

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – DECEMBER ACTIVITIES, 2011

EAST PARKS – CRAIG KLINKE

It's been an interesting winter thus far to say the least. Last year at this time, we were buried in snow and had all of our ice rinks in full operation. This December, we've had very little snow and unseasonably warm temperatures.

As of the time this report was written, all of our rinks are unsafe or inoperable. We still have open water at both the Tenney and Warner Lagoons. The warm temperatures have prohibited us from establishing land rinks at Olbrich and Heritage Heights. We haven't spent any time performing ice maintenance.

Because of the weather we've had, we have been performing other maintenance tasks that would not normally be done this time of year. We have had crews out pruning trees and shrubs. We've been grubbing stumps. We've gotten an early start on table, bench, and barrel repairs. We even had a prescribed burn on 12/27 at the old boat launch site adjacent to the Yahara River. We will be in good shape heading into spring of 2012.

We are fully prepared and ready for when winter finally arrives. All of our equipment has been converted to winter use. We have met with our Adopt the Ice partners at Olbrich and Heritage Heights. We have the water wagon ready to go to establish land rinks. All we are waiting for is Mother Nature.

WEST PARKS – KRISTIN MATHEWS, INTERIM PARKS SUPERVISOR

December's unusual weather gave West Parks the opportunity to do some much needed tree trimming within the general Parks. The Goodman crew has been going through park by park and trimming any trees that they can from the ground. The Summit crew has been doing the same as well as taking on bigger areas that have become overgrown in parks like Marshall and Hill Creek. They have been working in conjunction with our tiger unit to clear underbrush and remove invasives.

The crews have also been painting barrels and repairing picnic tables during their yearly maintenance. Our mower shop mechanics and leadworkers have been compiling a list of non-DPW equipment that will be needed for 2012 and beyond with a 5 year plan.

Though the shelters are set for winter activities, we were not able to perform any ice maintenance due to the warm weather.

MALL CONCOURSE – TOM SKAIFE, SUPERVISOR; LAURA BAUER, LEADSWORKER

As I write this it's the end of December and we've had no appreciable snow yet. While this is not good news for the recipients of new winter recreational equipment, it is great news for us. The sidewalks were clear and hazard free for the holiday shoppers, the nice holiday arrangements remained snow-free and visible, and we've been able to maintain an almost-daily sweeping schedule – very unusual for this time of year - but appreciated, we hope, by downtown business owners and customers.

We've also been busy refreshing all the mulch in our raised planters, both on State Street and around the Capitol Square. Mulching has a visually unifying effect in our service area, but it's a job we have difficulty finding time for in our busy summer season.

Bus shelter windows also received a washing, a task we fit in on days when the temperature allowed it. The dramatic difference between the clarity of the eye-level windows and the divided panes near the ground is due to the anti-graffiti coating remaining on the lower panes. While the coating was a good idea in theory, we find that it clouds over time, is then impossible to clean, and is always vulnerable to scratching. The coating was removed from the upper windows in 2009 at a cost of over \$800.00 per shelter.

The bike racks around the Capitol Square were replaced within the last few years with a new style. At the time we were not able to get all racks anchored into the pavement, a surprisingly time-consuming job. The unseasonable weather has also allowed us to concentrate some effort on this task, and most of the racks have finally been permanently anchored. B-Cycle bike racks have been removed where they would likely impede our snow removal operation, but we thankfully have yet to see the benefits.

The three remaining 70's era glitter light poles in Library Mall also received some attention. All thirty-three plastic globes were replaced with freshly washed ones, and a broken socket was repaired. We find that because these fixtures use incandescent bulbs, there are burned out bulbs almost weekly. We have quite a stock of light bulbs, however, and we're not likely to run out before the poles are removed for reconstruction of Library Mall.

We've also been finally finding proper homes for equipment and supplies that were displaced while our shop floor was torn up a few years ago. We're finding lots of interesting things, and we're excited about the prospect of again being able to quickly locate items when we need them, rather than rummaging through the "black hole" of our temporary storage room.

It's a rare treat to be able to go snow-free for a third of the season. We don't believe the weather can last much longer, but we're grateful for the extra time we've had to complete the assortment of tasks which are difficult when there is snow on the ground.

FOREST HILL CEMETERY – KEVIN SORENSEN

The weather cooperated for fall leaf cleanup so that we are in good shape going into winter. We were actually able to work on leaves into December, which hasn't happened in quite a while. The mild weather also has kept frost from penetrating the ground so that we don't have to heat graves in order to dig them. Although, we do have to lay plywood boards into the sections for equipment to drive on in order to prevent turf damage. Lack of snow and ice has allowed us to clean gutters and downspouts of all buildings and get into sections to do some low level tree and shrub trimming. One employee has been transferred to East Parks Maintenance for the winter season and will be back to the cemetery in the spring.

Thanks to Parks Maintenance for lending us 3 tractors for leaf season. Thanks to Construction for hauling our leaf/mulch pile and dirt pile before winter. Thanks to the Mower Shop for prepping all equipment for winter use.

We now have 5 full time employees and one PPT.

December: Lot Sales: 9 Interments: 22 Revenue: \$31,160.00

OLBRICH GARDENS – ROBERTA SLADKY

People and Gardens

As we look ahead to another year, its important to remember that Olbrich is about plants. To emphasize the point, our production Greenhouses are churning out plants throughout the year, except for a brief hiatus in mid summer when the spaces are allowed to naturally heat to temperatures that will kill pests. In 2011, our staff – assisted by transplanting volunteers – churned out more than 23000 finished plants. Nearly 9000 of those went directly into the outdoor gardens! This winter, Olbrich's education department is offering some behind-the-scenes greenhouse tours to showcase this work.

Visitor comment from the past month:

12/8/11 *"The suspended colored balls in the outside entryway is delightful. My friend and I felt like children as we came from the parking lot toward the building entrance."* Patricia J.

Numbers

OBG Attendance (counted from 9 – 4 only + event participants)	2011	2010
Nov 1 - 30	9868	9475
YTD Nov 30	218,261	231,158
Total Member Households (individuals*) Nov 30	6,084 (9,310)	5,552 (8,346)

**based on the number of membership cards issued*

OBG City of Madison Major Revenue Categories	YTD 11/30/2011	YTD 11/30/2010
Bolz Conservatory Admission YTD	\$38,173	\$43,640
Room Rentals YTD*	\$109,924	\$117,976
Catering Percentage Revenue YTD**	\$25,249	\$32,875

**accrued at time of booking – up to 21 months before the rental date*

*** accrued on a monthly basis following each catered rental*

Website Visits	Nov 2011	Nov 2010
Total Visits	9,986	7,976
Unique Visitors	8,168	6,338
New Visits	68%	66%

January Public Events at Olbrich Botanical Gardens call **608-246-4550** for more info

20th Anniversary Art Exhibit: Learn about the history of the Bolz Conservatory and see the winners of the photo contests, through Jan 8, Sundays, 11 – 5 pm

Art Exhibit: Julie Sutter Blair, Jan 29 – April 1, Sundays, 11 am – 5 pm,

Conservatory Exhibit: Treasures of the Rainforest, daily through March 18

Polar Dash: Saturday, Jan 21, 10 am – noon, sponsored by Olbrich and Physicians’ Plus

Cocktails in the Conservatory, Friday, Jan 27, 8 – 10 pm, \$5/person, DJ Nick Nice and cash bar

Children of the Rainforest: Samba 1, Sat, Jan 28, 10:30 am and 1:30 pm, \$3 age 13 and up, \$2 age 3 – 12, 2 and under free

Education - December programs call 608/246-4550 for information and to register

Bolz Conservatory

Behind-the-Scenes Greenhouse Tour, Choice of 3 Saturdays - 1/28 or 2/18 or 3/10 from 1 – 2:30,

Wellness at the Gardens

Yoga, Mondays 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm and Thursdays, 7:30 – 8:45 am (drop in OK)

Heavenly Hips – Use Yoga to Open Your Hips and Relieve Back or Knee Pain, Sun, 1/22, 1 – 3 pm

Tending the Garden Within: The Dreaming Garden, Mondays, 1 /23 – 3/12, 6 – 7:30 pm

Classes & Workshops for Adults

All About Figs! Sat, 1/21, 1 – 3 pm

Herbal Soap Making Fun! Old Fashion Soap and Feltmaking, Sat, 1/21, 1 – 5 pm

CONSERVATION – RUSS HEFTY

In early December staff completed preparations for winter operations i.e. cross-country skiing. No significant snow fell during December for the first time in the past 5 years. It was also unusually warm with no frost in the ground at the end of the month.

With the lack of snow precluding ski grooming we planned to lease a forestry mower to continue oak woodland restoration projects at Edna Taylor and Cherokee Marsh. However, the lack of frozen ground prevented us from using this machinery. A forestry mower is very effective tool that can mow down and chip exotic brush species like buckthorn and honeysuckle in our oak woodlands. Ground conditions need to be frozen or dry to minimize ground disturbance when using this equipment.

Therefore we turned to our chainsaw and brush saw to tackle exotic brush at Prairie Ridge, North Cherokee, and Turville Point. We used a small walk behind brush mower to clear several of the effigy mounds at Edna Taylor. Staff also started locating and marking boulders, locating old farm fence posts to prepare the oak savanna site at Edna Taylor for forestry mower operations. This upfront preparation saves on potential machine downtime instead of it being “discovered” later.

FORESTRY – MARLA EDDY

Forestry Section	Total Trees	Total Hours
Cycle Pruning	633	973.5
Pruned by Request	212	268
Small Tree Pruning Cycle	860	240
Tree Removal	57	169.5
Storm Work/Hangers		14
Unfilled Vacancies		366

The West forestry unit completed district cycle pruning in tree maintenance district 23 this month. Our next west side district cycle pruning area is in tree maintenance district 27. Boundaries for 27 include Gammon Road on the east side, the west beltline to the south & west and the city limits on the north side. The Streets Division is happy to know we are in this area because the branches are so low that they are

having difficulties getting to the curb when street sweeping or salting/plowing.

The east forestry unit did get into some district cycle pruning. We have been trying to finish cycle pruning in tree maintenance district 10 since 2006. But work requests from residents, engineering, parks maintenance, conservation, and other sister agencies continue to occupy our routine tree maintenance time.

We have updated our street tree inventory to include the inventory completed this past summer as well as take out trees from the data base that were removed by the forestry section. Our number one tree genus in our street tree inventory is maple at 33.7%, ash is number two at 24.7% and honey locust is in third at 13.1%. We have 80,787 street trees inventoried to date.

Forestry specialists continued to follow up on tree replacement sites and visiting new subdivisions in order to reserve trees from tree nurseries for the spring 2012 planting season. Also, the forestry specialists followed up on condemned oaks and elms for compliance of the nuisance abatement process. Finally, they have been following up on replanting plans for the 2011 engineering projects. They will fill in gaps where tree planting sites exist. Some examples of these engineering projects that we are setting up for spring planting include Williamson Street, State Highway 113, and West Lawn Avenue to name a few.

Special projects completed include:

- Door Creek Ski Trail (lower trail): remove some dead trees and broken branches.

GOLF – RAY SHANE

Courses closed, no report.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT – KAY RUTLEDGE

Warner Park Parking Lot

The Parks Division will be reconstructing the Warner Park parking lot in 3 phases over the next 3 years. In 2010 Phase 1 was completed, In 2011 Phase 2 was completed. In December 2011, plans and specifications for phase 3 were completed. Phase 3 includes bay 4 (in front of the park shelter), bay 1 (in front of the Mallards office) and bay 5 (new parking bays by the soccer fields). Bids will be due on January 27, 2012. Construction will start as soon as possible in spring 2012 and the project should be completed by May 25, 2012.

Olbrich Park Softball Light Replacement

Project is complete. Working on minor punch list items and final payment request.

Quann Tennis Courts

The reconstruction of 6 of the 12 tennis courts at Quann Park is complete. The color will be done in spring 2012, under separate contract; the refurbishing of the net posts will be done by our staff this winter.

Cherokee Park Playground

Neighborhood reps are in fundraising mode over the holidays. We will be checking in after the first of the year to see if their fundraising goals will be met or exceeded in order to proceed as planned with the project.

Tenney Park Pavilion

Several opening events were held at the shelter in December; on December 1st, the Tenney Park Shelter Group held a ticketed gala fundraising event to celebrate the grand opening of the shelter. On December 3rd, the official ribbon cutting was held, along with events for the kids. Speed skater Beth Heiden-Reid was the keynote speaker at both events. Continue to work on punch list items with Findorff, and awaiting receipt of as-builts and O&M manuals to move forward with closing out the contract.

Tenney Park Maintenance Bridge

Hired Bloom Companies through our RFP (Request for Proposal) process mid October, met with the consultant to start the design process on October 28th. Held a meeting with the consultant on December 21st to review preliminary designs and alignments for the new bridge.

Playgrounds, Paths and Basketball

The majority of punch list items were completed and will be wrapped up to close out the contract in spring 2012 after sites are inspected for the condition of the dormant seeding put down for site restoration on most of the playground projects in late fall.

Park Landscaping

Working on plans and specifications for installing new plantings this summer in BB Clarke Beach (managed meadow along shoreline), Tenney Park, Door Creek Park, Garner Park, and Warner Park, among other projects. Staff is continuing to develop designs and contracts to be bid out for 2012.

Olive Jones Park

The consultant is preparing plans and specs for the reconstruction of the retaining wall along the north, south and east perimeters. Soil borings were done in December, and the consultant has developed some preliminary design options for review and discussion. These will be presented to the Alder and neighborhood reps in January, and will be incorporated into a Public Works Contract for the retaining walls, asphalt replacement and fencing to be constructed after school is out in June 2012.

Marshall/Spring Harbor Park Dredging

Marshall Park/Spring Harbor Park Dredging is complete. The contract calls for us to pay 75% of the dredging bid item this fall, then survey the sediment pile in spring after it has set and drained, to determine actual final quantity.

Park and Open Space Plan

A revised draft of the plan was presented to the Long Range Planning Sub Committee on December 12th for their review and comment; the draft has also been reviewed by various City agencies and has been sent to Dane County Parks for their review and comment. Revisions to the draft plan will be presented to the Long Range Planning Sub Committee at their next meeting on January 23rd.

Hudson Park

Parks staff is progressing on the design for the Hudson Park beach improvements. Parks and Engineering staff met with the neighborhood to discuss three options for improvements to Hudson Park on October 25, 2011. The neighborhood chose a final option with some additional suggestions for changes, which were discussed with the DNR along with permitting requirements for the project. The design needs to be completed by early February for permit submission and construction in the fall.

Hoyt Park Improvements

Staff toured the park with members of the Friends of Hoyt Park on December 20th. Staff is working on developing a list of priority projects for 2012 and will be discussing this at the Friends of Hoyt Park Board Meeting on January 12th.

Other Projects

- Kiosk was received for assembly and installation for the Cannonball Trail junction at Knollwood Park and the UW Arboretum.
- Beginning to work with alders and neighborhood reps regarding upcoming projects for Blackhawk and Highland Manor Parks.
- Kiosk and trail construction have been completed at Hiestand Park, along with the informational materials for the kiosk.
- Working with Planning on the Arbor Hills/Leopold Neighborhood Plan and Hoyt Park Neighborhood Plan.
- Continuing to work with Engineering staff to evaluate proposed improvements at Stevens Street Park as requested by the Alder.
- Received notice of award for Kaboom Let's Play Spruce grants for various park playground improvements completed in 2011.
- Working on developing a new ski trail map for Elver Park.
- Expanding and updating our Playground Inventory to facilitate planning efforts for future improvements.