

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!

Enjoy a walk or a drive through the park to see the beauty of nature by day and highlights during the night.



Many thanks to Dan Alessandrini, Mike Faust, Jim Smith and Susan Cohen for hanging the holiday lights this year.

MEMORIAL BENCH FOR BEN

A Bench for Ben. If you would like to join Yolanda Stoffregen and Friends of Marquette Park in funding a memorial bench for Ben Watkins, just make out a check to:

Friends of Marquette Park
c/o Yolanda Stoffregen
1137 Saint Joseph St.
Gary, IN 46403
ystoffregen@sbcglobal.net

Most of you know about the young, talented Ben Watkins whose life ended after 14 short years. After losing both parents, he developed an extremely rare form of cancer. Throughout his many ordeals he kept smiling and working hard at his schooling and his wonderful cooking. He was a young man that Miller could be very proud of. He will be missed.

The memorial bench costs \$2,000 and includes a concrete pad, installation and the personalized plaque. Yolanda will be willing to pick up your check, if that is more convenient for you. We thank Yolanda for taking on this wonderful project in memory of Ben.

PAVILION PARKING SIGN REPLACED

We are pleased to report that the Pavilion Parking sign was replaced on October 5, 2020. Many thanks to the City of Gary for the coordination of several departments, law enforcement, the courts, and the insurance company to ensure funds were used to complete this project.

**HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
IN PROGRESS**

Sandy O'Brien is working hard to remove invasive species in the globally rare fore-dune habitat area along Lake Michigan's coastline south of the Chanute Trail and north of the lagoon. She received a grant from USFWS with City of Gary's partnership to restore the 17 acres. Part of the grant included a generous donation of \$5,000. Work to eliminate invasive plants and trees, seeding of native plants and erosion control will continue through spring of 2021. The grant totals \$12,500.00. Many thanks to Sandy for acquiring the grant to restore and protect a rare area of Marquette Park.

MARQUETTE PARK TRAIL SYSTEM

Plans are for four trails (short, long, accessible & beach). The trails will include points of interest, interpretive signage, accessible information, distances between points and directions from point to point. The signage will be similar to those at the Shirley Heinze Bayless Dunes Trail in Miller. The sites are: Concession Stand (with trails map), Patterson Island, Lagoon, Lagoon Boat Launch, Octave Chanute Marker, Chanute Trail, Stone Gates, Nelson-Algren Trail and Pavilion. We have discovered a new surprise attraction to add to a trail! Watch for more news as we move ahead with our plans. We are getting ready to share our plans with the City and Park Board to receive approval. We are planning to partner with Legacy Foundation and Shirley Heinze Land Trust on this project.

CONGRATULATIONS TO WATER SAFETY SOCIAL GROUP!!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

**MILLER BEACH WATER SAFETY
& THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS**



The Miller Beach Water Safety Social Group (WSS) was honored to be awarded an American Water Environmental Grant of \$2000.00. We would like to thank Holly True and Justin Mount of Indiana American Water for these funds as well as forming a new partnership with them to help spread this message.

The WSS's mission is to coordinate and focus community resources and energies on infrastructure and programs to educate the community to mitigate the risks to life and limb posed by activities on or near the water. Water sustains and supports all life on earth. With an American Water Environmental Grant, your community or community-based organization can lend the water supply or watershed a helping hand by working to improve, restore or protect it.

The American Water's environmental grants support innovative, community-based environmental projects that improve, restore and/or protect watersheds and community water supplies through partnerships. This program was started in 2005 and is nationwide.

The two missions go hand in hand. We adapted our program to be titled RESPECT AND PROTECT THE LAKE.

The goal of this presentation is to share the importance of protecting yourself AND our fresh water resources - Lake Michigan and the Great Lakes Basin for Indiana. We feel it is so very important that our Miller Beach community, surrounding areas and visitors are aware of the importance of both - knowing when and how to safely engage in swimming and water sports in the lake as well as how vital it is to keep the lake and the lake basin clean.

The grant monies have and will be used to educate NWI youth, their families and visitors on the importance of respecting and protecting Lake Michigan's water cycle. We have developed our friendly characters, Cory, Sandy, Millie, and Gary to help us tell this story. They will help us relay facts and practical solutions that can be used everyday. Interactive presentations and displays focus on safe and contaminant free recreation. We had three presentations this past summer and reached over 100 people. During COVID - that is not too bad. We engaged Great Lakes Surf and Rescue to present and share information. We were on the Chicago news stations that helped us bring awareness to the whole viewing audience. This Grant money will continue to be used into the early summer of 2021.

If you are interested in having one of these presentations for your school or your youth group please contact us at Watersafetysocial@gmail.com.

Our Cory t-shirts are for sale by the WSS group as well as in the Lake Street Gallery (thank you, Joyce). Proceeds go to helping fund our water safety efforts.



AMERICAN WATER



HELP SUPPORT OUR FMP & WSS PROJECTS

- Long sleeved FMP hoodie - \$25, sizes available - small, large and x-large
 - Short-sleeved FMP T-shirt - \$20, sizes available - small, medium
 - Gray sweatshirt - \$15, sizes available - 2x-large (only one left)
 - Green long-sleeved T-shirt - \$10 - sizes available - small, (only one left)
 - Short-sleeved WSS T-shirt - \$25 - sizes available - 2T to 2x-large (available at Lake St. Gallery)
 - Homemade FMP masks - \$10, \$15 or \$20 - Donations go to Statue Garden projects
- Contact Carol at frinedsofmarquettetpark@gmail.com to purchase products.

FMP RECOMMENDATIONS

Park Security at Night - We support the use of cameras in the park. The City has installed two cameras as a pilot program. We encourage the Flower Garden & Trails of Marquette Park to install the most push button.

Historic Street Light in Area - We continue to remind the City to replace the four historic street lights on Grand Ave. in the park. We expect an update on the City's plan for park street lights.

Historic Landmark Registry for Fr. Marquette Park - We are supporting Brad Miller's efforts to apply for Indiana and National Landmark status. This project is on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Pavilion Bridge Repair - The Pavilion bridge between the main fountain and the legacy Foundation need of major repair. It is a critical to public health and safety. We urge the City to address this issue, as the bridge deterioration makes the structure unsafe. Pieces of the bridge are falling under the bridge.

EXAMPLES OF WHAT GIFTS CAN DO:

- Much for trails & landscaping
- Walkway & stair maintenance
- The City native landscaping
- Seasonal displays & gardens
- Major projects to preserve park
- Long-term major projects

DESIGNATED GIFTS

You are welcome to designate your gift to be utilized toward a specific project at the amount of your choosing.

- Asian Bridge Project
- Pathways Signage Project
- Statue Garden Projects
- Water Safety Projects
- Other (Please specify)

THANK YOU, LEGACY FOUNDATION

We are able to fund projects in Marquette Park because of our amazing partnership with you.

Friends of Marquette Park Leaders

Tom Cera, Mary Ann Best, Susan Cohen, Linda Halas, Joe Petras, George Rogge, Carol Smith