

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Friends of Mt. Tabor Park (FMTP)

The 2016 *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 15th at the Western Seminary, Dave Hillman received FMTP’s highest award, **Friend of the Year**.
- Board members elected this year: Bing Wong and Anne Crispino-Taylor were re-elected for new 3-year terms, and Deb Hanson, Chris Olinger and Isabel Johnson were elected as new Board Members
- FMTP was approved to be added to the Oregon Cultural Trust’s registry of Cultural Nonprofits.

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.

- Deb Hanson is our representative with 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-1148, Weed Warriors-1762, Visitor Center-1071, and Board meetings and Admin.- 251 **for a total of 4232 volunteer hours.**

Foot Patrol – Dennis Puetz, Coordinator

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

Events reported from FP members while on foot patrol:

1. 14 needles and syringes were found and disposed of.
2. Graffiti multiple times was discovered, and especially on the Harvey Scott statue.
3. Campers significantly increased with the rising homeless problem in Portland. At least six cases of reported campers in the park.
4. February 29, a FP member discovered a heavy gym type bag on East bank of Mt. Tabor. It contained a large amount of gun and automatic weapon ammunition that was taken to the East Precinct.
5. Membership of FP is at 47 (per Gmail account) active list. This is slightly down from 2015 member count.
6. FP conversion to digital record keeping, documentation, communication for email and calendar is working well. The Gmail account is used as the basis for the digital record keeping.
7. Creation of scrapbook "Meet the Members" was finished, with an online version available too. Web link to scrapbook: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B5r9yIzPYYEXc2ITc0p0Z0ZjUGM> .
8. Newest member, Jack Vidosh, has been an amazing addition to the Foot Patrol. This one patrol member does the work of the entire FP membership by himself. In 2016, Jack performed: 142 patrols, 365 hours, 244 trash bags, counted 554 dogs on-leash, and 33 dogs off-leash. Thank you Jack !!!
9. Concerts in the Park event was successful. The pie table had to be eliminated this year, much to the disappointment of many people, especially annual visitors to the concerts. FP staffed an information table for each of the four Tuesdays to advertise FMTP and FP; response was minimal success.

10. Smart phones are being used more and more to document events and problems in the park. All problems are reported to parkscan.org web site, and photos are provided when possible.
11. Mt. Tabor Park is immaculate, and as clean as it ever has been, as reported by FP members.

As park ambassadors, we are the eyes and ears of the park, our motto being, "Observe, record, and report." As the leader I have kept the proven practices intact and have started using the Gmail account as a single source for communication, record keeping, scheduling, and storage of all Foot Patrol and FMTP records. We are using Google Apps: Gmail, Calendar, and Drive to accomplish this.

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

Foot Patrol Stats for 2016:

Total number of members at end of 2016: 47 (email list)

Total volunteer hours for foot patrol members in 2016: 1148

Total number of foot patrols since year 2000: 4007

Looking Ahead to 2017:

FP has been asked by City of Portland Parks Bureau to participate with trail measurement for the reopening of the Summit Bathrooms.

City of Portland is rewriting the "PDX Reporter" app for smartphones, and the FP will assist with testing the new version. The app greatly simplifies reporting of any non-emergency event, with ability to include photos, and GPS exact location. We look forward to assisting the City, and getting the app to be a successful communication/document tool for all people in Portland and especially those in Mt. Tabor Park.

We will continue to attract new members, be ambassadors to the park, and 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 2017:

Increase membership and participation, especially participation from members who have not performed a foot patrol during the previous year.

The Foot Patrol will be ready to respond to the needs of the park, as reduction in park services continue from City of Portland. Dogs off-leash are always a problem, and we will continue our efforts to inform owners of the leash rule and of the available off-leash dog park area.

Visitor Center - Dave Hillman, Coordinator

2016 has been another banner year for our Mt Tabor Park Visitor Center. More and more visitors from all over greater Portland, the great Northwest, all of the United States, and around the world have found their way to our park. This year we have seen 7,473 visitors, and in our five years of existence (believe it or not) we have hosted 31,577 visitors. It seems that every month and every year we exceed the previous year/ month totals. Along with the increase in visitor total, comes the increase in sales and contributions, which in turn is another plus for Portland Parks and Recreation. Our sales and contributions now total \$18,462! That is impressive considering our sales come from such a small space.

A few of the highlights for 2016 include these:

- 1) We have become a regular stop for the Portland based tour companies.
- 2) We have a new agreement with the Portland Police Bureau to make use of the Visitor Center and its facilities at night, which will increase the police presence in the park after dark and when the gates are closed.
- 3) The Caplener Group of Realty Trust has agreed to an annual contribution of \$500 to assist with our printing costs.
- 4) In October, we celebrated the 5 year anniversary of the Visitor Center with a gathering of 25 past and current volunteers along with PP&R representatives.
- 5) We replaced the gutter on the building near the Visitor Center door.
- 6) A new Visitor Center sign is to be created and installed on the park entrance sign.
- 7) Volunteer staffing has allowed us to open on average 6 days a week for approximately 24 hours per week.
- 8) We continue to expand the array of brochures and pamphlets recently adding LanSu Chinese Garden; Portland Art Museum; Oregon Historical Society; Pittock Mansion; Saturday Market; Sierra Club, and Nature Conservancy.

Challenges for 2017:

- 1) The building housing the Visitor Center is in dire need of major maintenance. The roof is loaded with moss, mildew, and debris; the siding is covered with mildew; paint is chipped and in horrible condition; the windows are old, single pane, without locks and/or screens. There has not been any improvement in the 5 years we have been in the Visitor Center.
- 2) We are in dire need of more space, and could easily have far more displays, etc. with additional room. But the reality is there is no additional space available in the building.

Weed Warriors – Lise Gervais, Coordinator

In 2016 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) Tabor to the River.

On January 1, 2016, we welcomed the new WW Stewardship Coordinator Stasia Honnold. She did a great job in her first season as our WWSC.

On June 6, 2016, we celebrated the accomplishments of Mary Kinnick as she retired from the FMTP Board and from her position as Weed Warrior Coordinator. She continues to provide advice during continued transitions in the Mt Tabor Park community.

VOLUNTEERING

- Total volunteer hours: 1,650—(2,056 in 2015, 2,345 in 2014, 2,001 in 2013, 1,870 in 2012). Fewer hours may be due to fewer extra work parties, smaller event with Warner Pacific and the cancellation of the Parke Diem event due to weather.
- Total for last Saturday of the month service projects only—
 - 1,282 volunteer hours for Last Saturday events (1340 in 2015, 1157 in 2014 and 381 in 2009 when regular WW reporting started)
 - average of 53 volunteers per Last Saturday event, (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 (101 volunteers). Plans are in the works to continue this annual tradition, scheduled for Saturday 9/30/17.
- During work parties, expanded 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”; several expressed interest in attending Crew Leader training in 2017.
- Crew Leader training was offered in February and again in March, taking place at the Visitors Center and in the field. Plant identification, safety, and effective ways to work with volunteers were included.
- 16 Crew Leaders gave generously of their time this year, with between 6 and 12 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, PSU, PCC, Reed 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 May, followed by Assistant Managers in June. They were enthusiastic and jumped right in!
- In September, we again participated in Warner Pacific's Common Day of Service. We had been told that 40 students were signed up but only 10 showed. We made the most of it by digging out a lot of blackberry in Unit 11, above the road past the Lincoln Street entrance.
- In October, the Saturday Parke Diem event was cancelled due to reports of strong winds and heavy rains, which could increase the possibility of limbs and trees falling.
- In November, a small group of Crew Leaders, 2 husbands and several potential new Crew Leaders planted native plant seeds in Unit 2 in the ravine between the basketball court and the Salmon Street entrance. Seeds and planting instructions had been provided by Ken Finney of BES to replant after bindweed had been sprayed with herbicide in September.

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 are expected to continue through June 2017.
- Continuing donations by KIND healthy snacks, Flying Pie Pizza, Bipartisan Café, and RainOrShine Coffee House. New Seasons Market on SE Hawthorne contributed lunches for the Crew Leader trainings.
- We're mostly set for tools but spent \$85 on XL leather gloves, missing springs for clippers, more first aid items (including Technu for poison oak), and \$98 for a pizza party at Flying Pie.
- Warner Pacific University provided us with a conference room for our Advisory Committee Meetings in June and November

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.

- Continuing with a relatively new group of individuals: WW Stewardship Coordinator (Stasia Honnold), PP&R Stewardship Coordinator (Isabel LaCourse), FMTP WW Coordinator (Lise Gervais), BES liaison (Colleen Mitchell), recent replacement for Louie Guerrero (Scott Domine) and future park ecologist to replace retiring Mart Hughes (recently announced).
- Identifying source(s) of funding for the WW Stewardship Coordinator after June 2017.
- Continuing effort will be needed to remove invasive species restarts, to engage in early detection and removal of new opportunistic invasive plants (evergreen blackberry, Canada and bull thistle, garlic mustard, Scotch broom, and others were found this year), and to remove invasive groundcovers (e.g., herb Robert, yellow avens) in order to free space for native plants to fill in and enable dormant seeds to germinate.
- Helping crew leaders and volunteers make the shift to restoration work that requires “Japanese gardener” rather than “linebacker” approach. Work must be more informed and focused, and volunteers need to be kept motivated.
- With the change in the nature of our work, different metrics are needed to measure native habitat restoration accomplishments.
- Now that reservoirs are offline units formerly off-limits to restoration may open up, creating opportunities to free more native plants from blankets of ivy and clematis. However, there will probably be fewer of the days of rolling a huge “rug” of ivy down a slope that were typical of the early years of the Weed Warriors.
- Critical to the future of the Weed Warrior effort are the recruitment and motivation of both our Crew Leaders and other volunteers. As mentioned earlier, 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 strong interest in new opportunities for learning. They play a critical role in sustaining a high level of motivation among the volunteers. Attention must continue to be given to their needs and interests.
- 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 Grant High School, which will soon be moving to the Marshall campus closer to Mt. Tabor Park.)
- Continuing to reach out to people of ethnic, racial, and cultural groups that have traditionally not been included in mainstream conservation efforts.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2017 Crew Leader training will take place on Saturdays, 2/25 and 3/18.
- Last-Saturday-of-the-Month Stewardship events will start on March 25; the last will take place on October 28.

- A March field trip with Mt Tabor Middle School is being organized by Isabel LaCourse of PP&R.
- I am currently corresponding with Ms. Molly MacNeill, a 2nd grade teacher at Creative Science School, for details on a field trip to learn about the geology, flora, and fauna of the park.
- In August of 2017, Franklin High School will be moving back to its original location on SE Division after several years of renovation. This will create opportunities for projects with science teachers who have reached out to FMTP WW in the past. FHS has also recently started a Natural Resources class which may also create stewardship opportunities.
- An updated Stewardship Agreement, (formerly known as the Memorandum of Understanding) with Portland Parks & Recreation-City Nature, will be finished later this month and will continue to guide the work of PP&R and the Weed Warriors.
- Sometime in the summer, we will probably see a final report from Ryan Durocher (Bureau of Environmental Services) on BES activity and an assessment of achievements and continuing challenges in the various natural areas of the park.

THANK YOU'S

Thanks to Crew Leaders Mikey Bishop, Corlene Blue, Rachel Brooks, Brad Copenhaver, Ada Garcia, Brady Hall, Deb Hanson, Mary Kinnick, Monique Leslie, Darvel Lloyd, Zosia Lynch, Gayle Marechal, Alexie McNerthney, Justin Olexy, Chris Olinger, Ellen Simmons, Jess Williams, and Bing Wong. 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, PP&R Stewardship Coordinator Isabel LaCourse, Emily Lytle (PP&R and SOLVE), and the continuing support from Colleen Mitchell and her colleagues at BES, Ryan Durocher and Ken Finney. Thanks also to PP&R Natural Areas Supervisor Lynn Barlow, Park Technician Johannes Venghaus, and Ecologist Mart Hughes who retired in December.

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

Trails

Trails Committee Chair Beau Russell 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).

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 re-designed, and maintained the FMTP website.(go to www.taborfriend.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 5th annual Tar n Trails Run/Walk Fundraiser for FMTP held on Oct 23rd - 54 participants took part - \$800 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 Meeting/Winter Program Meeting held March 15, 2016, our 16th Annual Meeting/Winter Program (open to the public). Our featured speaker was Kevin Robinson, the director of the Adult Soap Box Derby. He showed videos of past events, and spoke about the history of the derby and where he wants to take it in the future. A special thanks to Board member Gayle Marechal for serving as the main organizer of the event, and to our hosts at Western Seminary
- Annual FMTP Picnic (potluck) for members and friends of “Friends” was held August 9th 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

Due to generous membership giving, the Tar ‘n’ Trails Run/Walk event, donations, and purchases made at the Visitor Center, FMTP was able to fund the following projects:

- Funded and installed a new drinking fountain, located between the two restrooms east of the Visitor Center.

- Funding for a new bench and its installation near the Visitor Center.
- Continued to fund the Weed Warriors Stewardship Coordinator at 5-6hrs. 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)
- Funded a 25hr. training program for the new Weed Warrior Stewardship Coordinator who began employment January 1, 2016

Projects we hope to be involved with in 2017: Chris Olinger has been working 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.

Membership – Suzanne McCarthy, Membership Chair

The Friends of Mt. Tabor Park closed out 2016 with a membership count of 100. Since numerous memberships are for couples or families, the actual number of members is 141.

We acknowledge our appreciation for the continued support of our members, with special thanks for the generous giving of some members' donations above and beyond basic membership dues (Douglas Fir) of \$15 per family.

Other categories of giving are:

Linden - \$25 to \$49.99: 20 members

Red Leaf Maple - \$50.00 to \$99.99: 29 members

Red Alder - \$100.00 to \$249.99: 20 members

Madrone - \$250.00 to \$499.99: 6 members

Sequoia - \$500.00 and up: none

Because of their generosity, we were able to help fund much-needed upgrades and maintenance, which benefit all who visit the park. Anyone who uses and/or loves the park is invited to support it by becoming a member of the Friends. Please visit our website, www.taborfriends.org, for more information about what we do or how to join. Now that people can sign up and pay using electronic means, joining has become even easier, by simply clicking on the 'Join FMTP' button in the Membership section. You may also follow the instructions for sending a check.

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
- Weed Warrior Facebook page—thank you Stasia Honnold
- FMTP Facebook page—thank you Martrese White

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 PP&R 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Extending Visitor Center hours through recruitment of additional volunteers.