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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

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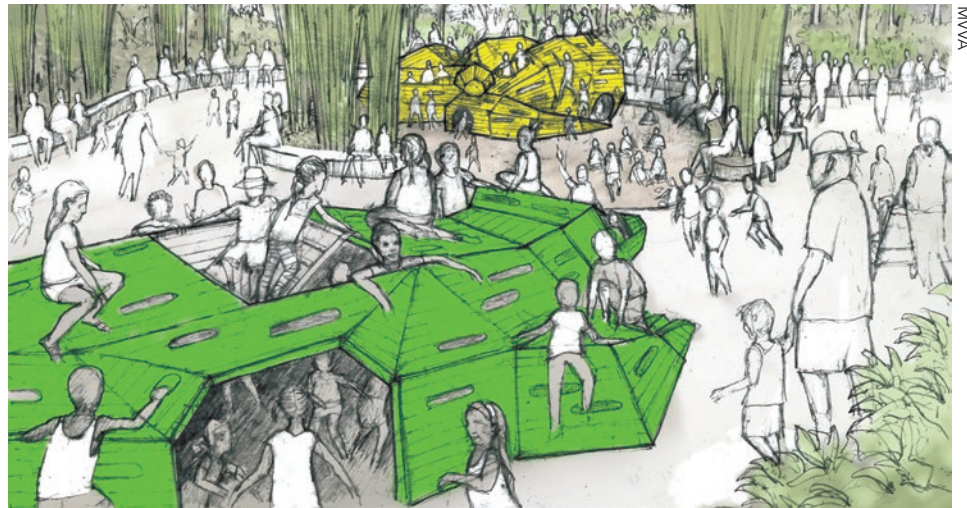
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Save the Dates!

in the park

COMING SOON:

The Commons at Hermann Park



One of the primary features of the Commons at Hermann Park will be an innovative "play garden" with whimsical play structures for children of all ages.

Houston is a very different city than it was in 1914, the year Hermann Park was created. It is, of course, much larger and more diverse than anyone could have ever imagined. The neighborhoods surrounding Hermann Park have also evolved and grown in that century. The needs and wants of Hermann Park's neighbors and Houstonians at large have changed dramatically, nearly as much as this city's many skylines.

In that spirit, Hermann Park Conservancy is developing the Commons at Hermann Park, an exciting new project located along Cambridge and Fannin Streets.

The Commons, currently in the design stage, is a project geared towards meeting the needs of park users, now and in the future.

It is located at the crossroads of the Museum District, the Texas Medical Center, and Rice University. In addition, it sits

at the heart of the upcoming Innovation Corridor—with the tech startups to the north in Midtown and the TMC3 research complex to the south along Brays Bayou.

With this prime location, this new project's goal is to be a gathering place for all Houstonians, from families and university students to tech workers and medical researchers.

Hermann Park Conservancy has always had one mission: maintain and improve the Park for generations to come. Over the years, that has included projects both big and small—from construction of the McGovern Centennial Gardens to improving the network of trails and paths to cleaning up green spaces.

The Conservancy's goal with every project, including the Commons at Hermann Park, is to get feedback from those that use the Park the most: you.

Continued on page 10



HATS IN THE PARK
see pages 6-7

MISSION

Hermann Park Conservancy is a citizens' organization dedicated to the stewardship and improvement of Hermann Park—today and for generations to come.



Last month, at our annual *Hats in the Park* luncheon at McGovern Centennial Gardens, I had the pleasure of introducing this year's honoree, Jane Anderson Curtis. She gave a wonderful speech, all about her favorite memories of Hermann Park. You can read an excerpt of her remarkable speech on page three.

Jane has been devoted to Hermann Park for over twenty years—but it wasn't love at first sight. Imagine her first view of the Park—a significant loss of trees, parking lots where gardens should be and a huge mud pit (or a "reflection pool") in the middle of the park. But Jane looked past that.

As a part of the team behind Hermann Park's first master plan back in the 1990s, Jane and the team at Laurie Olin's firm had a lot to look past. Think back to 1993 in Houston. This was long before the revitalized greenspaces of today. There was no Discovery Green, no Buffalo Bayou, and Hermann Park was not looking its best. It certainly took tremendous vision (and a lot of determination) to look at Hermann Park and say "What if?"

Luckily for Hermann Park and Houston, it was love at first sight when Jane met Bill Curtis and decided to move to Houston full time. She joined the Conservancy's board, serving as our chair as well as on the projects committee which oversees the design and construction of park improvements.

Critically, she also started our maintenance and operations committee, realizing with the pressures on the city's budget the Conservancy would have to step up and take on stewardship initiatives.

Perhaps Jane's biggest impact on the Hermann Park we know today was her involvement with the construction of McGovern Centennial Gardens. Not only did she give critical feedback on the design, she joined the Conservancy as our first director of horticulture and hired the staff to get the garden operating.



Hats in the Park honoree Jane Anderson Curtis and Doreen Stoller.

Her efforts in developing the maintenance operations are why the Gardens continue to look beautiful today, and will stay that way for generations to come.

McGovern Centennial Gardens may be relatively new to Houston, but they've become a centerpiece of this city. It's a new backdrop in the lives of Houstonians.

There are many people who can dream big dreams but very few people have the drive and determination to make them a reality. Jane Curtis is one of those people.

Hermann Park has been transformed because Jane helped us execute the master plan she developed 20 years ago, and her work has brought great joy to all of the families who visit the Gardens and play in the Park.

The next time you visit the Gardens or walk along the Jones Reflection Pool or enjoy any other part of Hermann Park, take a moment to remember those, like Jane, who took a look at Hermann Park and had the vision to wonder what could be.

See you in the Park,

Doreen

Doreen Stoller, President

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The Commons at Hermann Park

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Hats in the Park Luncheon
All gifts in honor of Jane Anderson Curtis, honoree, and chairs Laura Wareing Wheless and Kelley Young

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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY

Creating a Space for all Houstonians

by Jane Curtis

I didn't grow up in Houston, so my first memories of the park date to August of 1993, when I came with my mentor Laurie Olin to take stock of the park and have our initial meeting for the Master Plan. I was in charge of the camera, and when we went back to Philly and I pinned up all the images of the park—the mud-pit that is now the reflection pool, the long rows of porta-johns outside the front door of the Zoo, the scorched earth—my other landscape architect friends would come over to my desk, look at the pictures, and start laughing. It didn't look much like a park.

Over the years, as the projects completed by the Conservancy grew in scale and scope, most of my memories are tied to the birth and early days of raising our children.

The epic night at Holiday Lights when little Lucy fell into the new McGovern Lake, and proved that the safety bench to keep toddlers from drowning did, in fact, work. Then there was cutting the ribbon by the Reflection Pool when I was hugely pregnant with Pete, so I had to ask Jay Baker to be my stunt double.

Actually, during my two-year term as chair of the Conservancy, I was pregnant my first year, then hauling baby Pete around for the second. There were board

meetings when he was passed around like a party favor. What's the expression, hold my beer? Hold my kid.

But we got through it all, and like an unruly teen, the Park became greener and bluer as per Laurie's vision and began to mature into the landmark public space that it is today.

Doreen took me out to lunch about two years before we opened McGovern Centennial Gardens, and asked me to consider taking it on—to see the project through construction and build the operation for the Gardens as the first Director of Horticulture.

As I recall, her exact words were "go into your prayer closet," and I did have to mull it over for a long time. But I am so grateful that I said yes, because I've had this privileged experience of shepherding the Gardens from its early stages to what it is today.

Working in the public realm is more like an endurance relay race, as it can take years to take a project from conception to completion. You have to be able to pass the baton and accept slow, steady progress in order to build something on this magnificent scale.

Continued on page 11



Tracy Leeds, Bill Curtis, Jane Curtis (Honoree), Brooke Runnette, and Jennifer DeVore at this year's Hats in the Park luncheon.

Holocaust Museum 'Coexistence' Exhibit Coming to Hermann Park



Jose Rementeria, USA. Exhibition Coexistence initiated and created by the Museum on the Seam, Jerusalem

Yasuyuki Uno, Japan. Exhibition Coexistence initiated and created by the Museum on the Seam, Jerusalem

Holocaust Museum Houston (HMH) and Hermann Park Conservancy invite you to *Coexistence*, an interactive art exhibit coming to the art path along Fanning, May 2–30, 2019. *Coexistence* is a unique and thought-provoking free outdoor art exhibition, featuring 45 large scale works that represent a wide range of concepts and issues that affect human relations as we work to coexist in a global society. In addition, join us at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 2, 2019, at Miller Outdoor Theatre for spoken word performances by Houston area students and performance

artist Outspoken Bean, an appearance by Matthew "Levee" Chavez of New York City's Post-it note Subway Therapy fame, and workshops to create poetry. Plus, HMH's NextGen is hosting a free "Yoga and Art in the Park" at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 18 at Hermann Park's Molly Ann Smith Plaza followed by a docent-led tour of the exhibition and a Post-it note "therapy" session with artist Matthew "Levee" Chavez. *Coexistence* is free and open to the public during Park hours.

For more information, visit hmh.org.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT:

Phillips 66 Renews its Support



Phillips 66's long-standing relationship with Hermann Park Conservancy continues this year with a grant in support of conservation initiatives, helping our mission of maintaining and improving Hermann Park for generations to come. With this support—through both grants and corporate volunteers—forest trails have been raked along Brays Bayou, debris has been removed from McGovern Lake, and thousands of seeds have been planted. In addition, Phillips 66 has partnered with the Conservancy on a unique sponsorship of waste bins throughout the Park, as well as supporting ongoing reforestation programs with corporate volunteers, actively matching employee gifts to the Conservancy, and renewing its sponsorship of the popular *Kite Festival*. Phillips 66 employees are



Ken Childress
Kevin Temple (front) and Sri Sampath from Phillips 66 take part in a volunteer day

also well represented among Conservancy members and contributors. Special thanks to Phillips 66 for its leadership and support!

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Hats in the Park Luncheon continued

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Sue White
Evan Wildstein—In honor of John Bradshaw Jr.
Stacy Wilkison
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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY

Love Your Park: Member Volunteer Day

Nearly thirty members of Hermann Park Conservancy showed up on a brisk morning to volunteer at McGovern Centennial Gardens. The first Love Your Park: Member Volunteer Day was held on February 9 to help Conservancy members show their support for Hermann Park by planting and weeding in the beds along Hermann Drive.



Member volunteers braved the cold to plant along Hermann Drive

Want to get involved in the future? Keep your eye out for future Love Your Park volunteer opportunities!



Members take part in the first Love Your Park Member Volunteer Day



Joining the Conservancy is a Win-Win for Hermann Park and Members

Every Hermann Park Conservancy member is part of a team who believes Hermann Park is a treasure for all Houstonians. People join for different reasons. Some want to support urban conservation and wildlife habitat preservation, while others join to share the joy they had as children playing in Hermann Park with their own children. Membership support provides vital operating funds, which helps us to keep the Park looking better than ever.

In thanks for supporting this Houston treasure, Conservancy members receive exciting benefits including invitations to member exclusive events, free tickets to ride the Hermann Park Railroad and pedal boats, Member Express boarding lines, free unlimited rides on the train on the second Saturday of every month, and discounts in the Conservancy Gift Shop and Pinewood Cafe.

Learn more by visiting hermannpark.org/membership.

Hats in the Park 2019

It was the second official day of spring, and the McGovern Centennial Gardens were in full bloom in preparation for *Hats in the Park*, the Conservancy's annual fundraising luncheon. Guests started the afternoon with a champagne reception, followed by a fantastic lunch under the tent on the formal lawn. Co-chairs Laura Wareing Wheless and Kelley Young planned a "tea with best friends in the garden" affair, topped off—of course—with beautiful hats.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the luncheon.

Photos by Jenny Antill



1 Mary Jo Chapoton, *Hats in the Park* Chairs Kelley Young and Laura Wareing Wheless, and Elizabeth Wareing 2 Phoebe Tudor and Leigh Smith 3 Kristen Berger, Isabel David, and Kristy Bradshaw 4 Leticia Loya and Hermann Park Conservancy Chair David Ruiz 5 Mayor Sylvester Turner 6 Shawn Stevens 7 Tongula Givens Steddum, Roslyn Bazzelle Mitchell, Karina Barbieri, and Wondy Weston 8 Leisa Holland-Nelson, Amy Pierce, and Winell Herron 9 Jennifer Gravenor, Karina Barbieri, Ishwaria Subbiah, and Leah Rausch 10 Francine Ballard, Gregory Burke, Stephanie Cockrell, and Lisa Holthouse 11 Kelley Lubanko, Cyndy Garza Roberts, Ellie Francisco, Bobbie Nau, Shelley Reeves, and Hallie Vanderhider 12 Mary D'Andrea, Gina Bhatia, and Allison Thacker 13 Kathleen Jennings, Christine Falgout, and Valerie Dieterich 14 Todd Waite and Franci Neely 15 Susie Criner, Mack Fowler, and Caroline Levander 16 Phyllis Williams 17 Don Howell and Letty Knapp 18 Kim Tutcher 19 Van Ngo, Vivi Robertson, and Adam Cook 20 Stephanie Tsuru, Pam Sengelman, and Katie Tsuru 21 Fady Armonious and Hallie Vanderhider

2019 Kite Festival

Thousands of people gathered in Hermann Park for our sixth annual Kite Festival.



DONORS

Hats in the Park Luncheon continued

In Kind
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 City Kitchen
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Kite Festival
\$10,000-\$24,999
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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY





Along with a space-themed play area for children, the Commons at Hermann Park will have refurbished trails and park space for Houstonians of all ages.

The Commons at Hermann Park
continued from page 1

The Conservancy hosted a public meeting on Thursday, February 7, to gather thoughts and feedback on how to move forward with this project. Attendees listened to a presentation on the designs by the project's landscape architects from Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, and voiced their ideas and concerns on parking, maintenance, safety issues, ecological impacts, and other areas of the project.

Since this project is being designed for all Houstonians in mind, any and all comments and ideas are taken into consideration.

Over the coming months, Hermann Park Conservancy will continue gathering feedback—through public meetings and emails sent to ideas@hermannpark.org—to insure this is a space the community can use for years to come.

After final designs and permits are filed and fundraising is complete (through private and corporate donations), work can begin along Cambridge and Fannin. The Conservancy expects the full timeline to be between five and six years.

This is just the first step in the Conservancy's revised Master Plan. A dog park, further improvements to infrastructure, parking enhancements, and many more improvements are also in the pipeline for Hermann Park.

DONORS

Park to Port Bike Ride
continued

In Kind
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Park to Port Bike Ride
continued

In Kind
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Texas Medical Center
Waste Management

Run in the Park

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Wells Fargo: Houston Latin Connection Chapter

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John Dazey and Vernon Walling
Stephen D'Souza
Enaxis Consulting
Cece and Mack Fowler
Max French
Intercontinental Terminals Co, LLC
Andy James
Tuija Kalpala
Kate Bell Elementary School
Victoria Khan
Laura and Andrew Malek

In Kind
Clif Bar
Dick's Sporting Goods
DJ Mav
Fleet Feet Sports
Frost Bank
Houston Parks and Recreation Department
Mayor's Office of Special Events
Saint Arnold Brewing Company
Shake Shack-Rice Village
Silver Eagle Distributors
Waste Management

Urban Green

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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY



Creating a Space for all Houstonians
continued from page 3

But the best memories I have of Hermann Park come from my last five years here, and the relationships that I built through the construction of the Gardens and its opening. There are a lot of men and women in the Parks department who work so hard to keep the Park clean and green, and working side by side with them was an honor and a privilege.

I know that it can be easy to look past the people who pick up trash all day long, but I'm telling you, it's an act of love. The people who work in Hermann Park day after day to keep the Park in good shape for the city of Houston are wonderful people and they changed my life.

I also made friends with arborists, nurserymen, compost makers, pine straw delivery drivers—wonderful tradespeople and advisors who helped us get the garden operation off the ground and running.

Then there was my staff of gardeners and maintenance people, as well as my colleagues at Hermann Park Conservancy. All of those relationships made working long days and weeks worthwhile as we tried to figure out how to get the gates open and closed, and the fountains on and running, and the Mount green and the hedges trimmed.

But at the end of the day, the memories that will stay with me the longest are of the random encounters that you can have when you have the joy of working in [a place like McGovern Centennial Gardens].

We all got the chance to talk to a lot of strangers who came to the Gardens to walk, or sit, or mourn, or heal, or sleep, or just breathe. These are just mundane moments, everyday moments.

Then you meet a lot of people who are here in Houston going through treatment for cancer, and they often don't have much to do between sessions of chemotherapy, so they come here—sometimes to volunteer or just to sit in the Gardens.

Then there are special moments of celebration: people who came to propose to their partner, or on Mother's Day, or to bring their grandmother, or celebrate an anniversary. In one special tale, the moment a teenage boy finally had the courage to hold his girl's hand as they sat together on the benches at the top of the Mount.

If you can think back to the days before we opened the Gardens, there used to be a continuous fence along Hermann Drive. During lunch hour, you could see car after car of single people parked on Hermann Drive, eating their sandwiches alone with the engine running.

They would drive to the Park, but they would feel blocked by the fences and wouldn't come into the Park. But now they are here, the park edge is more permeable, those same people are here together, in community.

My best memories are watching how much life happens here, in a public park, and how this place serves so many people in the course of a regular day, a regular week.

2018 Park to Port Bike Ride

Hermann Park Conservancy's annual *Park to Port* Bike Ride sees hundreds of cyclists taking a 20-mile route from the Park to the Port of Houston and back. This year's event took place on Saturday, October 6.



Photos by Blueprint Film Co.

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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY

2018 Run in the Park

Runners of all ages came to Hermann Park on Saturday, November 10 for the annual *Run in the Park*. The 5K run was followed with an after-party for participants along the Jones Reflection Pool.



Photos by Chemberli Lachaille

Stonyfield Organic, Walmart, and Hermann Park Conservancy Team Up to Go Organic

Aaron Mondak, Stonyfield Organic



Representatives from Walmart, Stonyfield Organic, and Hermann Park Conservancy celebrated the launch at this year's Kite Festival.

Stonyfield Organic, Hermann Park Conservancy and Walmart announced during the Kite Festival on Sunday, March 24 to celebrate the transition of areas of Hermann Park to organic maintenance practices. The move comes as part of Stonyfield's #PlayFree initiative, which aims to help convert public parks and playing fields across the country to organic grounds management to ensure community spaces are free from the use of harmful pesticides. The areas of Hermann Park that will serve as pilot areas will be the main lawn at McGovern Centennial Gardens and the raised lawn at Molly Ann Smith Plaza along McGovern Lake.

The funds will be used to construct a closed loop composting system which includes a series of bins to convert green waste from Pinewood Cafe and landscape maintenance activity into rich, organic compost. The funds will also be used to procure compost application equipment,



a vermicomposting unit, signage, and training. The new maintenance methods will eliminate the use of herbicides and synthetic fertilizers on two high-profile turf locations.

Doreen Stoller, Hermann Park Conservancy's president, said, "Houston is a rapidly growing city which increases the need for green space. Public funding cannot keep up with the need, so private investment in public parks is critical to keep communities healthy. We believe that parks should be healthy, safe environments for both people and nature."

The Conservancy will start implementing these new methods by this summer.

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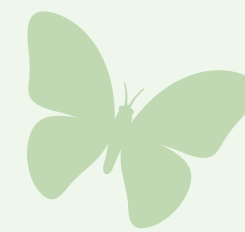
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The names listed above and on the preceding pages include donors who made gifts or pledges of \$100 or more between July 1 and December 31, 2018, as well as all Park to Port Bike Ride, Run in the Park, Hats in the Park luncheon and Kite Festival donors, and George Hermann Society members. Gifts to *Evening in the Park* will be recognized in a future issue. In compliance with IRS standards, commitments paid over time in installments are recognized once in full at the time of the pledge. Please contact the Conservancy if we inadvertently have not included your name or if you would like to be listed differently in future publications.



Save the Dates! Hermann Park Conservancy Calendar of Events



Evening in the Park Gala
Chairs: June Deadrick & Barbara Friedman
Honoring Terrylin Neale
Thursday, April 25, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Jones Reflection Pool and Molly Ann Smith Plaza



Member Burger Night
Thursday, May 9, 2019, 5-7 p.m.
Pinewood Cafe



Mother's Day at Hermann Park
Sunday, May 12, 2019, 8:30-10 a.m.
Pinewood Cafe

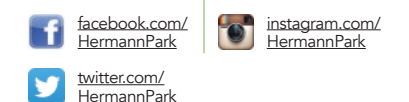


Summer Vegetable Planting with Urban Harvest
Wednesday, May 20, 2019, 6-7:30 pm
Family Garden, McGovern Centennial Gardens



Father's Day at Hermann Park
Sunday, June 16, 2019, 8:30-10 a.m.
Pinewood Cafe

Details at hermannpark.org



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Tommy W. Lott
David Rice Lumms
Kristen Buck
Nancy Manderson
Jackie Wolens Mazow
Kristen W. McDanald
Joe Meppelink

Melissa Mithoff
Yuzuru Nagawa
Sarah Newbery
Judy Nyquist
Kathleen O'Reilly
Roz Pactor
Mark T. Prescott
Carol S. Price
Dean Putterman
Glen Ragland
Chris J. Reichert
Shafik I. Rifaat
Abbey Roberson
DeAndre Sam
Karla A. Sepulveda
Louis Sklar
Ed Smith
Sebastien Solar
Harry L. Stille
Cassie B. Stinson
Craig Stone
Michele Thompson
Nanako Tingleaf
Gary Tinterow
Nicola Fuentes Toubia
Sarah Pennington Tropoli
Kenneth Tsai
Peter Tsan
Hunter Vance
Maggie Beary Vermillion
Barbara Evans Williams
Phyllis K. Williams
Crystal Wright, M.D.
Susan Young

CONSERVANCY TEAM

Doreen Stoller, President
doreen@hermannpark.org

John Bradshaw Jr., Director of Campaign Strategy
jbradshaw@hermannpark.org

Emily Chambers, Programs and Events Coordinator
echambers@hermannpark.org

Candace Cleveland, Pinewood Cafe Manager
ccleveland@hermannpark.org

Diane Kerr, Director of Volunteer Programs
dkerr@hermannpark.org

Kristine Mall, Development Coordinator
kmall@hermannpark.org

Megan Mark, Individual Giving Coordinator
mmark@hermannpark.org

Meghan Miller, Director of Development
mmiller@hermannpark.org

Ron Misrack, Director, Visitor Services
rmisrack@hermannpark.org

Becky Porteous, Accounting Manager
bporteous@hermannpark.org

Marcus Powers, Marketing and Communications Manager
mpowers@hermannpark.org

Fani Qano, Project Manager
fqano@hermannpark.org

David Renninger, Director of Operations
drenninger@hermannpark.org

Gretchen Sammons, Venue Manager
gsammons@hermannpark.org

Latonya Scott, Manager, Visitor Services
lscott@hermannpark.org

Kyle Wolfe, Volunteer Coordinator
kwolfe@hermannpark.org