

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Friends of Mt. Tabor Park (FMTP)

The 2017 *Annual Report for the Friends of Mt. Tabor Park* identifies significant accomplishments as well as challenges. FMTP strives to build strong relationships with many city agencies, local organizations, and other “friends” groups. Thank you for your past support, and we look forward to future discussions on ways we can help to better serve the public in Mt Tabor Park. The current FMTP Chair, Beau Russell, may be reached on the FMTP cell phone, 503-512-0816 or a message may be left via email at taborfriends@gmail.com. Our web site is: www.taborfriends.org.

FMTP Purpose

FMTP was founded by interested citizens in early 2000 with the completion of the Mt. Tabor Park Master Plan. FMTP is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The purpose of FMTP “shall be to improve and/or help maintain Mt. Tabor Park for the benefit of individuals, organizations and the Park Bureau of the City of Portland, to identify and solve problems and participate in park projects. FMTP works with the Park Bureau, Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association and other neighborhood, community, and user groups to monitor park use and operation, support effective management and maintenance of the park, and the vision and goals of the “January 2000 Mt. Tabor Park Master Plan.”

Special Awards and Memberships

- At the FMTP Annual Meeting held on March 14th at Copley Commons (Tabor Space), Dennis Puetz received FMTP’s highest award, **Friend of the Year**.
- Board members re-elected to 3-year terms: Suzanne McCarthy, Laura Mason, and Martrese White. No new Board members were elected
- FMTP was approved to be added to the PEW Charitable Trust and the Nonprofit Association of Oregon.

FMTP Advocacy Role

- Bing Wong continues to be our representative on the Citizen’s Advisory Committee that is providing community review of the Portland Water Bureau on the reservoirs and project funding priorities once the reservoirs are disconnected from our water supply.

- FMTP continues to be a member of the Intertwine Alliance, a coalition of public, private, and nonprofit organizations working to integrate nature more deeply into the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region
- Laura Mason is our FMTP representative on the Mt Tabor Yard Planning Group.

Volunteer Efforts and Accomplishments

FMTP continues to provide hundreds of hours of volunteer service particularly through the Foot Patrol, the Weed Warriors, and Visitor Center. Total volunteer hours for the year were Foot Patrol-862, Weed Warriors-2106, Visitor Center-1267, and Board meetings and Admin.- 295 for a total of **4530 volunteer hours**.

Foot Patrol – Dennis Puetz, Coordinator

This year the Foot Patrol (FP) had another successful year keeping the park clean, orderly, and creating a safe environment with their presence in the park.

Events reported from FP members while on foot patrol:

1. **12+** needles and syringes were found and disposed of.
2. Graffiti is a constant problem; the new Summit bathroom was opened in August, and during the first week it was struck twice. Harvey Scott statue continues to be a target.
3. Campers continue to be a problem but not as much as in 2016.
4. January, after major snow event in Portland, an extremely large number of dogs were off-leash every day for a few weeks (it was as if the on-leash rule had been eliminated)
5. June 27, 2017, trail markers' posts (Blue, Green, Red) were cleared of vegetation, cleaned, and painted.
6. FP Gmail account is working excellently as the basis for all record keeping.
7. August 29, M4 rifle found; originally thought to be real, but Police verified it to be a very realistic imitation M4 Military air rifle.
8. August 9, man threatens Johannes with a gun. Johannes is the Park Tech for Mt. Tabor park.
9. August 9, runner hides keys while on a run, dog finds keys and takes them ...!!
10. August 22, Adult Soapbox Derby organization leaves park immaculate after event ... thank you!!
11. Smartphones are being used more and more to document events and problems in the park. All problems are reported to www.pdxreporter.org web site, and photos are provided when possible.
12. Mt. Tabor Park is immaculate, and as clean as it ever has been, as reported by FP members.

In 2017, I created a trail maintenance adoption program for the Blue, Green, and Red trails. The following Foot Patrol members stepped forward to adopt a trail:

Red Trail: Patricia Morgan; Blue Trail: Dave Beltz; Green Trail: Steve Bingold

In 2017, as leader of the Foot Patrol, I have looked for a way to recognize individuals who volunteer the most, contributing to the success of the Foot Patrol. To recognize these individuals, I have decided to have an annual TOP 10 List, based upon volunteer time. TOP 10 for 2017 are:

- Steve Bingold
- David Beltz
- Jack Vidosh
- Terry Jenness
- Ellen Simmons
- Beau Russell
- Donna French
- Julia Smith
- Nancy Russell
- Pat & Suzanne McCathy

I want to thank all members who volunteered for patrols, assisted at events, and supported the effort to keep Mt. Tabor Park the gem it is. The park has never been cleaner!

Name tags for foot patrol volunteers: Two of our foot patrol members have been wearing a name tag while on patrol for most of this year. The name tag seems to be a friendly sign when talking to people visiting the park, so I created a name tag for anyone that has done at least one patrol during 2016 and 2017; available in the Hut

Foot Patrol Stats for 2017:

Total number of members at end of 2017: 51 (email list)

Total volunteer hours for foot patrol members in 2017: 807+61(concerts)=868hrs.

Total number of foot patrols since year 2000: 4281

Looking Ahead to 2018:

We will continue to attract new members, be ambassadors to the park, be active and involved with the park. We will work with PP&R, the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, and Portland Police Bureau. The presence of the Foot Patrol on Mt. Tabor will always be a positive sign for all who enjoy the park.

Challenges for 2018:

1. Off-leash dogs remain the biggest problem for the Foot Patrol and for visitors in the park. The monthly reports of off-leash dogs have dropped dramatically from over 130 dogs off-leash for the first 3-months of 2017 to about 30 dogs off-leash for last three months of 2017.
2. Increase membership and participation, especially participation from members who have not performed a foot patrol during the previous year.

Gratifying Stories ... Several times in recent months a comment has been made by visitors, "The park is so clean do you think that visitors are more respectful and help keep the park clean because they see it is clean, and want to do their part?" This is a wonderful testimony that Foot Patrol efforts are making a difference, even greater than we could have expected.

Other comments by visitors: A woman at the dog park said, "she drives all the way from NE to our park because it is so clean, and the folks are so friendly." Not an uncommon remark, we often hear this from visitors. People from all parts of Portland and beyond come to Mt Tabor Park "because it is clean and safe." Kathleen Phipps from Forest Grove "... drives to Mt Tabor Park because I feel it is safe, peaceful, and Mt Tabor is inspirational ... I connect with my thoughts and feelings here."

Foot Patrol Purpose: keep park clean, safe, and secure. Act as ambassadors who observe, record & report items such as theft, vandalism, graffiti, improperly secured facilities, lost & found items; assist visitors in park, and pick up litter. Report all reportable items to www.pdxreporter.org.

Visitor Center - Dave Hillman, Coordinator

Our small Visitor Center has now been up and running for six years, yet I continue to be amazed by our success as documented by the number of visitors coming from all over greater Portland, the Northwest, the entire USA, and the world. Just take a look at the large map and the number of pins placed on the map by our visitors. We're even on the map's second edition! It's hard to find a part of the world without a pin! For this year's report, I believe it's best to present it in three parts, (1) the present, (2) our overall success, and (3) our concerns and suggestions for the future.

The Visitor Center Today:

We have been very successful in gaining new volunteers, and fortunately currently have a total of 10 volunteers with a somewhat fixed schedule. This has allowed us to be open 6 days a week, for approximately 30 hours a week. You can find us in the Visitor Center for approximately 6 hours on each Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and approximately 5 hours a day on Monday and Thursday, and 3 hours on Tuesday. This will vary depending upon personal needs and/or weather. Yes, we can still use a few more volunteers to allow us more open time for late afternoons and evenings, especially in summer and autumn seasons. We continue to increase the variety of maps, brochures, publications, and other materials that we can offer our visitors, with the largest increase coming from many of the greater Portland non-profit organizations and the State of Oregon.

Our Documented Success:

Perhaps the best way to document our success or accomplishments is to just look at the sheer numbers. Every year has seen an increase in our visitors, and this year we increased every month (except January) over the same month in all previous years. 2017

brought us 9,513 visitors, which is 1,942 more than any previous year. Our 6-year total is now 41,188! Our Visitor Center sales and contributions have been nearly \$5,000 just this calendar year, with almost \$2,000 of that being available for FMTP funded projects with the park. As we grow in both recognition and awareness by other organizations, they have been supportive in providing pamphlets, maps, and brochures for our Visitor Center. For example, the Oregon Historical Society, the Art Museum, the Forestry Center, the State of Oregon have all supplied materials. I think it is a “real pat on the back” for the FMTP and our volunteers!

Concerns and Suggestions:

We still need our park visitor sign! This has been promised for well over 18 months, and we need it to be installed on the park entrance sign at 69th and Yamhill. Many visitors to the park, especially new ones, cannot find us without a “few clues.” We can use more space, especially wall space, and would really like to have the fabric wall panels replaced by a floor to ceiling wall. A solid wall would also allow the park staff to have far more secure and private office space. Two contractors have stated the project would cost approximately \$2000 and could be done quickly and easily. We also need several more signs placed in the playground, near the top, the off-leash area, and perhaps near the area between res # 5 and #6 that would say in essence, “Lost and Found can be Located at the Visitor Center”.

Weed Warriors – Lise Gervais, Coordinator

In 2017 Friends of Mt Tabor Weed Warriors (WW) continued to remove invasive vegetation manually, primarily from areas on the northeast side of the park, working closely with staff from Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) and the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES). BES ended the Tabor to the River project in June 2017.

Stasia Honnold, in her role as Stewardship Coordinator, continues to do a great job coordinating projects, volunteers, and Crew Leaders with enthusiasm and skill.

Mary Kinnick has continued to contribute her time and skills to Weed Warriors in the form of fundraising and making volunteers feel welcome at work parties. The FMTP Board has authorized the initiation of a fundraising campaign that will ensure the WW Stewardship Coordinator position is sustainable. A summary of this effort can be seen elsewhere (page10) in this Annual Report.

VOLUNTEERING

-Total volunteer hours: 2,106 - (1,650 in 2016, 2,056 in 2015, 2,345 in 2014, 2,001 in 2013, 1,870 in 2012).

-Total hours for Last Saturday of the Month service projects: 1,516 hours (1,282 in 2016; 1,340 in 2015; 1157 in 2014 and 381 in 2009 when regular WW reporting started)

-Average of 59 volunteers per Last Saturday event, (53 in 2016, 54 in 2015, 36 in 2014, 32 in 2013, 42 in 2012, 37 in 2011, and 27 in 2010)

-In September, again partnered with The Nature Conservancy and PP&R for our biggest work party of the year (175 volunteers, including 17 Weed Warrior Crew Leaders). Plans are in the works to continue this annual tradition; scheduled for Saturday, 9/29/18.

-During work parties, continued to use the mid-way “educational breaks” to increase volunteer knowledge of invasive and native plants; the relationships between plants, insects, birds and fungi; and how volunteer efforts are helping the park.

-Continued to see more volunteers returning and becoming “regulars”; at least one expressed interest in attending Crew Leader training in 2018.

-Crew Leader training was offered in February and again in March, taking place at the Visitors Center and in the field. History of the Park and Weed Warriors, plant identification, safety, and effective ways to work with volunteers were included.

-Crew Leaders gave generously of their time this year, with 11-17 participating at each event. New crew leaders were paired with continuing ones for their first several service projects.

-Continued to attract volunteers with support from a number of organizations including Hands On Portland, SOLVE, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Warner Pacific College, Portland State University, Portland Community College, a number of scout troops, and business organizations including New Seasons.

-New Seasons Hawthorne Store Managers came for a mid-week 3-hour work party in June, followed by Assistant Managers in July. They were enthusiastic and jumped right in to digging out blackberry vines, despite the hot weather. We worked in Unit 10 on the Green Trail, above the dog park.

-In September, we again participated in Warner Pacific’s Common Day of Service. The WP Women’s Soccer team did an amazing job digging out a whole lot of blackberry vines in Unit 10 on the Green Trail above the dog park.

FUNDING AND DONATIONS

-Received funding from FMTP, the Bureau of Environmental Services, and Portland Parks & Recreation enabling continuation of the part-time Stewardship Coordinator for 5 hours a week. Funding levels continued through June 2017.

- FMTP stepped up to fund the WW Stewardship Coordinator position from July 1, 2017-Nov. 30, 2017.

-Continuing donations by KIND Healthy Snacks, Bipartisan Café, and RainOrShine Coffee House. New Seasons Market on SE Hawthorne contributed lunches for the Crew Leader trainings.

- Warner Pacific University provided us with a conference room for our Advisory Committee Meeting in July.

- We’re mostly set for tools but spent \$137 on screen-printing ink and t-shirts for Crew Leaders.

CHALLENGES FOR 2017

-Making the best use of a finite number of volunteer hours and impressing upon volunteers how much we value their efforts and accomplishments, especially in the

unknown climate of PP&R budget cuts and BES's withdrawal from stewardship efforts at Mt. Tabor in June 2017.

-Continuing effort will be needed to remove invasive species restarts, to engage in early detection and removal of new opportunistic invasive plants in order to free space for native plants to fill in and enable dormant seeds to germinate.

-Now that reservoirs are offline, units formerly off-limits could be the focus of restoration efforts.

-Critical to the future of the Weed Warrior effort are the recruitment and motivation of both our Crew Leaders and other volunteers. More volunteers have become "regulars," and, as a result, along with Crew Leaders, can share their knowledge and experience with newcomers. Our Crew Leaders have expressed interest in new opportunities for learning. They play a critical role in sustaining a high level of motivation among the volunteers.

-Identifying source(s) of funding for the WW Stewardship Coordinator after June 2017. Mary Kinnick's involvement with this is much appreciated.

-Finding more ways to inform the community about the continuing need for Weed Warrior volunteer efforts. (I attended volunteer fairs at PCC SE, 2 times; Franklin High School, 2 times; and a BES table at Sunday Parkways).

-Continuing to reach out to people of ethnic, racial, and cultural groups that have traditionally not been included in mainstream conservation efforts.

UPCOMING EVENTS

-2018 Crew Leader training will take place on Saturdays, 2/24 and 3/3.

-Last-Saturday-of-the-Month Stewardship events will start on March 24; the last will take place on October 28.

-Franklin High School has moved back to its original location on SE Division. This may create opportunities for projects with science teachers who have reached out to FMPWW in the past. FHS has also recently started a Natural Resources class which may also create stewardship opportunities. Possible April mini-work party with AP Biology class in the works.

-Stasia and Lise will be participating in a walk-through of the park to discuss future projects and objectives in January with PP&R's Isabel La Course, Johannes Venghaus, and Steve Lower.

-An updated Stewardship Agreement, (formerly known as the Memorandum of Understanding) with Portland Parks & Recreation-Land Stewardship, is expected after the walk-through and will continue to guide the work of PP&R and the Weed Warriors.

THANK YOU'S

Thanks to Crew Leaders Ada, Alexie, Anka, Bing, Brad, Caleb, Candice, Chris, Corlene, Darvel, Deb, Ellen, Gayle, Gil, Hanns, Izzy, John, Kevin, Lynne, Marj, Mary, Rachel, Robin, William, and Zosia. A special thanks to Dick Anderson for again volunteering himself and his pickup truck for our projects.

Thanks also to the outstanding leadership of FMTP Weed Warrior Stewardship Coordinator Stasia Honnold and PP&R Stewardship Coordinator Isabel LaCourse. Thanks also to PP&R Natural Areas Supervisor Lynn Barlow, Park Technician Johannes Venghaus, and Ecologist Steve Lower.

Thank you to the FMTP Board, especially Gayle (as our WW/Board Liaison), Bing and Chris who volunteer their time as Board members as well as Weed Warrior Crew Leaders.

I continue to be impressed by how invested our Crew Leaders are in keeping the park healthy and what a great job Stasia Honnold is doing leading the effort. It is an honor to be involved with such a great group.

Trails

New Trails Committee Chair, Dennis Puetz, continues to try and find ways volunteers can partner-up with Park's staff to help maintain Mt. Tabor Park's trail systems. In doing so, he has been in contact with PP&R regarding the need for "demand trail" reconstruction to reduce run-off and soil erosion (see Challenges and Concerns section). This also includes utilizing the Foot Patrol in the maintenance of the wooden trail and tree identification posts, weeding, and painting.

Other Service

- Parking, security, and informational support by Foot Patrol members for the July Concerts in the Park
- Enhanced access to FMTP-related information via a Facebook page created and maintained by Martrese White. Martrese also has continued to maintain the FMTP website. (go to www.taborfriends.org)
- Board member leadership and the many volunteer hours board members spent attending meetings and carrying out a myriad of responsibilities on behalf of FMTP members.
- The 6th annual Tar n Trails Run/Walk Fundraiser for FMTP held on October, 23rd - 54 participants took part - \$1700 raised for FMTP; special thanks to Board member Anne Crispino-Taylor for her leadership in organizing the event.
- On October 10, FMTP opened the Visitor Center and the Weed Warriors conducted a volunteer service project (118hrs.) in order to participate in the 3rd annual Parke Diem city-wide volunteer service event sponsored by the Portland Parks Foundation.
- FMTP Newsletter (semi-annual) – sent electronically to all FMTP members in February & July (and in-mail copies to those requesting it); Thanks to Gayle (for copy and editing) and Martrese (for Layout) who collaborated on its production

- Annual FMTP Picnic (potluck) for members and friends of “Friends” was held August 8th in Picnic Area A in the park; it was very well attended with an estimated 50+ folks participating. Thanks to Board member Laura Mason who did an excellent job in organizing the event.

Funding

Chris Olinger has been working the past year with Parks to finalize plans and get costs to create a Harrison gate handicap cut-out near reservoir #1, installing a retaining wall by the steps at SE 69th and Yamhill, and possibly contributing to the rebuilding of 2-sections of the Amphitheater wall. This past March he was told that because of the two landslides in the park in the winter (2/16/17) the wall projects and the handicapped access cut-out are on hold. They have become Capital Improvement Projects, which puts them under the control of a different division in PP&R. Additional meetings with Parks have taken place.

On a positive note, we have been able to fund:

- New landscaping around the newly renovated summit restroom.
- Continued to fund the Weed Warriors Stewardship Coordinator at 5-6 hrs. a week with funding from the Bureau of Environmental Services, Portland Parks and Recreation-City Nature, and FMTP (also allocated funds for tools and supplies)

Membership – Suzanne McCarthy, Membership Chair

The Friends of Mt. Tabor Park completed 2017 with a robust membership. There were 131 memberships, but there were 36 of those that represented several people, so by the end of the year there were actually 167 members. New memberships and renewals for the calendar year 2018 have already reached 81 for a total of 106 persons, so it is clear we are off to a good start for the new year.

Those who are interested in maintaining and enhancing the beauty that is Mt. Tabor Park are invited to join the Friends. Members can find various ways to serve in the park by volunteering in any of several activities: Visitor Center, Weed Warriors, and the Foot Patrol. Detailed information is available on the website at www.taborfriends.org

Also available on the website is information about joining. The process is simple, and options are outlined for electronic sign-up or for sending a check. Basic dues are \$15.00 per family.

The Friends of Mt. Tabor Park is grateful for all members and would like to acknowledge especially those who donated more than \$25.00 during 2017. The additional funds are used for maintenance and upgrade projects in the Park. The following list is a summary

of the extra donations during 2017. All donations to the FMTP are tax deductible as we are a 501(c)3 organization.

Gifts over \$25.00 are divided into classes which are given tree names. One hundred two of our members gave more than this minimum.

Linden, \$25.00 to \$49.99: 33
Red Leaf Maple, \$50.00 to \$99.00: 35
Red Alder, \$100.00 to \$249.99: 30
Madrone, \$250.00 to \$499.99: 4
Sequoia, \$500.00 and up: none

Special Fundraising Campaign Approved by FMTP Board

Mary Kinnick

The Board authorized a 2018 special fundraising campaign to ensure the sustainability of the FMTP Weed Warrior program (native-habitat restoration) and increase the ecological health of the park. Until July 1, 2017 funds from FMTP, the Bureau of Environmental Services and Portland Parks & Recreation paid for the Weed Warrior Stewardship Coordinator part-time position, a position essential to the work of the Weed Warrior crew leaders and volunteers. (See Weed Warrior section of this report.)

A Steering Committee was formed and currently includes Mary Kinnick (chair), Jeff Anderson (Portland Parks Foundation), Amelia Caldwell, Jackie Dingfelder, Kari Easton, Tom Koehler, Kate Raphael, Tim Raphael, and Diane Redd. The Committee developed an overall strategy for the campaign and began work on identifying prospective donors and developing informational documents. The February Newsletter will include more information about the campaign, a first for FMTP. FMTP applied for and received a \$2500 Nancy Hebb Freeman discretionary grant from the Portland Parks Foundation (PPF) that will pay for campaign-related expenses. Thank you PPF!

Products

Carol Baumann served as the products manager consulting with Dave Hillman, Visitor Center Coordinator, about which and how many products to purchase and sell (t-shirts, sweatshirt and hats with FMTP logo, note cards, etc.).

Publicity

FMTP is always looking for ways to keep the community informed of what we have planned and about all the good work we do.

- Articles to the *Southeast Examiner*—thank you, editor Nancy Tannler
- Enhanced website at www.taborfriends.org --thank you, Martrese White
- Weed Warrior Facebook page—thank you, Stasia Honnold
- FMTP Facebook page—thank you, Martrese White

Challenges/Concerns

This report concludes with the identification of challenges that warrant our attention. We welcome members and others who care about Mt. Tabor Park to suggest ideas to help address these challenges and to identify new ones we may be neglecting. We look forward to conversations with Parks’ and other City staff as we work together to address these challenges.

- The poor and deteriorating (and in some cases, unstable) condition of many of the 90 historic lamps; replacement will be very expensive; (another possible priority for a future bond measure?).
- The damage by illegal off-trail biking that causes soil erosion and decreases the safety of others in the park; signage in the park helps in part to address the issue, but more public education about the problem and engagement of the cycling community is needed to reduce the problem.
- The need for “demand trail” reconstruction to reduce runoff and soil erosion; PP&R will be informing FMTP of ways they/we can help with funding.
- The restoration of key vistas required in the 2000 Mt Tabor Park Master Plan; PP&R-Urban Forestry developed a plan for such restoration throughout City parks, including Mt Tabor Park; work has begun in other parks, but we haven’t heard yet when there will be an opportunity for the public to review plans for restoring vistas at Mt Tabor.
- Reducing the incidence of car prowls and break-ins, with our Foot Patrol working with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and Portland Police Bureau to establish better means of communicating with park visitors about the problem.
- The increased incidence of speeding bicyclists who disregard the safety of other park users.
- Safety concerns due to the lack of much needed roadway maintenance (potholes and crosswalk markings).
- Repair of a failed section of the retaining wall below East Tabor Drive.