To the OLPA Community:

As we continue to navigate through these unprecedented times, please know that we are doing everything possible to make sure the park is clean and safe for your enjoyment. If you have been out enjoying the beautiful Spring weather, you may have seen that we continue to do limited work in the park - pruning, cleaning up debris and paths, all the while, maintaining appropriate distancing. If you are among the many who have out enjoying the park, please also try to maintain your distance from others and keep in mind that our narrow paths may mean that you may have to divert for others.

As we look back at 2019, it was a year of significant accomplishments and transitions for OLPA. In Deepdene, we have completed some bigger capital projects, most notably, the refurbishment of the railings on the North bridge and the completion (at long last) of the bridge that was crushed by downed trees in the 2017’s hurricane IRMA. With the assistance of Dekalb County, we have also undertaken the renovation of the park trails, which should help with trail durability and control erosion. As we look forward to 2020, we anticipate additional major capital project work to be planned for Deepdene, mostly focused on controlling erosion in the stream bed, particularly in light of the much-needed storm water management project on Ponce de Leon, being led by GDOT. The OLPA Board and staff will work closely with GDOT and Fernbank to ensure that any proposed solutions are sensitive and responsive to the delicate ecosystem of Deepdene and Fernbank’s wetland area. We will be engaging a hydrologist to assist by assessing the creek and proposing storm water management solutions to be included in GDOT’s larger project. Stay tuned.

In the pastoral park segments, we have begun to prune the Darlington Oaks that line the south side of Ponce de Leon. There will be an immediate improvement with traffic signal visibility, and longer-term, the pruning will allow us to train the trees to eventually create a broad, high canopy over Ponce de Leon, which should be a beautiful addition to the parkway. We also spent the year continuing with our renovative pruning projects to maintain the health of the shrubbery beds in all segments of the park. In 2020, we will begin studying the playground at the corner of S. Ponce and Springdale, with an eye to needed renovations and improvements. If your children are users of this play area, please provide feedback and the OLPA Board and staff will work closely with GDOT and Fernbank to ensure that any proposed solutions are sensitive and responsive to the delicate ecosystem of Deepdene and Fernbank’s wetland area. We will be engaging a hydrologist to assist by assessing the creek and proposing storm water management solutions to be included in GDOT’s larger project. Stay tuned.

Finally, I would like to express sincere gratitude to all of you who supported OLPA during the 2019 Annual Fund. We continue to rely on the generosity of neighbors and friends to provide the funding to care for this park, and you have risen to the occasion! Thanks for all of your support in 2019. We look forward to more successes in 2020.

Sincerely,

Toby Brooks, President

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George Ickes Retires

George Ickes served the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance as the Maintenance Park Director for many, many years. He invested his time, talents and resources to ensure that our beloved park remained a beautiful oasis for all to enjoy. Park visitors enjoyed their visits with George while on their daily walks. Not to worry, George continues to volunteer in the park from time to time so you will continue to see him picking up trash or debris. George, thank you for your dedication and service to Olmsted Linear Park.
OLPA accomplished many tasks that improved the old-growth forest and pastoral park in 2019. Throughout the park, OLPA's maintenance crew and volunteers worked to clean signs, pick up trash, remove non-native invasive plants and mulch shrub beds. In Deepdene, walking trails were restored, native plants were installed and new dogwood trees were planted. Part of these efforts were made possible with a grant from The Garden Club of Georgia. As a result, many existing native plants such as Bloodroot, Wild Ginger and Solomon's Seal are flourishing. Repairs were made to the bridges and new benches were installed.

A portion of the paved path in Dellwood was replaced and a new pollinator garden was installed. The garden was part of DeKalb County's Park RX Prescription Day where volunteers planted native milkweed, blueberry bushes and other pollinating flowers. The 2019 “Carnival Under The Canopy” Gala Benefit was a wonderful success where guests were entertained by The Marching Abominables. OLPA partnered with The Atlanta Preservation Center “Phoenix Flies” event and conducted tours of the park. The first annual “Dog-n-Donuts” event took place in September and for the second year, OLPA hosted an annual fall plant sale in October.

We want to express our sincere appreciation for the volunteers who helped make the gala a success and who attended our volunteer workdays in the park. OLPA logged over 1000 hours of volunteer service in 2019. Partnering with The Paideia School and Georgia Tech, students worked to clear weeds and mulch shrub beds.

Many thanks to our stakeholders for their commitment and support to Olmsted Linear Park: Fernbank Museum of Natural History, the City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation; DeKalb County Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs, DeKalb County Commissioner Jeff Rader, City of Atlanta Council Member Jennifer Ide. We appreciate their friendship and partnership in keeping the park clean and safe for our community.

We want to thank our Legacy Leaders for their generous gifts in tribute of loved ones who reached significant milestones or those who have passed. These tributes were commemorated with a bench plaque in the park.

Amy Pudven Irwin – Deepdene
Lynn Kerpel - Deepdene
Berta Radford Lainey – Virgilee
Gloria Seymour - Deepdene
Theodore Cole Weimar – Shadyside
Thank you to our Olmsted Linear Park Donors!
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Margaret Cowie Ingram
Lynn Kerpel
David Kruczek
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Ellen A. Lyon

Dogwood - $250+
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Heather Fenton and Richard Ossoff
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