



TRASH PICK-UP IS A TEAM EFFORT IN FLUSHING MEADOWS PARK

Sports fever in New York City is not limited to the major leagues. Parks' baseball, softball, soccer, and volleyball fields are filled with dedicated users for much of the year. In addition to bringing thousands of people to the parks, league sports generate truckloads full of litter. Ballfield permit holders are required to clean up after themselves, but since so many different people play on the fields each week, it can be hard to tell who is responsible for litter left behind.

Larry "Hollywood" Kalman, PRM at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in Queens District 15, thought of a colorful way to solve the litter problem and hold ballplayers accountable for their trash. PRM Kalman purchased garbage bags in three different colors — blue, yellow, and white — and assigned one color each to soccer, volleyball, and baseball. Then, he created large stickers with the names of each permitted team, put the stickers on the bags, and distributed the bags to the teams.

Each team must use its own bags to pick up litter generated during its time on the field. After the game or practice, the team places the bag in the field's trash can. When the district's packer driver comes to empty the trash cans, he matches the names on the bags with a list of all the permit holders. This way, he can see which teams have been using their bags.

As an incentive for teams to adhere to the rules, a series of disciplinary measures was devised. The first time a team does not use its bag, its permit will be suspended for one week. After a second offense, the team will lose its permit for a month, and a third offense results in a permanent loss of permit privileges. An announcement was made to all teams before the program started to warn them of these consequences. So far, two teams have received one-week suspensions.

PRM Kalman bought 200 garbage bags for each team at Home Depot. Bags cost approximately \$5 for a box of 100 bags. After the first 200 bags, teams will be responsible for purchasing and labeling their own bags.

The trash pick-up program has been in effect for a little over a year, and litter conditions at the ballfields have improved significantly. According to Mr. Kalman, a single soccer field in FMCP used to take all day to clean following a busy day of matches. Now, with greater accountability placed on permitted field users for trash pick-up, it takes only a couple of hours. For additional information, contact Larry "Hollywood" Kalman at (718) 699-4245. *Written by Amy "Cardigan" Tryon.*



Trash label with team name

BICYCLES WITH A BOOST PATROL CITY PARKS

Ford Motor Company has donated fifteen electric Th!nk bicycles to Parks. The bicycles have motors which allow riders to supplement their leg power with an electric boost. The bicycles will be used to patrol narrow or crowded terrain, such as Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx and Rockaway Beach in Queens.

Before riding a Th!nk bicycle, riders must activate the power motor with a key ignition at the rear of the bike. A Th!nk bicycle operates like a normal bicycle until the rider turns the right hand grip, causing the power to kick in. The bicycles utilize a 400-watt DC brush motor, which reaches top speeds of over 18 m.p.h. The power is derived from a lead acid rechargeable battery, unobtrusively stored under the seat. The battery can be recharged in six hours using a standard household outlet. A battery indicator is located across the handlebars and allows riders to view the amount of power used and power remaining.

The Th!nk bicycle comes in two models: the *traveler* and the *fun*. The *traveler* has three speeds and goes up to 16 miles between recharges. It folds up for easy transport. The *fun* has a traditional, rigid frame, seven speeds, and lasts an average of 22 miles between charges.

The bicycles can be used on a variety of terrains, including pavement, trails and beaches. The Urban Park Rangers, Beach Operations crews, and Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) plan to use the bicycles in their daily operations and for special purposes such as tours. Richard "Bronco" Gentles, Director of PEP, expects the bicycles to facilitate interaction between the public and PEP officers, as people are more inclined to approach officers on foot or bicycle than in vehicles. The bicycles offer officers the mobility to move quickly and safely through narrow paths crowded with bicyclists and joggers. Parks welcomes these tree and animal-friendly, nonpolluting additions to the Parks fleet.

The *traveler* retails for \$1,195 and the *fun* retails for \$995. Both are available from Th!nk, a division of the Ford Motor Company. For additional information, contact Keith "Kermit" Kerman at (212) 360-8228. *Written by Laura "Lollipop" Gaul.*



PEP Officers and Urban Park Rangers take Parks' new Th!nk bicycles for a spin in Central Park

NEW DEVICE IRRIGATES TREES DROP BY DROP

With a greater number of Greenstreets to care for, Forestry has begun using Treegators to boost the efficiency of its watering crews. Treegators are portable irrigation systems that wrap around the trunk of young trees no greater than 4" in diameter. Treegators contain 20 gallons of water which drip into the ground by weight of gravity. This allows for the slow saturation of the root ball that is necessary for young saplings to mature into healthy trees.

It takes nearly two growing seasons before a young tree can establish its roots in the soil. During that time, watering crews must continually water the tree. Treegators can reduce watering



Treegator

frequency by up to 50%. In addition, the manufacturer claims that watering crews would have to water a single tree for up to 20 minutes to achieve the same saturation level as a Treegator.

Treegators are made of durable plastic which is resistant to UV rays and rips and tears caused by weedwackers or mowers. Treegators are available at a number of garden centers and retail outlets. Although costly (nearly \$20 each), if Treegators are properly utilized, watering crews can be deployed more effectively and particular trees in jeopardy of drying can receive greater care. **For additional information about Greenstreets and Treegators contact Fiona "Treetop" Watt at (718) 760-6811. Written by Derek "Cassidy" Lombard.**

TELECOMMUNICATIONS CREW INTRODUCES FIBER OPTICS TO PARKS

Parks' Telecommunications and MIS divisions are undertaking an ambitious project: this winter, they will network computers in the Arsenal with fiber optic cable. The fiber optic cable will allow information to travel over the Arsenal network at the speed of light.

Under the direction of Telecommunications Director Arthur "Touch Tone" Pirozzi, Supervisor of Technicians Ralph "Stargazer" Galileo is overseeing the Arsenal's transition to fiber optics. Fiber optic cable is made from pure glass approximately three times as thick as a human hair. Information is transmitted across the cables via a laser light. Mr. Galileo compares the flow of information across fiber optic cables to that of traffic on a superhighway with twelve lanes running each way. In contrast, the copper wire currently in place at the Arsenal transmits information via electronic signals at the speed of traffic on a one-lane highway.

Parks' Telecommunications crew plans to begin work on the Arsenal this winter and complete the project in the spring. The technicians will connect the computers one office at a time by working at night and on weekends to avoid work interruptions. MIS will assist by installing updated computer cards in each computer to support the fiber optics. The entire project, including equipment and supplies, will cost approximately \$600,000. Mr. Galileo estimates that the project could have cost Parks as much as \$1.7 million had it been bid out instead of being tackled in-house.

— *Continued on column 2* —

METAL CAGES PROTECT PARKS TRUCKS

In Brooklyn, Parks blacksmiths are providing protection for M & O vehicles with the installation of computer cages and rear window guards.

Parks vehicles are the occasional targets of thieves who steal the computers that regulate many of the basic functions in new cars. Brooklyn is employing an innovation developed by the Flushing Meadows Garage to deter thieves. The blacksmiths have installed cages or sealed the glove boxes in new trucks to prevent the computers from being stolen. Materials and labor for both the cage and the glove box protector cost around \$80. The cost of replacing a stolen computer averages about \$600.

In addition to providing protection for vehicle computers, the blacksmiths are installing rear window guards on new Parks pickup trucks. Rear window guards are designed to prevent equipment such as shovels, lawn equipment and debris from breaking or smashing the rear windows of the trucks. The rear window guard, which is bolted to the bed of the truck, is installed at an estimated cost of \$145, including all labor and materials. **For more information, contact Brooklyn Supervisor for Trades Al "Tinman" Simoncini at 718-965-6557. Written by Harris "Phlippides" Kaplan.**



Rear window guards protect truck windows.

— *"Fiber Optics," Continued from column 1* —

Mr. Galileo received certification in fiber optics installation last year. He has already installed fiber optics in some areas of Parks, including links between the Olmsted Center and Queens Forestry and between Belvedere Castle in Central Park and the National Weather Service equipment that serves as a weather station for New York City. Currently his crew is installing a link between Litchfield Villa and the Picnic House in Prospect Park. All of the technicians in Parks' telecommunications division are now certified to install fiber optic cable. **For additional information about the project, contact Ralph "Stargazer" Galileo at (212) 410-8991. Written by Emily "Millet" Willits.**

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Newsletter edited by Emily "Millet" Willits, 11/24/00

