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## FRIENDS OF MITCHELL PARK

### Fall/Winter 2009

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Marty Scherr  
Jeffrey Weiss*

Contact:  
*Holly Sukenik  
332-2952  
hsukenik@hotmail.com*

### Mitchell Park Fun Day

The 7<sup>th</sup> annual Mitchell Park Fun Day was held on Halloween from 4 until 6 pm. More than 150 kids and adults



Kingdom like cats, bunnies, a rooster and even a minuscule green dragon were all in attendance.

Special thanks go to the event organizers.

Jeanett Yonemoto served as chairman again this year. Paul Williams and his band provided live music, which added so much to the very festive atmosphere. The haunted house was created by Angela Newnam, and it was the best ever. It generated lots of screams and giggles.



Adults and children were seen going through it more than once.

Lisa Schertler made the arrangements for the moon bounce, which was a huge hit. Emily Madden, Dan Zelikow and Marcelo Sanguinetti organized the pumpkin decorating, and there was always a line for tattoos and colorful hairspraying, artistically applied by Alison Adkins. Bill O'Brien organized the food - pizza and drinks.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the other volunteers, including Myra Addison, Steve Adkins, Jeannie O'Brian, Jennifer Dieh, Margel Highet, Bill Beldon, Penn Lupovich and Todd Newnam. All worked hard to make Mitchell Park Day a huge success.



#### Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift to Friends of Mitchell Park of:

\$100    \$250    \$500    \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address & Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Kindly make out your check to "Friends of Mitchell Park" and mail to:

Holly Sukenik, Vice President  
2401 Tracy Place, NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
202-332-2952

### Future Mitchell Park Events

The purpose of events at our beloved park is to bring the community together. All Mitchell Park events have been based on ideas and contributions from our Kalorama neighbors. Some of the past events have been this year's pre-Trick and Treat Party, Fun Day, Film in the Field and Square Dance. Recent suggestions include a Kalorama garage sale in the Park. The Board of Friends of Mitchell Park wants to hear your ideas and thoughts. Please e-mail [ityonemoto@gmail.com](mailto:ityonemoto@gmail.com), or call Holly Sukenik at 332-2952

## Notes from the President:

In these Thanksgiving times, let's be thankful to our City for the work they started in Mitchell Park. With all the rain we had recently, we all could appreciate the results of re-grading the field as well as the engineering involved in draining the run-off storm waters. The stairs and sidewalk on S street towards Kalorama Square are no longer swamped with water and debris from the field and embankment. S Street along the park looks much more welcoming with the new coping wall and the partially rebuilt sidewalk. Still there is much work to be done and to be followed up on.

The present state of the little house is also of concern, the school, which uses it, is a welcome presence that enhances the park and attracts young parents and children.

As for outreach activities, we had a wonderful pre-Halloween party attended by almost 300 neighborhood people, small and grown-up. Paul

Williams' band was outstanding; the haunted house was amazingly scary; and the moon bounce attracted many little bouncing feet. Coffee and pizza were served for free.

In the spring - and when the park is again fully recommissioned, we will offer activities on which our Activity Committee is already at work. And spring will of course bring back those irises, daylilies, roses and hydrangeas, and plenty of little children and their parents.

Summer will bring back mosquitoes and we were made aware that they are a real problem for the children and their parents. FOMP has decided to study ways of getting rid of them in an environment friendly way especially at the playgrounds.

We all at Friends of Mitchell Park, wish you a happy holiday season, and a great New Year.

—FOMP President Pierre Wagner

## Maintenance Committee Report, December, 2009

Ah, the best laid plans...Many neighbors have inquired about why the Mitchell Park Athletic Field is still "under renovation" and when it will be open again. Work was to have been completed by November 30, 2009. The original expectation was that the renovation project, intended largely to at-long-last take care of erosion, runoff and drainage issues, would be completed and the field returned to community use by the beginning of 2010. Because of unforeseen issues to do with contracting and the weather—extensive rain most of the fall—we are a bit behind schedule.

The maintenance committee met with DPR in the park on Friday, December 4. Our new liaison took extensive notes on components of the renovation still incomplete. (He also took notes on a host of other non-renovation items). Still to be completed on the erosion control project are re-inspection of the contouring and consistency of the new topsoil added to the field, "over-seeding" (i.e., adding a second batch of turf seed to ensure durable and dense grass), fertilizing, replacing topsoil behind the new coping wall along S Street plus inspection and repair of cracks in the new wall. Plants that were moved during construction of the wall will be

replaced and all debris will be removed. In addition, the dead tree near the Southeast corner is to be removed and replaced.

Our hope—there are few guarantees—is that all of this work will be completed during the next few weeks and that the field will be open for play in the Spring. Friends of Mitchell Park appreciates your patience!

Mentioned earlier were "other non-renovation" items. It has come to our attention that the little building is in need of repairs, there are some defects in the playground surface and one piece of equipment needs maintenance. Some concrete near the building is cracked and a few lights are out. The maintenance committee is investigating remedies for some of these issues and will be reporting back to the community in the near future.

One more item: if any neighbors notice the need for repairs or maintenance, please contact Marty Scherr at 202-986-2780, [marty638@gmail.com](mailto:marty638@gmail.com). We will do all we can to sustain Mitchell Park as one of the nicest in the City!

## Mitchell Park and Pets

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has been in disarray since the D.C. Council rejected the appointment of Ximena Hartsock as permanent Director on October 6. This has created uncertainty about when the field at Mitchell Park will open. When it does open, Friends of Mitchell Park intends to continue pursuing our goal of making the park a welcome place for residents and their pets. At the same time, accommodating multiple uses of the space creates challenges for us in keeping the field healthy and green.

The Mission Statement of FOMP is:

*"The Friends of Mitchell Park, Inc. (FOMP) fosters the improvement and maintenance of Mitchell Park to meet the needs of our diverse neighborhood. Our goal is to provide space and facilities for children, adults and pets as well as quiet areas for families and individuals to enjoy. We strive to make Mitchell Park a safe, beautiful, well-maintained gathering place for all Sheridan-Kalorama residents."*

It is easy to see where there might be some collision among these intentions, but none that are irreconcilable. "Children, adults and pets" have been coexisting without much problem. The Charter School kids and other casual users have made it clear that there is room for all. There are separate quiet areas, play courts and playgrounds. A "beautiful, well maintained gathering place" is generally no problem, but the field did have a tendency toward swampiness, which we all hope will change as a result of the extensive work this past summer.

I have been looking at dog parks and quasi dog parks around the city. DPR has criteria for designated dog parks, used at Walter Pierce, S Street, and elsewhere. They are usually pretty

stark creations, with chain link fence, tan bark surface, etc. There are other city hybrids such as Chevy Chase Recreation Center baseball field, and private examples such as the nonprofits Congressional Cemetery and Rosedale Conservancy. The biggest problem with either kind of space for dogs is dog "debris" There is no magic solution to this. It requires organization and acceptance of limitations and diligence by dog owners. In cases like Rosedale and the Cemetery, there is a fee for access, used for upkeep of private grounds.

There are dog owners in our area, who are accustomed (in some cases, over decades) of walking their dogs to Mitchell Park for a run and socializing. As a dog owner myself, I have had a chance to observe generally good manners on the part of owners, restraining pets from being pests to non-owners at the park, picking up after their dogs and accommodating other organized uses. The Dupont Current had a story in November about "Dog Park Woes" at the S Street Dog Park. The story was about excessive demand for the space and lack of discipline either imposed or self-imposed. It was also about measures to deal with these problems without restricting use of the area for dogs.

Pet ownership is increasing in our city. Dealing with it is a matter of finding accommodation rather than imposing prohibitions. Finding the right way to handle this when our field opens for use is certainly something for our agenda. But I hope it is also something we owners can undertake, neither tolerating anarchy nor disfiguring the park by fitting part of it into the District's dog park specifications. "Accommodation" fits both the situation and the Mission Statement of FOMP.

—Rob Nevitt, FOMP Board Member and Dog Owner

## Electronic Information System

The Friends of Mitchell Park has organized an electronic information system which will allow us to send out electronic invitations and flash communications pertaining to our program of various activities. We thank all our neighbors who have already registered. If you are interested to be on our e-mail list, please go to: [friendsofmitchellpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmitchellpark@gmail.com)

Thank you.