skills. This not only helps you stay safe in the water but also builds confidence. Look for local swim classes or practice with a buddy. Remember, strong swimming skills are essential for water safety.
2. **Find an Indoor Pool:** Just because it's cold outside doesn't mean you can't enjoy swimming! Finding a local indoor pool is a great way to keep up with your swimming practice during the winter months. Check out community centers, gyms, or schools that offer public swim times.

WSS Updates:

Assess Condition and Order Supplies: Our team has been diligently assessing the conditions of our water safety equipment and facilities. We have also placed orders for new supplies, including life jackets, rescue equipment, and signage. These upgrades will help us better serve the community.

Acquire Sponsors: We are excited to announce that we are actively seeking sponsors to support our water safety initiatives. If you or your business are interested in becoming a sponsor, please reach out to us. Your support will help fund essential safety programs and equipment.

Call for Volunteers: Regular maintenance is key to keeping our beach and water safety equipment in excellent condition. Our team has assigned specific maintenance tasks to committee members and volunteers. If you'd like to get involved and help with maintenance efforts, please contact us. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Projects:

Life Jacket Loaner Station: We are pleased to report the success of our Life Jacket Loaner Rack program. It will be returning prior to Memorial Day weekend. For those who own a vacation rental, as you spring clean, please keep an eye out for WSS life jackets. We would be happy to pick them up or arrange a drop-off.

Adopt a Safety Station: If you would like to adopt a safety station, please let us know. We will be having a dig day in the Spring to make sure they are accessible.

Recognizing Lifeguards and more: We would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of our lifeguards. Please be aware of the red, yellow, and green flags around the entrance of the beach, which indicate the current water conditions and safety levels. Stay safe, and we'll see you at the beach!

Finally, please join us in extending our sincerest gratitude to Rich Best, founding member, treasurer, and all-around awesome dude, who is heading for new adventures. Many thanks to Rich for his 6 years of service. Thank you Rich, we wish you all "The Best!!" Thank you for your continued support in keeping Miller Beach a safe and enjoyable place for everyone.



FMP Projects

Memorial Benches Phase III - We are offering the original benches installed during the 2012 park renovation. There are stone benches near the entrance to the park and metal benches throughout the park that are in good condition. FMP is restoring benches in need of refinishing. If you are interested in purchasing a memorial bench with a memorial plaque, please contact us at friendsofmarquettetpark@gmail.com.

18 Disc Golf Tee Sponsors for 2025-27 - SOLD OUT! All 18 Tees have sponsors! These sponsorships last two years. Many thanks to our Disc Golf Tee Sponsors. The new signs will be installed ASAP.

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. Ezekiel has a background in researching the history of indigenous people to Northwest Indiana. We are considering ways to share his wealth of knowledge with you through walking tours and presentations. We are making connections with indigenous people.

Street Light Replacement - The City of Gary has begun replacing street lights along Broadway Ave. 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.

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.

Appreciation of Volunteers - FMP funded the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at the Pavilion in November of 2024. We plan to support this event in 2025. The Shoreline Committee keeps track of all the volunteers hours in Marquette Park. In 2024, the **total volunteer hours was 11,275.875 accumulated by 424 people. 11,275.75 is equivalent to \$225,515.00 of paid work hours at \$20.00 per hour. Miller survives and thrives because of volunteers. We cannot do it without our volunteers!** Come join us! We love company. FMP is an all-volunteer organization.

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.friendsofmarquettetpark.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