25th Anniversary
Stop the Road Reunion

By Jennifer Richardson and Cathy Bradshaw

Has it really been 25 years since the Honorable Judge Clarence Seeliger issued an order requiring mediation to end the Presidential Parkway dispute? The answer is YES, though for many of us, it seems like only yesterday.

A 25th anniversary reunion and celebration of the end of the road fight was held in the Dellwood segment of Olmsted Linear Park on August 7, 2016. Dellwood is one of five segments of this historic park along Ponce de Leon that would have been destroyed had the road been constructed.

The celebration included BBQ, cool drinks, musicians who led some of the original road protest songs, Roadbuster and CAUTION veterans, city and county officials, neighbors as well as representatives from Freedom Park Conservancy, Candler Park Conservancy and Olmsted Linear Park Alliance.

For those of you who don’t know, the road we stopped was put on the Department of Transportation’s plans in 1939, and formalized when the General Assembly of the State of Georgia created THE STONE MOUNTAIN MEMORIAL HIGHWAY. Its purpose was to connect highway 78 at the foot of Stone Mountain to the Boulevard-Glen Iris “stub” downtown at 75/85.

The new facility was to be a four-lane commuter road, with elevated bridges, high speed traffic and 42 cul-de-sacs. It would parallel Scott Boulevard and Ponce de Leon Avenues and bisect many in-town historic neighborhoods including Old Fourth Ward, Poncey-Highland, Inman Park, Candler Park, Lake Claire and Druid Hills.

Neighbors came together to fight the road through groups such as CAUTION, Olmsted Parks Society of Atlanta and Roadbusters, along with local civic and neighborhood associations. Through more than 10 years of rallies, fundraisers, meetings, political campaigns, parades, continued on page 4
President’s Column
A Privilege and a Pleasure

Julie Ralston, OLPA President

For the past three years, I’ve had the privilege to lead the board of one of the best organizations I know of – the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance (OLPA). At the end of 2016, my term in this role ends, but my deep caring about this historic park will not.

For more than 100 years, residents of metro Atlanta have been the beneficiaries of this beautiful six-segment park – running like a green river down Ponce de Leon. The vision of Frederick Law Olmsted and the foresight of developer Joel Hurt preserved this greenspace for all of us to enjoy.

During the past three years, OLPA has realized the rehabilitation of all of the park segments, the last being the 45-acre, Deepdene segment. The organization has also worked to deal with floods, droughts, damage from errant cars and the aging of some of our iconic trees.

OLPA also stepped up its efforts to invite people into the park, to bring it to life with activities including the Olmsted Plein Air Invitational, which OLPA served to incubate the first year before it became its own non-profit organization. We also hosted a Stop the Road Reunion to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the settlement that stopped a 4-lane highway from coming right through the park and our neighborhoods.

Thousands of plants have been pruned and majestic trees are being treated to help keep them as long as possible. Plants and trees have been tagged and surveyed. Volunteers are planting new ones and children are learning the names of each.

It’s a magical place to visit, when you get out of the car and just walk along the paths. It’s been my pleasure to be a part of its stewardship. And, the journey continues to keep this treasure for future generations.

Congrats to the Olmsted Plein Air Invitational outdoor painting competition for establishing their own non-profit organization. OLPA is proud to have helped to launch this effort, but now they are a full-fledged organization of their own. The next Olmsted Invitational will be held April 2-9, 2017.

Trees, Trees, Trees

By: Connie Weimar

Drought and unrelenting heat took its toll on the park this summer. We lost eight trees in the pastoral parks and four in Deepdene, including a very large water oak near the circle across from Paideia that was 55 inches in diameter at chest height.

Luckily, planting season is upon us and Trees Atlanta has partnered with us to plant approximately 20 trees in spots carefully chosen by our landscape architects at Tunnell & Tunnell. George Ickes, OLPA’s Park Maintenance Director, and his crew will also be planting new shrubs, dividing other shrubs and relocating shrubs that are in spots that have become too shady to be suitable.

In late September, ArborGuard delivered our new tree survey of the pastoral parks, numbering, cataloguing and mapping all of our beloved trees. Our tree survey lists the diameter, species, condition and concerns for every tree. We look forward to using this data to provide our trees with the care they need for long, healthy lives.

Trees Atlanta Plantlanta Volunteers with Councilman Alex Wan

Last winter, flooding in Deepdene damaged our waterfall. DeKalb Commissioner Jeff Rader has come to our rescue with funds to make the necessary repairs. We hope to begin work this fall and complete it in the spring.

George and his crew have worked tirelessly to make the park look as perfect as possible. We have been the ‘unexpected recipients’ of many loads of illegally-dumped wood chips, and George has used them to achieve his goal of weed-free and mulched pastoral park segments.

Be sure to take a fall stroll through the park soon and enjoy!
Board Highlights

Welcome…

The OLPA Board of Directors say welcome to its new board and advisory council members.

Allie Brown

Allie Brown is a Renewable Energy Associate at the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy. She received her BA in Anthropology and minor in Ecology in 2013 at UGA. Allie is a founding member of the Olmsted Linear Park Young Leadership Council (YLC). Olmsted Linear Park is near and dear to her heart. She’s an Atlanta native and grew up down the street from Deepdene. Allie hopes to engage young professionals through the YLC who are passionate about preserving and protecting Olmsted Linear Park for generations to come.

Amy Erwin

Amy Erwin is a native Atlantan, nature lover and supporter of our public parks. Prior to retiring in 2011, she launched and ran a successful division of a cable company, and was in the telecommunications industry for 28 years. Amy is a founding board member of the Candler Park Conservancy and lives in the neighborhood with her husband, Elliott Albers. Amy loves the park and is grateful to live steps away from this historic urban oasis. She is honored to be able to contribute in any way to sustain its vitality.

Amy Howell

Amy Howell currently serves as general counsel to the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. She is active in a number of professional organizations and has served on various committees. Amy currently serves on the DHCA Board of Directors and the Fernbank Elementary School Foundation board. Amy received her BA from Connecticut College and a juris doctor from The Temple University School of Law. She lives in Druid Hills with her husband and two young children.

Alida Silverman

A longtime resident of Druid Hills, Alida Silverman is very active with the DHCA and Tour of Homes, as well as in the efforts to restore/rehabilitate our Olmsted Linear Park. She was the former president of the Olmsted Parks Society of Atlanta, Inc. Alida served as a member of the master plan committee, then as a founding member of OLPA. She became a trustee of the National Association for Olmsted Parks and the national Olmsted network. She has returned to OLPA as a member of the Advisory Board and participates in the maintenance committee.

Scott Storbeck

Scott joined the OLPA Advisory Council Board in January 2016 and currently serves as the Druid Hills neighborhood representative on the Board of Directors. He and his wife, Kim, live on Lullwater Road and are members of the Druid Hills Golf Club. Scott has been involved in many civic activities over the years, most notably the restoration of the 6.5 acre Lullwater Conservation Garden. In addition, he has served in various capacities with the Druid Hills Civic Association. Scott is the founder, managing director and CEO of Market- Line Associates, LLC. Scott holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Kansas and a master’s degree in finance and accounting from Vanderbilt University.

Janice Whitener

A native Georgian, Janice has lived in Druid Hills for 11 years close by the amazing Deepdene forest. She is retired from child welfare social work where she had opportunity to initiate, establish and manage programs for family preservation and the protection of children and adults. As a civic volunteer, Janice continues to advocate for family preservation as well as the preservation of green spaces. Janice is a UGA DeKalb Master Gardener (MG), actively volunteering at Woodlands Garden in Decatur as well as many other gardening projects. “It’s an honor to support our park, a beautiful urban sanctuary that continuously gives valuable benefits to all of us and with everyone’s support, it will continue doing so for our future generations.”
protests, hearings, arrests and hundreds of thousands of dollars spent to “Stop The Road” – this unprecedented battle was won against the formidable efforts of those entities that endorsed the road.

The more than 300 attendees of the reunion heard a special message from the Hon. U.S. Congressman John Lewis, honorary chairman of the event. Representative Lewis was a pivotal supporter in keeping the proposed road from decimated the park and in-town neighborhoods.

A “timeline” of events and news was assembled by a group of road fight veterans and displayed on “Memory Boards”. In addition to the multiple activities, the day was a time for a “reunion” of neighbors who had played a significant role in defeating the road. Emotions showed on faces, as friends saw each other for the first time in years.

It was a glorious celebration and a coming together of friends who fought the battle 25 years ago, or those who wanted to learn about the history of the road fight. Most of all, it was a gathering of many in-town neighborhoods who stood up for each other to fight a destructive and unnecessary intrusion, and who won an astounding and historic battle against an expressway.

This event could not be possible without our Host Committee and the Planning Committee from surrounding neighborhoods who helped bring it all together. Thank you!

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**Reunion Host Committee**

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Candler Park Neighborhood Organization  
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Kate Seville  
Gale Walldorff  
Carolyn Hall  
Lynn Kerpel  
Amy Erwin  
Robin Chalmers
Bird-Friendly Habitat Restoration in Deepdene

By Sandy Kruger

We are excited to announce that the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance (OLPA) is partnering with the Atlanta Audubon Society (AAS) to restore bird-friendly habitat in Deepdene. This partnership is part of the 2016 Five Star and Urban Waters grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, funded by Southern Company, a parent company of Georgia Power, and the U.S. Forest Service.

OLPA and AAS will work together to restore bird habitat and create baseline bird data to aid conservation planning. This project will provide numerous citizen science and educational opportunities to the local community and double the partnership’s local impact on bird habitat. We will host bird-watching events throughout the year.

We also need volunteers to help clean out invasive plant material and prepare the area for native species. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us at atlantaolmstedpark@gmail.com.

PAWS in the Park! My Deepdene Adventures with Max

By Christine Introna

As my sweet terrier, Max, and I step into the dappled sunlight of Deepdene for our daily constitutional, we are enveloped in the cool forest and leave the heat of the day behind for a few rare moments. The silence is a treasured relief from the electronic devices that burn their way into every moment of our existence. The lacy leafed canopy overhead casts gentle shadows on our footfalls.

For Max, every step sniffing out a new friend or an old nemesis is pure pooch joy. We are periodically greeted by our friends in paradise: other dogs, friends and strangers. All are taking in the beauty and enjoying respite from the day’s labor. Visitors travel from all over to enjoy the tranquility and mystery of the old growth forest.

Deepdene is surrounded by so many homes and schools that represent human and dog hearts from near and far. If one leaves oneself open to life, it’s surprising what warmth washes over the heart. Fear and apprehension evaporate. Just kindness is left in its wake. Surprise yourself with a walk in one of Atlanta’s loveliest oases: Frederick Law Olmsted’s gift to our neighborhood and our city. Max and I promise you will not be disappointed.

Olmsted Linear Park Featured in Georgia Outdoors

By Sandra Kruger

Georgia Public Broadcasting’s Georgia Outdoors host, Sharon Collins, featured the Olmsted Linear Park in the Urban Forests segment that aired on September 22, 2016. In this program, Collins talks about the value of trees and the conservation efforts to protect the region’s forest canopy. Our very own George Ickes takes part in the conversation. Watch now at http://www.gpb.org/television/shows/georgia-outdoors/episode/al111cee1-def1-44cc-880a-389800e6557c#.WAULXYOKQfM.link
Interesting OLPA Facts

By Alida Silverman

DID YOU KNOW? OLPA is a creation of the master plan for restoration and rehabilitation of the Olmsted Linear Park? The master plan called for an entity to implement the plan. Once the plan was adopted by the City of Atlanta, DeKalb County and Fernbank, Inc. (you see where “Alliance” came from) in 1997, the work of implementation began. Oak Grove was the first of the segments to be rehabilitated. The dedication was a joyous event, complete with Coca-Cola in small iconic bottles.

DID YOU KNOW? OLPA is a member of the National Association for Olmsted Parks (NAOP), the national Olmsted network for organizations looking after Olmsted landscapes across the United States and Canada, as well as individuals who care about them. NAOP provided a lifeline of sorts when Sally Harbaugh discovered that Frederick Law Olmsted was responsible for the design/plan for Druid Hills – his ‘last suburb.’ The Olmsted Parks Society, the Road Fight (that recently celebrated its 25th anniversary of victory) and the master plan followed.

If you missed the screening of the PBS Olmsted documentary last fall at Fernbank, you can catch the screening at Georgia Tech in January 2017.

Celebrating Fall – Thank You OLPA Supporters

On Sunday, October 16, some 50 plus guests gathered at the home of Walter and Sandy Kruger where they enjoyed delectable hors d’oeuvres of salmon, pulled pork sliders and other various treats. Guests included previous host committee members for the annual OLPA gala and the Stop the Road Reunion celebration in August. The festive party was a fitting way to say “thank you” for all the help and support our hosts provide to these important efforts on behalf of the park!

Park Opens the “Air Bee & Bee”

Last spring, OLPA was asked to participate in a community project and create a bug hotel for the newly installed Wildwoods at the Fernbank Museum of Natural History. Bug hotels – wow, what a fun project, right?

We knew this would be a competitive feat, for there are so many creative minds working out there. We soon came up with a plan and went to work.

It is a fabulous exhibit – so go check it out! Many thanks to our volunteers, Allison Snyder, OLPA Young Leadership Council; Connie Weimar, Maintenance Committee Chair; Julie Ralston, OLPA President and Tim Ralston of Rutledge Park.

Welcome and Congratulations to Georgia Tech’s Frederick Law Olmsted Professor John E. Taylor
Please Support the OLPA Annual Campaign

Do you love our wonderful, huge trees and our old-growth forest? This year’s annual fund will put an extra emphasis on these unique treasures in our parks. The board has commissioned a comprehensive tree assessment and are developing a plan for on-going tree maintenance that will be made possible through your generous support of our annual fund.

» Please contribute generously to the 2016 OLPA Annual Campaign today by visiting www.AtlantaOlmstedPark.org or by calling 404.377.5361

» Consider recognition opportunities of benches and bridges - your family name will live perpetuity in the park.

» Learn more about Planned Gifts - remember the Olmsted Linear Park in your estate planning.

As you plan your year-end giving, please consider this an investment not only for your community today, but for generations to come.

Thank You to Our Contributors

Annual Campaign Gifts - JANUARY 1 - NOVEMBER 5, 2016

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* A donation of $250 or more will allow you to be recognized in our virtual park on our website as a tree sponsor.

Please remember the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance in your estate planning.

Ask your employers about matching gift opportunities.

Thank you for your donation! Your donation is tax deductible. OLPA is a 501(C) 3 nonprofit organization.