

# Conservator

• restoring the vision • preserving the legacy •



• the friends of delano park newsletter • volume 11 •

# Restoring the Vision - Preserving the Legacy

*“The best and most beautiful things in this world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.”*

- Helen Keller

What is it that makes this Valley community unique? What experiences in our everyday lives give us a powerful sense of place? Everyone has their “places of enchantment,” places that conjure up memories of their childhood and special times they have shared with family and friends, places in which they have gathered as a community to share national holidays and celebrations. The Tennessee River, the Old State Bank, the Princess Theatre, the Wheeler Wildlife Refuge, and Point Mallard are dear to our hearts and give us a strong sense of “home”. Delano Park, too, is certainly at the heart of what makes Decatur a great city and provides a common ground bringing people of diverse backgrounds together to celebrate shared public spaces. As the park slowly regains its former glory, people who have used it for years and those who may be new to Decatur or too young to remember the park’s earlier days are enjoying the old-fashioned ambience of Delano Park’s quiet beauty.

This summer the Rose Garden has become a magnet for people from all over Decatur and elsewhere – people on their way to or from work or school, out-of-towners on their way somewhere else, folks from the Point Mallard campground touring the city, families in town for soccer tournaments, former residents in town for high school class reunions, family reunions, etc. It has become one of the most popular places in Decatur for keepsake photographs of brides, children, and families. In addition to some of the most beautiful weddings imaginable, the Rose Garden has hosted the Historic Decatur Garden Tour with the Decatur Youth Symphony sending strains of delicious music floating throughout the garden, regular visitors simply wanting to take in the changing beauty, countless al fresco brown bag lunches, and couples seeking the perfect romantic backdrop for handholding and stolen kisses. Volunteers from Friends of Delano Park,



*Rebecca Martin and Greg Barnes on their wedding day in the Rose garden, Summer 2006  
(Photo courtesy of Waldrup Photography)*

Junior League Sustainers, Master Gardeners, Athens State, and various garden clubs have pulled weeds and deadheaded roses and lilies. Who would ever have guessed how badly Decatur needed a place of beauty, a retreat from our “busyness”, an opportunity for a little therapeutic volunteer work? The Rose Garden seems to have filled those needs and more.

Speaking of need, let’s cross 8th Avenue and move to the SplashPad. Never in our wildest dreams could we have predicted how popular the SplashPad would be. If we could turn back the clock and build it again, the only changes we would make would be to make it larger and with more mature shade trees. It was a “standing room only” crowd every day the weather permitted. For the first time in years, picnickers with blankets spread on the ground in Delano Park became a commonplace sight. The SplashPad was a snapshot of what Americans take pride in believing our country to be – a melting pot of various colors and cultures – a most

democratic space. It is truly a dream realized!

For 119 years, Delano Park has been a 28-acre oasis in the heart of the city which has provided recreation and renewal for our community. People will continue to have fun at Delano Park. The large and sloping expanse of grass will continue to provide space for picnics and Frisbee-throwing. Couples will continue to exchange first kisses and get engaged as they did for all the years since the park was established. Children and families will continue to pose for pictures on the bridge and have reunions and wedding receptions in the pavilions. So, in one spectacular place, the park is at the heart of what makes Decatur a great city. Perhaps Delano Park will inspire our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren to remain here and save the other things they love about Decatur.

# A Vision For All Children

*“Just think what miracles could be done if all our hearts were joined as one.”*

-Unknown

*The following piece was contributed by Andrea Sligh, a loving mother, caring citizen, and member of Junior League of Morgan County.*

As the parent of a child with a physical disability, I urge you to give your support, financially and otherwise, to the Playground and Garden for All Children in Delano Park. A great need for such a playground exists in our part of North Alabama. Additionally, Friends of Delano Park, Junior League of Morgan County, and the City of Decatur are in an excellent position to begin construction on the playground as soon as funds are available. Please allow me to share with you my personal story.

In many ways my daughter, Sarah Kate, is a typical preschooler. She loves to read, watch Disney movies, draw, and engage in other activities that preschoolers enjoy. She has a joyful laugh, a sweet voice, and is socially and intellectually equal to her peers. In particular, she enjoys physical play, such as swinging and sliding. Unfortunately, most playgrounds are virtually impossible for her to maneuver without a great deal of assistance. Sarah Kate has only recently learned to walk on her own, and the simplest things, such as the mulch used to line most playgrounds, are considerable obstacles for her.



*Sarah Kate Sligh*

The most difficult obstacle for Sarah Kate, however, is not a physical one. The additional assistance that she requires in playgrounds not equipped to accommodate children with disabilities separates her from the other typical children. It is the segregation from her peers which naturally occurs in a typical playground that is most difficult to overcome. Playtime is not only physically beneficial to children, it also benefits them socially. In a setting where children are able to interact with other children of varying abilities, a respect for these varying abilities will be cultivated. Additionally, when children of all abilities play together, those children who are most visibly different will feel just a little bit more “typical” which positively impacts self-esteem. The boundless playground that is planned for Decatur’s Delano Park is designed in such a way that children with physical disabilities would be able to have the benefit of a playground experience virtually identical to that of any typical child.

A boundless playground won’t cure my daughter of her condition. It will, however, provide her with a wonderful opportunity to interact with her peers and to develop her own special gifts. In the words of John F. Kennedy, “All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talents.”

*“You don’t need to be able to walk in order to play. You don’t need to be able to talk in order to play. You don’t need to be able to see in order to play. You don’t need to be able to hear in order to play. You just need a place to play and children to play with.”*

-Anne Bernstein

# Project Updates

## 1. Rose Garden

Dogwoods, Chinese fringe trees, and boxwoods will be planted in December. 1,000 tulip bulbs and lots of pansies will be planted this fall and winter. Volunteers are needed for general maintenance and winter preparation (addition of compost, pruning boxwoods and roses, etc.). Donor signage and plant labeling will be installed in the spring.

## 2. The Playground and Garden for All Children

Friends of Delano Park, in partnership with the Junior League of Morgan County, is making final plans to kick off the public campaign seeking donors for the many wonderful play and garden elements which will become a part of the “boundless” playground to be built in the park. In addition, the City of Decatur has applied for a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to be applied toward the purchase of playground equipment and surfacing. Junior League of Morgan County

and the City of Decatur have committed to provide the required matching funds. Construction documents are being developed to rehabilitate the WPA stone bathhouse at the SplashPad into a universally accessible restroom facility. A portion of the funding required for the rehabilitation will be provided by the City of Decatur Parks and Recreation.

## 3. Trees

This winter several varieties of native oak trees will be planted to maintain the park’s aging tree canopy.

## 4. Delano Park Conservancy

In June a conservancy fund was established for the long-term maintenance of the Delano Park facilities and greenspace. Funds received from Rose Garden rentals, photography, etc. are deposited in this account to secure the future of the park. The Conservancy funds will be used to maintain Delano Park as a beautiful place for leisure, recreation, and the appreciation of nature.



*Kevin Bryant, owner of Turf Doctor, Inc., injecting roses and boxwoods with compost tea and mycorrhizae*



*Volunteers from Junior League Sustainer Spirit working in the Rose Garden*

*“Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.”*

*-Frank Lloyd Wright*

# **Friends of Delano Park appreciates the many thoughtful gifts from its patrons.**

*The following contributions were made between May and November 2006.*

## **HONORARIUMS**

**Jimmy & Marella Adams**

Charlie & Mary McKimmon

**E. J. Briscoe**

George & Judi Vinson

**Evans & Kappie Dunn**

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**Barbara Inscho**

Trowelers Garden Club

**Barbara Kelly**

Green Thumb Garden Club

**John & Lucy Key**

**Jim & Katie Mitchell**

Charlie & Mary McKimmon

**Arthur, Amy, & Jack Orr**

Wally & Barbara Inscho

**Britt & Pat Owens**

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**Quilla Reed**

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**David & Menine Rice**

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**Bill & Noel Shinn**

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Sandra Pippen

**Sally Smartt**

Green Thumb Garden Club

**Stewart Stephenson**

Wally & Glenn Terry

**Phil & Marie Thomas**

**Glynn & Cathy Tubb**

Charlie & Mary McKimmon

## **MEMORIALS**

**Rose Alfano**

Wally & Glenn Terry

**Marion Backe**

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*(Memorials Continued)*

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Regions Bank Friends, Directors,  
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**Nancy Agnew Yates**

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**BIRTHS**

**Frances Sloane Bibb**

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Jim & Margret Ann Templeton

**Katherine Elizabeth Lamback**

Kerry & Nell Standridge

**David Dyer Moore**

Robert & Kay McWhorter

Jim & Margret Ann Templeton

**BIRTHDAYS**

**Jack Charlton**

Gilmer & Dorry Blackburn

Mark & Gay Maloney

**Jackie Goode**

Jim & Margret Ann Templeton

**GRADUATION**

**Taylor Anderson**

**John Bibb**

Billy & Marthelyn Biles

**William Charles Fite**

Billy & Marthelyn Biles

Jim & Margret Ann Templeton

**Katherine Matthews**

**Ruthie Puckett**

**Emily Thornton**

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**MOTHER'S DAY**

**Nell Clem**

Kerry & Nell Standridge

**Virginia Hughes**

Richard, Cynthia, & Rory Grugel

Mary Virginia Hughes

**Marie Standridge**

Andy & Barbara Kelly

Kerry & Nell Standridge

**MARRIAGES**

**Eric & Allison Sandlin Liles**

Billy & Marthelyn Biles

Jim & Margret Ann Templeton

**Ronnie & Cynthia Jarman**

Hank & Beth Pearce

**Austin & Erin Mitchell Phillips**

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Jim & Margret Ann Templeton

**GIFTS**

Estate of John A. Caddell

Lynn & Anne Fowler

Hill and Dale Garden Club

Henry & Melanie McCrary

\*MindVolt

Jim & Suzette Penley

Jerald & Winnie Reed

Sexton Foundation

Jimmy & Barbara Smith

James & Pat Smithson

Margret Ann Templeton

\*Turf Doctor, Inc.-Biological

Lawn Care

Tim & Cynthia Volin

\*In kind

*"If you truly love Nature, you will find beauty everywhere"*

-Vincent van Gogh

# LEVELS OF GIVING

## **Conservator's Circle** (\$25,000+)

Hank & Beth Pearce

## **Delano Park Guardian** (\$10,000+)

Baker Foundation

*The Decatur Daily*

\*MindVolt

3M-Decatur

Sexton Foundation

Pat & Sally Smartt

## **Delano Park Preservationist**

(\$5,000+)

The Boeing Company

City of Decatur Beautification Bd.

The Melvin & Virginia Hutson  
Foundation

Andy & Barbara Kelly

Kiwanis Club of Decatur

Henry & Melanie McCrary

New Decatur/Albany

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\*Peoples Bank

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Trowelers Garden Club

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## **Delano Park Visionary** (\$2,500+)

Anonymous

John & Peggy Black

deLoain Burgess

Byco Plastics

\*Byrd, Smalley, Evans & Adams

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Charles & Nell Clem

Daikin America, Inc.

Felton & Anne Davenport

Laurie Davis

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Katie Harris Mitchell

Jim & June Odom

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Joe & Kristen Propst

Connie Rix

Lee Sentell

Bill & Noel Shinn

Jimmy & Barbara Smith

Jim & Margret Ann Templeton

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## **Carolyn Cortner Smith Society**

(\$2,000+)

\*Barr Properties, LLC

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Terrence McCall

McCall Brothers, LLC.

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John & Jan Wicks

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Em & Jill Barran

Sonny & Melissa Craig

Lynn & Edith Haney

Bob & Carolyn Sparks

Kerry & Nell Standridge

## **Boxwood Society** (\$1,000+)

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Bingham & Bunny Edwards

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\*Turf Doctor, Inc. Biological  
Lawn Care

Rick & Linda Walter

## **Hydrangea Society** (\$500+)

Ted & Amy Arrowsmith

Lindy Ashwander

Tom & Becki Caddell

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\*Emack Slate

Hill & Susan Ferguson

Hal & Janice Gaultney

Steve & Penny Haddock

\*Hutto Printing

Tommy & Laurie Loyd

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Arthur & Amy Orr

Jim & Suzette Penley

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Robbie & Ingrid Rebman

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Dick & Tay Williams

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Tom & Mary Bingham

Carl Cole

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Jim Fisher

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# LEVELS OF GIVING

Green Thumb Garden Club  
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Tom & Dicky Maynor  
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Charles & Marcia Overstreet  
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Rex & Jean Rankin  
Bill & Pat Sexton  
Joe & Glee Sides  
Janet Woller South  
Erma Thomas  
Dale & Penny Trammell  
Glynn & Cathy Tubb  
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*In order to maintain listing in remaining levels, a minimum annual donation of \$25 required*

## **Garden Patron** (\$100+)

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(Barcay Properties)  
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Gordon & Joan Barksdale  
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David & Carol Bolding  
Gerald & Linda Boyd  
Jane Bradford  
Martha Kilgore Brown  
Brent & Christie Burney  
Donna Castellano  
Sage & Emogene Copeland  
Decatur High School Class of 1965  
Bill & Juanita Dukes  
Barbra F. Ellner  
Richard, Cynthia & Rory Grugel  
Kim Hallmark

Steve & Shirley Hammond  
Mrs. Julian Harris  
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Jeanne W. Leaverton  
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Steven & Mary Anne Nyquist  
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Shine Peebles  
Dave & Mona Powers  
Kim Pritchard  
Bill & Mary Leigh Ralph  
Jerald & Winnie Reed  
Muse Reed  
Dennis & Shirley Ryan  
Ken & Lynn Schuppert  
Bill & Betty Sims  
Bill & Suzanne Stone  
Sammy Stone  
Jim & Betty Kay Tucker  
Fred & Lou Underwood  
George & Judi Vinson

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Sandy Blackard  
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Debbie Griffin  
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Tim & Cynthia Volin  
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## **Garden Friend** (\$25+)

Jack & Amy Caddell  
Donnie & Patsy Cathcart  
David & Barbara Cauthen  
Kaleigh Dodd & Family  
Debbie Gibson  
Bobby & Lou Greene  
Mary Nichols Hicks  
Hill and Dale Garden Club  
Jeannine Hill  
Mike & Laura Innes  
Junior League Sustainer Spirit  
Mike & Saundy Kittle  
Nita Lawrence  
John & Kelli Lovelace  
Yvonne McCord  
Jim & Odean McCulloch  
Harold & Elizabeth Pilgrim  
Carla S. Ross  
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Jack & Toby Sewell  
Jewel F. & Christine Smith  
Alex Templeton  
Paula VanNatta  
Chuck Woodbury

\*In kind

*"The right of children to play, to sing and to dance; the right of youth to sport for sport's sake; the right of men and women to use leisure in the pursuit of happiness in their own way, are basic to our American heritage."*

-Harry Truman



*This year in Delano Park, 1,000 tulips will herald the arrival of spring. What better gift for a loved one for Christmas or Valentine's Day than a gift of tulips planted in their honor in Delano Park? With a donation of \$1 per bulb (\$25 minimum), Friends of Delano Park will plant your tulips in the Rose Garden. Mark an anniversary, a birth or birthday, remember a loved one with bright and sunny tulips. Whenever you see tulips in the Rose Garden, you'll know that yours are among them. For your donation, you and the person(s) you are honoring will receive a note indicating the number of bulbs planted and the date of your gift.*

## How Do I Make a Contribution?

Memorial gifts and honorariums are wonderful ways to remember and honor loved ones and friends. Donations will be used toward the rehabilitation and improvement of Delano Park. Your gift is fully tax-deductible and will be listed in the next issue of *Conservator*. If you wish to send a gift in memory or honor of a special person, please fill out the form below and mail it to: The Community Foundation of Greater Decatur/Friends of Delano Park, P.O. Box 742, Decatur, AL 35602. For more information about the many ways of giving, please call Nell Standridge at 256/350-6836. Named gift opportunities are available.

Honorarium

Memorial

**This gift is a tribute to:** \_\_\_\_\_

The above person is: *(please circle)* mother, father, brother, sister, cousin, aunt, uncle, friend, other \_\_\_\_\_ to the following person(s) listed, who will be notified of the gift.

*Please notify the following persons of my gift:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*Donor Information:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*Form of Payment:*

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_  *Check*  *Visa*  *MasterCard*

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A fund to benefit Friends of Delano Park has been established within The Community Foundation of Greater Decatur. The Community Foundation of Greater Decatur is a community foundation qualified under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations should be made to The Community Foundation of Greater Decatur/Friends of Delano Park. Donations are deductible as charitable contributions to the extent provided by law.

**The Community Foundation  
of Greater Decatur**  
Friends of Delano Park  
P.O. Box 742  
Decatur, Alabama 35602

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*Renee Blackwell Royer in the "roundhouse" (bandstand), Easter 1953*



*...So your children can tell their children*