

*Working to preserve,
enhance and advocate
for Denver's parks,
recreation resources,
open space and
urban tree canopy
for over 42 years.*

NEWS FROM THE PARK PEOPLE

THE PARK BENCH

The Park People Has Moved!!!

After several years of fundraising and nearly a year of planning, contract work and construction, The Park People have completed Phase I of the restoration and rehabilitation of the James Fleming House in Denver's Platt Park. What does that mean? We've moved! The James Fleming House, a beautiful Queen Anne Victorian stone mansion, now serves as the headquarters for The Park People. On July 15th, we bid a nostalgic but long-overdue farewell to our old home at the Eugene Field House in Washington Park and relocated to the renovated and spacious 2nd floor of the Fleming House. Nearly all of the interior restoration is complete, and we are getting settled into our new home. Staff and Board members alike beam when we pull up to our new "digs," which provides us with much-needed elbow room for our growing programs and activities. Phase II is underway and includes the refurbishing of the 1st floor windows and the painting of the exterior trim. Once that work is completed in early spring of 2012, the 1st floor will once again be available for public use, including special events, community meetings and classes for the Platt Park Senior Center next door.



Mile High Tree Champions Program Takes Off

Last fall The Park People launched The Mile High Tree Champions program to engage local businesses in our mission to enhance and bolster the urban tree canopy. Thus far, the Mile High Tree Champions program has been a raving success! Participants to date include Accenture, Comcast, CH2M HILL, Kaiser Permanente, MapQuest, Newmont Mining, Wells Fargo and FREIGHT at TAXI (Zeppelin Development, Inc). Together, these eight companies have planted over 400 trees in Denver's parks, at affordable housing sites, at Bluff Lake Nature Center and numerous other locations around the city. A special thanks to all of the "inaugural" participating companies of our exciting new program.



Newmont Mining sponsored and staffed the planting of 58 trees at Rosedale Park in south Denver.

Denver Digs Trees Continues to Thrive!

As of this fall, the Denver Digs Trees program has provided more than 42,000 free and low-cost trees to Denver residents. This year we held our 20th annual spring street tree distribution and our 3rd annual fall shade tree distribution. Both were highly successful events thanks to the combined efforts of our staff, volunteers and, of course, this year's sponsors – The City and County of Denver, Colorado Garden Show, Inc., Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc. and Xcel Energy. In addition, fuel for our volunteers (i.e. food and beverages) was generously donated by Einstein Bros Bagels, ink! Coffee, and Basil Docs



Volunteer Gail Ferber helps a tree recipient cart and load her new Swamp White Oak at the Ruby Hill Park distribution site.

Pizza.

This year's distributions set several records. First, 71% of our trees were planted in target (i.e. undercanopied) neighborhoods where trees are most needed. That beats last year's all-time high of 66%. Second, more than 80% of our tree requests came in through our online application, which greatly improves our efficiency. And finally, by the end of October, all 2075 trees had found homes. This means we will not have to winterize any trees this year – to tree Program Manager Kim's absolute delight!

The street and yard trees planted through Denver Digs Trees will grow to help improve quality of life in many ways. They will filter air pollution, cool our homes and neighborhoods, reduce energy consumption, absorb and store greenhouse gases, provide habitat for urban wildlife, make our communities more beautiful and walk-able, promote physical fitness by inviting us outdoors, and more! These trees will create a legacy of green infrastructure supporting healthy, vibrant communities for decades to come.

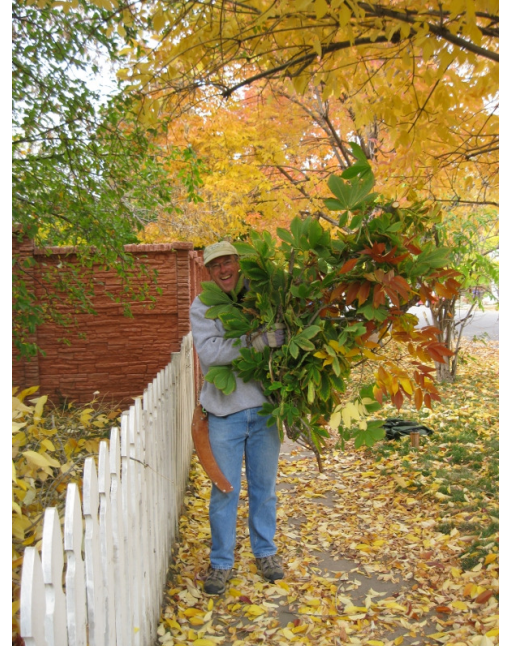
Community Forester Program In Action

During the winter of 2010, we worked closely with Denver Forestry Division to retool the Community Forester Program, first established in 2003. The goal of reworking this training program was to provide more classroom and field experience for the participants who become skilled and knowledgeable volunteer foresters. These high-level volunteers lead and support tree planting and care activities for The Park People, Denver Forestry, and the Mile High Million planting initiative and take on projects in their own neighborhoods.

We are pleased to report that in 2010 and 2011, 66 individuals earned their shiny new *Community Forester* vests and badges after attending workshops in tree biology, health, planting, pruning, identification, inventory, and volunteer leadership and management. An additional 60 *Tree Stewards* participated in part of the workshop series. Already, these new Community Foresters and Tree Stewards have joined our cohort of wonderful, experienced volunteers in supporting the urban forest throughout Denver. Within the past year, they have clocked more than 150 hours in pruning street trees alone.

The significance of these contributions cannot be overstated. The proper planting and care of young trees is an investment in the next generation of city trees that will grow to replace thousands of declining Silver Maples, American Elms, Ashes, and other aging and diseased trees that we lose each year. And while Denver's street trees are technically City property, their care is the responsibility of adjacent property owners. Our Community Forester volunteers are helping to provide crucial interventions – the important early-life inputs of proper planting, structural pruning, and careful watering that are essential to developing healthy, long-lived trees that will become assets rather than liabilities for residents and our community forest.

The next round of trainings will begin in March. Visit our website or contact our office in January for more information.



Community Forester John DeRungs pruned street trees on a beautiful fall morning.

Public-Private Partnership at Work in Wash Park

Through privately raised funds, The Park People helped make some significant maintenance improvements to one of Denver's most beloved and frequently visited parks. In the spring, we hired two contractors to trim nearly 1,900 trees in Washington Park. The Park People partnered with Denver Forestry to identify trees that needed trimming and to ensure that contractors met City forestry standards. The pruned trees included approximately 200 conifers and 1,700 deciduous trees. Not only did this work enhance the beauty and longevity of the tree canopy that graces Washington Park, but it also enhanced safety for park users.

We also infused \$225,000 into Denver Parks and Recreation's restoration of the Wash Park Boathouse, accelerating the timeline for its ultimate completion.

Finally and most recently, The Park People partnered with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado and Denver Parks and Recreation to restore the park's heavily used running path. The first phase of the restoration took place in October, during which roughly half of the running path was completed and a new generation of evergreens were planted on the north end. The second half of the path will be resurfaced in March of 2012.

These projects are shining examples of the great strides that can be made through public-private partnerships to support our valuable public resources. The Park People was established to fulfill our mission through our ongoing programs and to support the park system by making capital and main-

tenance improvements with private funds, like those that took place in Washington Park.



On October 15, 400 volunteers joined The Park People, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, and Denver Parks and Recreation to lay crusher fines on the running path and plant a new generation of evergreen trees.

Shade and Fruit for the Globeville Townhomes

On May 7th, The Park People partnered with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) to plant 48 trees and 400 perennials and ornamental grasses at the Globeville Townhomes in north Denver. Thanks to a grant from the Colorado Tree Coalition and the Mile High Million planting initiative, we were able to provide a new generation of large shade trees as well as fruit trees at this recently renovated Denver Housing Authority (DHA) site. One of the city's least-treed neighborhoods, Globeville is an isolated part of Denver, divided from the rest of the city by I-70 and I-25. It is considered a "food dessert" with limited access to affordable, healthy foods. The large trees planted in May will grow to shade residential units, common areas, and street corridors while the fruit tree orchard will provide residents with an onsite source of peaches, plums, and apples.

Ever a grateful partner appreciative of the value of trees, DHA garnered its resources to contribute the 400 perennials and ornamental grasses to plant alongside the trees to further beautify the site. Once again, we were pleased to work with VOC to harness the power of more than 70 volunteers who planted, mulched, and installed irrigation for the 448 plants. Enthusiastic residents joined us for the event, and one considerate individual even brought out homemade food to show her appreciation.



Hands-down, We've Got the Greatest Volunteers

As with many nonprofits with a small staff, volunteers are the lifeblood of The Park People. Operating our programs and fulfilling our mission would be impossible without the help of our amazing team of volunteers who donate their time, ideas, and energy to the improvement of Denver's parks and urban forest.

Most of our volunteers support our *Denver Digs Trees* and *Community Forester* programs. They are outreach ambassadors, distribution site staffers, planting site and tree survival inspectors, tree wranglers, planters and pruners. Dedicated volunteers also help us with our general operations and other projects. They support us in the office, on our committees, with technology and social media, as event photographers, and so much more.

Our board and staff are continually astounded by the dedication, enthusiasm, and generosity of these many individuals. Warm thanks to all of you whom we are fortunate to work alongside.

In 2011 alone, our activities were supported by the sweat-equity of more than 400 volunteers.

Park People volunteers contributed more than 2,500 volunteer-hours – a value greater than \$53,400!



Board of Trustee Transitions

The Park People's Board of Trustees experienced some significant changes in 2010 and 2011. Several of our long-time, highly valued Trustees stepped down after years of dedicated service. Resignations included Glenn Fee, Kathryn Dudley, Cappy Shopneck, Dianne Truwe and Douglas Unfug. We would be remiss not to also mention the resignation of Maggie Morrissey (who technically stepped down in 2009) whose mother, Sue Cannon, was one of the founders of The Park People. Each of these individuals have been members of The Park People "family" for many years – some for decades. And they will be sorely missed.

However, along with the goodbyes, we are fortunate to be joined by a number of new Trustees with fresh ideas, energy and perspectives for The Park People's governing body. New Board members include John Abramson, Jennifer Burstein, Chris Chavez, K.K. Ciruli, John Hereford, Johanna Kelly, Patrick McMichael, Jude O'Connor and Scott Robson. Several of our "new" members have served on the Board before, which speaks volumes about their dedication to their passion for our mission. We are pleased to have a strong team of individuals guiding and nurturing our organization.



Some of The Park People's Trustees at a recent meeting.

Our Supporters

Contributions from July 31, 2010 through October 31st, 2011. If we inadvertently omitted your name, please contact us.

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Contributors to the Fleming House Restoration

Contributions from July 31, 2010 through October 31st, 2011. Contributions made to the Fleming project made prior to this period were recognized in our previous newsletter. If we inadvertently omitted your name, please contact us.

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

November 2011

As 2011 nears its end, I am once again overwhelmed by the amount of work The Park People accomplished this year. The details of our projects and programs are here in our newsletter and the accompanying annual appeal letter. As many nonprofits are experiencing, the economy has delivered a much tougher environment in which to raise money to fulfill our mission. Yet with the support of foundations, our corporate partners, the City of Denver and individual donations, we continue to thrive as an organization. This year has been no exception.

2011 marks our second year participating in Giving First's *Colorado Gives Day*, which will take place on December 6th this year, and our third year as members of Community Shares. We are proud to partner with these two tremendous organizations, both of which are working to increase philanthropic giving in Colorado. For more information, visit www.GivingFirst.org and www.CShares.org.

Respectfully,

Paige Heydon, Executive Director