

2011 Annual Report

Friends of Mt. Tabor Park (FMTP)

The *2011 Annual Report for Friends of Mt. Tabor* identifies significant accomplishments as well as challenges. FMTP strives to build strong relationships with many city agencies, local organizations, and our other “friends.” 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 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(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.” (FMTP Bylaws, updated June 8, 2008).

Special Recognitions

At the FMTP Annual Meeting/Winter Program in March at Warner Pacific College **Frank Gorshe** was recognized as the **FMTP Friend of the Year** for his dedicated service. Over the past 11 years his contributions to FMTP have been extensive, including initial and continuing website development, guardian of funds in his role as Treasurer, service as chair, as an initial member of the Foot Patrol, and as our resident photographer at many events. **Providence Health Systems** was **awarded Honorary Membership** for donating copies of the new trails map (available at the main kiosk in the park). Four individuals were elected to 3-year Board member terms: **Jason Doerflein** (new), **Tom Leiner** (new; subsequently resigned), **Frank Gorshe** (continuing), and **Mary Kinnick**, (continuing). The Winter Program attracted a large crowd at Warner Pacific College and featured **Dr. Scott Burns**, Portland State University geologist, who presented a lively, engaging presentation, “*Dynamic Geologic History of Mt Tabor—It Rocks!*” He confirmed that Mt Tabor IS a volcano. We also learned it is 203,000 years old.

Significant Accomplishments

- ***New Visitor Center Opens—Off to a Great Start!***

Portland Parks & Recreation approved an agreement that allowed FMTP to open a Visitor Center in the park October 1, 2011. The FMTP Board appointed **Dave Hillman**, our resident dreamer whose efforts made this happen, FMTP Visitor Center Volunteer Coordinator. Between October and mid-December the Center received over 800 visitors who hailed from locations throughout the NW, the U.S and even the world. The Center is a room located in a portion of the park’s maintenance facility adjacent to the north side main parking lot and is open most weekend afternoons. As more volunteers are recruited to staff the Center, the goal is to have it open most every day during the spring and summer. Stop by and check out the wealth of information available about the park. Thanks to so many for helping to make this happen: Mt. Tabor Neighborhood

Association, Southeast Uplift, and City Bureaus including Parks, Water, Bureau of Environmental Services, Transportation and Office of Neighborhood Involvement. And a special thanks to **Jan Caplener** for the wall of historic photos.

- ***FMTP Foot Patrol Membership Grows***

Since its founding, the Foot Patrol has clocked 23,528 volunteer hours, or the equivalent of 40 hrs. a week for 11 years! This year 59 individuals (up from 46 last year!) conducted 221 foot patrols, along with service during the July concerts in the park and other special events, for a total of 528 volunteer hours. Including meetings, training, and admin., **the total was 1004 hours**. The Foot Patrol continues to help make the Park a safer and cleaner environment for all to enjoy. As eyes and ears for the park, its motto is: “Observe, record, report,” and it does, working closely with Portland Parks & Recreation, Police, and Water Bureau staff and officers. Nancy and Beau Russell, co-organizers, provide overall leadership with others taking on specific roles. *See Appendix 1 for further detail on the Foot Patrol.*

- ***Projects Funded Due to Generous Giving by Members***

Our members continued to give generously enabling FMTP to support a number of projects. Total revenue was \$10,281 and expenditures \$6,040. As in prior years we saw a continued spirit of giving from our membership base, with many donating over and above their basic \$15 dues. In 2011 FMTP members submitted \$2,880 in basic dues, along with \$5,206 in the higher-level dues donation categories. In addition a highly successful garage sale resulted in \$2,088 revenue. Thanks to **Carolyn Dixon, Patty Turner, and Pat Morgan** and all those who found items to donate! Projects supported in 2011 or approved for 2012 include: Weed Warrior part-time volunteer service coordinator, start-up costs for the new FMTP Visitor Center, increasing park access/safety (to 3-wheelers, wheelchairs) with modifications to one closure gate (SE 69th St. entrance at top of hill) and for the drinking fountain at the top loop in the Park, repairs to the kids’ soap box derby track, bike rack for the top loop area, and donation for the summer park movie. Also authorized was a project to construct steps on the north side of the top loop, subject to cost sharing with Portland Parks. Thanks to **Frank Gorshe** for his outstanding service keeping careful track of the finances.

- ***Weed Warriors—Volunteer Hours Double!***

The Weed Warriors set a record of 2479 volunteer hours in 2011, doubling the 1219 hours in 2010. We believe the result is due to strengthened collaboration with Portland Parks (**Susan Hawes, Mart Hughes, Louie Guerrero, Johannes Venghaus**) and Bureau of Environmental Services (BES-**Naomi Tsurumi**) (Tabor to the River project); partnerships with Warner Pacific College, Mt Tabor Middle School Cedar Lodge, Hands on Greater Portland and SOLV; dedicated crew leaders (**Darvel Lloyd, Gayle Marechal, Monique Leslie, Nora Hanna, Tony Cole, and Bob Rodgers**) and Weed Warrior Advisory Committee members; continued leadership from FMTP Weed Warrior volunteer service coordinator **Alexa Todd**; and increasing knowledge by the community of the threat to the long term health of the natural areas of the park if we fail to remove invasive vegetation and where needed, replant with natives. Weed Warrior last Saturday of the month (9am-noon) service projects ran from March through October, culminating in the first ever Volunteer Appreciation Picnic. Efforts continue to clear invasives from Unit 5, an area that lies below the top loop on the east side and then to move on to Unit 6, an area below Unit 5. Some additional highlights are:

- a new Weed Warrior Facebook page (go to www.taborfriends.org)

- funding support from FMTP and BES for the part-time volunteer service coordinator and a BES grant from East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District that provides funds for Weed Warrior tools and supplies
- a refurbished Weed Warrior office/storage area made possible with support from Portland Parks, Water Bureau, Home Depot-Mall 205 (a new carpet)
- \$200 from SOLV for tools and supplies
- a special Saturday service project by students, staff and faculty from Portland Community College
- development of a more comprehensive crew leader training program for 2012
- prospect of the first “adopt-a-plot” strategy involving New Seasons Market employees from the SE Hawthorne store.
- new brochure developed by BES for self-guided tour of invasives removal/planting work--available at the main kiosk

See Appendix 2 for more information about the Weed Warriors.

- ***Trail Stewardship and Off-Trail Bikes***

Significant progress was made assessing and mapping areas of soil erosion caused by off-trail bikes. Solutions to date have included split rail fencing in several select areas.

The Mt. Tabor Park Master Plan guidelines were reviewed that relate to bicycle use in the park. As a result, new signage is being installed regarding bicycle use on marked park trails. Thanks to **Beau Russell** for his leadership on this issue and **Doug Brenner, Louie Guerrero and Johannes Venghaus** from Parks for their counsel and help. Also, a map of the three marked trails (Blue, Green and Red) continues to be in high demand. Many thanks to **Providence Health Systems** for printing another 5000 copies! Maps may be picked up at the kiosk next to the main parking lot.

- ***Off Leash Dog Park—New Steward Appointed***

New Steward **Chad Kula** reports that 2011 was a productive one for the Dog Area in Mt Tabor Park. A new gravel pathway was constructed that runs across the often muddy, and slippery center area. Warner Pacific College gave three great service days, keeping the invasive plants at bay, helping with a new drainage plan, and with general maintenance. A new doggie bag dispenser was installed (thank you **Roger Hediger** of the Water Bureau), and a plaque was put on the message board thanking **Nancy Norby** for her many years of leadership and service as Steward for the Dog Area. Plans are underway to teach kids about dogs (safety and education) and an appreciation for our parks. The possibility of a fenced area for timid dogs and runners is being explored. Thanks to those who have directed donations to FMTP specifically for improving the Dog Area.

- ***Other Forms of Service by FMTP volunteers***

--Parking, security and informational support by Foot Patrol members for four July Concerts in the Park

--Pie sales (with pies from Bipartisan Café) at the Concert series--\$354 generated (thanks **Bertha Guptill**)

--Enhanced access to FMTP-related information via Facebook page, a revised website at www.taborfriends.org (thanks **Frank Gorshe**) and delivery of the FMTP newsletter and Annual Report to members via e-mail (thanks **Pat Morgan**).

Membership & Services

- As of December 31, 2011, membership stood at **192**
- FMTP Newsletter (semi-annual) – mailed to all FMTP members in February & sent electronically in July (and in-mail copies to those requesting it); edited by Sue Sells
- Membership/Winter Program Meeting March 15, 2011 - our 11th Annual Meeting and community educational program (open to the public). A special thanks to Board member **Patty Turner** for serving as the main organizer of the event and to our hosts at **Warner Pacific College**.
- Board member **Phyllis Weih** became the FMTP Archivist.

Products

- **Carol Baumann** appointed Products manager to replace outgoing **Mary McWilliams** who has kept us in good supply. Products (t-shirts & sweatshirt with FMTP logo, note cards, etc.) are available at Mt Tabor Realty at SE 69th & SE Belmont--thanks to **Isabelle Zifcak**-- and some are also available at the new Visitor Center.

Publicity

- Articles for Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association newsletter
- articles to the Southeast Examiner
- enhanced website at www.taborfriends.org
- new Weed Warrior Facebook page
- continuing FMTP Facebook page

Challenges/Concerns

This report concludes with the identification of a number 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.

- with the strong possibility of a significant budget cut to Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) for FY13 (begins July 1, 2012), one that may result in restroom closures (replaced by port-o-potties), reduced garbage pick-up, the loss of hours from Park Techs, temporary employees, gardeners—the challenge is to work with PP&R to identify how FMTP can help to keep the Park safe and clean, reduce the presence of invasive vegetation, and keep trails maintained. (Note: PP&R has suffered budget cuts for the past 3 fiscal years and has taken a larger % of cuts than many other City agencies; City Council members will, hopefully, find a way to reduce the hit PP&R is asked to take this time around).
- reducing the incidence of off-trail bikes that can cause soil erosion and decrease the safety of others in the park

- engaging members of the biking and running communities who use the Park in ways that encourage them to become FMTP members and/or assist with service projects designed to improve conditions in the Park associated with their activities
- our Foot Patrol working with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and Portland Police Bureau to help reduce car prowling incidents by establishing better means of communicating with park visitors
- restoration of key vistas required in the 2000 Mt Tabor Park Master Plan (PP&R currently assessing work needed throughout City parks)
- identification of more developmentally appropriate play structures and associated costs for replacing various current structures (a local resident is exploring possibilities)
- our Weed Warriors working closely and collaboratively with PP&R and BES to plan and carry out habitat restoration efforts currently underway
- work recruiting and training more Weed Warrior crew leaders to support the increasing number of volunteers turning out for the Saturday service projects and requests by organizations for one-time special service projects; and providing more comprehensive training for crew leaders to help volunteers work effectively and safely
- finding sources of longer-term funding for the Weed Warrior volunteer service coordinator position
- the poor condition of many of the 90 historic lamps (a possible priority for any future Parks bond measure)

APPENDIX 1
2011 FRIENDS OF MT TABOR FOOT PATROL REPORT
Prepared by Beau and Nancy Russell, Co-Organizers

Total number of foot patrols in past 11 years.....	2,975
Total number of foot patrol hours during those 11 years.....	23,528
Total number of foot patrols in 2011.....	221
Total number of foot patrol hours during 2011.....	528
Total participants on active roster in 2011.....	59
Total number of new participants in 2011.....	11
Total hours for foot patrol members in 2011.....	1,004
On patrol.....	528
Training and meetings.....	189
Summer Concerts.....	163
Administration.....	124

Challenges for 2012:

The proposed cuts to the PP&R 2012/2013 budget will pose some real challenges if implemented. The Foot Patrol will be ready to respond, as we are able, to the reduction in park services by continuing to work in partnership with Portland Parks and Recreation, the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, the Portland Police Department, and Portland Water Bureau to help keep Mt Tabor Park a pristine and safe destination.

To reduce issues of safety and be able to better answer park user questions regarding the shared use of trails.

Working with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement and Portland Police Bureau help reduce car prowl incidents by establishing better means of communicating with park visitors.

Notable event in 2011:

Portland Parks and Recreation won the National Gold Medal for Excellence. This national recognition is a tribute to the hard work of park employees, private partners and dedicated volunteers. Because of its reputation, *The Mt Tabor Foot Patrol was selected to participate in the video highlighting the importance of volunteerism throughout all the Portland parks.*

APPENDIX 2
2011 FMTP WEED WARRIOR
VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROJECT REPORT
Prepared by Mary Kinnick, Project manager

The focus of the Weed Warrior effort this year was on clearing English ivy, Himalayan blackberry and clematis vitalba from Unit 5 (along the eastside below the top loop). This will continue in 2012 until finished with Unit 6 (lies below Unit 5) to follow. Volunteers focus on removing invasives when they are mixed in with native plants. Cedar Lodge students helped remove English ivy and also helped plant natives (many sword ferns on the north side of the Park and other natives on the south side) and a Weed Warrior “wanderer” group helped keep Scotch broom at bay.

- **Total Volunteer Hours: *.....2478.5 (double the 1219 hrs. for 2010)**

Saturday service projects.....	954.0 (381 in 2009; 624 in 2010)
Mt Tabor Middle School Cedar Lodge	578.0
Warner Pacific College	646.5 (520 in 2010)
Portland Community College	65.0
Atkinson Elementary School	26.0
Crew leader training	12.0
Special SOLV service day	14.0
Project manager (volunteer)	183.0

*includes crew leader hours and hours of the volunteer project manager

- **Resources**

- Funding for part-time volunteer service coordinator
- FMTP.....\$1500 (calendar year)

BES.....\$2112-FY11*; \$2398(FY12)

- Tools & Supplies for Weed Warriors
 - East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation
 - District grant to BES.....~\$2400
 - SOLV.....\$200
 - PP&R.....donated gloves
- Refurbished Weed Warrior office/storage area
 - Donations from PP&R, Water Bureau, Home Depot and QFC
- BES.....donated guides/posters
- Flying Pie Pizza, Trader Joe's, FMTP, PP&R.....donations for Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

- **Other Notable Developments**

- New Facebook page for Weed Warriors initiated (go to www.taborfriends.org)
- Development of lesson plan on park ecology & invasives removal
- Research project to track progress on invasive vegetation removal
- Draft of guidebook for use by volunteer service coordinator
- Draft of Memorandum of Understanding between PP&R and FMTP
 - re: roles and responsibilities for each with habitat restoration efforts

- **Challenges/Concerns**

- continuing to strengthen our collaboration, joint planning and communication with PP&R (Services and City Nature) and BES to carry out habitat restoration efforts; especially critical for Weed Warriors to know when areas covered almost exclusively by invasives will be scheduled for cutting back/removal/treatment by either PP&R or BES so we can plan our manual removal work accordingly
- recruiting and training more Weed Warrior crew leaders to support the increasing number of volunteers turning out for the Saturday service projects and respond to requests by organizations for one-time special service projects
- finding a long-term funding sources for the part-time Weed Warrior volunteer service coordinator position
- the rapidly advancing English ivy leafing out and spreading again in Unit 1 tackled by Weed Warriors several years ago (north side to the west of the amphitheatre); Weed Warriors asked by PP&R and BES to shift focus in 2010 to Unit 5 as BES was scheduled for more invasives removal and planting in Unit 1; ivy continues to advance
- avoidance of working near ground wasp nests in late summer around dense thickets of trees, shrubs, and invasives
- taking care that volunteers (especially seniors and children) don't "overdue" it, especially in hot and/or rainy weather
- developing effective techniques for pulling thick, mature ivy, clematis and Himalayan blackberry vines and cutting and digging out the roots

-working with PP&R and BES to reduce the possibility for soil erosion on slopes where invasives are removed and the soil left bare, which also increases the chance for use by off-trail bikes

-finding support for continuing research on the effectiveness of the multiple efforts at habitat restoration currently underway, including better assessment and measurement techniques to show the impact of Weed Warrior efforts

A Final Note: The possibility for significant cuts to the PP&R budget for FY13 could result in new challenges for the Weed Warriors. We count on the Park Tech along with other Services and City Nature staff to help plan for our projects, remove debris piled up by the volunteers, supervise inmate crews/court-appointed community service individuals for some invasives removal work... and much more.

*FY=Fiscal Year (July 1-June 30)