

Program Updates

During the spring semester 2006, an Audubon naturalist worked with public school students from three middle schools and one high school to create the 100-page *Seward Park Field Guide*, the initial offering of the Seward Park Center. For our next project, Seward Park Center board members, staff, and city parks staff are currently working with students and teachers at Rainier Beach High School to design a winter project to create a pocket-size trail guide of Seward Park. Seward Park has nearly 10 miles of interior trails, primarily through the old growth forest. Using photography and layout skills learned by students who create the school year book, this artistic trail guide will help identify potential sites for future interpretative signage at Seward Park. The resulting map will benefit the entire user community of the park.



The next project in the field guide series will be a nearshore and aquatic field guide done during the spring 2007 semester. Like the previous guide, this project will involve hundreds of students, teachers, and many educational and community

partner organizations. Middle and high school teachers interested in participating in this project should contact Gail Gatton at (206) 652-2444 x101 or email ggatton@audubon.org.

We hope to celebrate the release of both these projects the first weekend in June in conjunction with *Jazz in the Park 2007*, a concert series organized for more than 30 years by the SouthEast Effective Development (SEED) arts program.

Photo by Tom Collicott

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SEWARD PARK ENVIRONMENTAL & Audubon CENTER NEWS

A partnership between Seattle Parks Department + Audubon Washington

Groundbreaking at Seward Park

The sweet sounds of Caribbean steel and traditional African drums — expertly played by 3rd and 4th graders from the New School at South Shore in southeast Seattle — signaled the beginning of a very exciting milestone for the Seward Park Environmental & Audubon Center.



Seward Park Stewardship Board President John Lipsky introduces the New School Drum Ensemble, led by Jah Breeze (far right).

On Saturday, December 2, community leaders, neighbors, and friends gathered to celebrate the beginning of renovation of the historic build-

ing at the entrance to Seward Park that is to become a state-of-the-art environmental learning center.

John Flicker, President of National Audubon Society, welcomed the crowd by emphasizing how Seward

Park is part of Audubon's vision to bring outdoor education to traditionally underserved urban populations. Seward Park will be part of

a national network of 35 centers that have been connecting kids with nature since the first cen-

ter opened in Connecticut in the 1940s.

Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels spoke for the entire city when he mentioned the joy of breathing new life into an old building in an Olmsted legacy park. In a moment of light heartedness, he announced a decision to name the Pacific Northwest's most common woodpecker the Northern Flicker, after the Audubon president.

City Councilmember David Della, chair of the Parks Committee and longtime supporter of the Seward Park Center, acknowledged the

benefits to the neighborhood of having an Audubon Center located at Seward.



Mayor Greg Nickels (left) and Audubon President John Flicker (right) get instructions in using the jackhammer from Parks employee Sonny Gloria (center) as they prepare for the ceremonial start to renovation.

Neighborhood Councilmember Sally Clark expressed her excitement at seeing the involve-

SPECIAL THANKS to the following individuals for joining the Hard Hat Brigade + Celebration

- Christy Anderson, *President, East Lake Washington Audubon*
- Jah Breeze & Erie Jones, *Directors, New School Drum Ensemble*
- Shawn Cantrell, *Executive Director, Seattle Audubon*
- Nina Carter, *Executive Director, Audubon Washington*
- Christina Gallegos, *Seattle Parks, Seward Park Naturalist*
- David Goldberg, *Mithun Architects*
- Charlie Kahle, *National Audubon Board, Western Region Director*
- Lynn McBride, *Mithun Architects*
- Kent Peterson, *Boeing Corporation*
- Marina Skumanich, *President, Seattle Audubon*
- Paul Talbert, *President, Friends of Seward Park*
- Dan Taylor, *National Audubon, Western Region Vice President*
- David Williams, *author, The Street-Smart Naturalist*
- Sam Wood, *Seward Park Bird Expert*

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Photos by Mark Wittow

From the Director's Desk

It is hard to believe that nine months have passed already since I became director for the Seward Park Environmental & Audubon Center. It has been a fantastic experience and I am extremely excited to head into the construction phase of the Center. While experienced Audubon staff have advised, "Be careful what you wish for; you never know what hassles await you when you start renovation of an old building," I know that renovation means time for our board and staff to delve into our programmatic offerings.

After months of focusing on fundraising to meet our \$3 million capital campaign goal, we finally are able to direct our energy into the suite of programs we will offer when the Center opens its doors next summer. We hope to do this in conjunction with the many potential partners operating in the area, many of whom participated in our *Hard Hat Brigade* at the groundbreaking celebration.

These include the many members of the Audubon family — our local chapters of Seattle, East Lake, and Rainier; the network of centers around the nation; and our sister center in Sequim, the Dungeness River Audubon Center. It also includes the Friends of Seward Park and the other program providers in Seward Park, such as BikeWorks, the Clay Studio, Mount Baker Rowing & Sailing Club, and other Parks Department offerings.

The Center will open sometime in the summer of 2007 — it is hard to be precise about when exactly that is because there are many variables at play, including dealing with a historic property in which certain aspects have been designated with landmark preservation status, and a very competitive construction scene in the Pacific Northwest.

Nonetheless, both Parks and Audubon are determined to offer summer camp options at Seward Park for students entering middle school, as well as youth, family, and adult programs that might include weekend bat hayrides, moonlight kayak trips around the peninsula to explore nocturnal nature, and specialty week long day camps (e.g., Forest Frenzy, Savvy Scientists, Aquatic Adventures).

This is the first of what we hope will be quarterly newsletters. It is intended to keep you updated on what is happening with the Center and, as we develop programs, will include our quarterly offerings. If you prefer to receive the newsletter electronically, please let us know that and we will save printing and mailing costs. To express a preference, please send an email to Lori Jerome at ljerome@audubon.org with a subject line of Seward Park E_Newsletter Only.

Thank you for your interest in the Seward Park Center and I look forward to regular communication with you through this newsletter.

Gail Gatton, Center Director

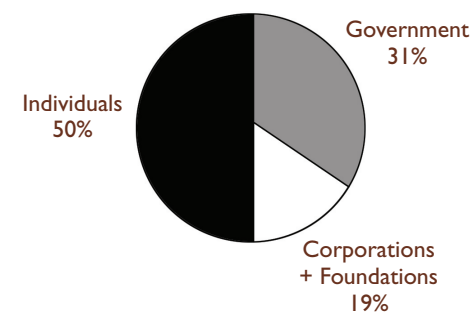
Path to Approval

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors met on November 29 and enthusiastically approved proceeding with the Seward Park Center. The path to approval from National Audubon Society included review of the Center's business plan by the Center Review Task Force, review and approval of the five-year operating budget by the Finance and Planning Committee, and the approval to start construction from the Executive Committee.

At each step along the way, certain fundraising milestones had to be met. To date, more than \$2.6 million has been raised towards the total capital campaign goal of \$3 million. This goal includes all design and construction costs plus an operating reserve equal to three years operating costs for the Center.

Funds have come from many sources, including multiple levels of government (city, state, and county), corporations, foundations, and hundreds of individuals. The chart below displays the percentage breakdown of the sources of funds raised as of December 1.

Capital Campaign Donations



Save the Dates!

May 12, 2007

Breakfast Boat Cruise aboard the M/V Fremont Avenue

The only early morning event we'll ever sponsor! Join us for birds, brioche, and buckets of fun as we circumnavigate Lake Washington looking for migratory waterfowl and other fab feathered friends.

July 12, 2007

2nd Annual Tea Party 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Audubon was started by east coast society ladies upset about the use of stuffed birds on fashionable hats. We honor them and the power of their collective voice with high tea on the lawn! Hats welcome!

August 11, 2007

1st Annual Gala Dinner at Seward Park 6:00 - 10:00 PM

Be a guest at our first ever signature dinner event! An elegant dinner will be served on the stage in the Amphitheatre, complete with white linen tablecloths, string quartets, and candlelight.

September 15, 2007

Cocktail Cruise aboard the M/V Fremont Avenue

What goes up, must come down. Join us for our counterpart to the spring migration, as we spend an evening waterside with martinis, manhattans, mergansers, and mallards. Light hors d'oeuvres.

October 20, 2007

2nd Annual Community BBQ Seward Park 12:00 - 4:00 PM

Groundbreaking

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ment of so many parts of the southeast Seattle community at the groundbreaking celebration. She touted the educational opportunities the Center will bring to the children and adults of southeast Seattle and specifically mentioned the Center's pilot project — a Field Guide of Seward Park. The Field Guide is a comprehensive identification resource for the flora, fauna, birds and habitats of Seward Park — researched, written and illustrated by over 400 public middle and high school students last spring.

Wrapping up the speeches, Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds said the partnership between the City and Audubon has been an exciting experience that will result in a truly unique opportunity for residents of Seattle. He mentioned the dedication of people in both organizations that have helped make the Center a reality. Funds from the 2000 Pro Parks Levy Projects served to leverage an additional \$1.7 million in design and construction funds raised by Audubon for the Center.

Chocolate cupcakes for all and the jarring sounds of a jackhammer — jointly operated by Mayor Nickels and President Flicker completed the ceremony.

Seward Park Center Stewardship Board of Directors

Josh Lipsky, Chair

Ruth Bell

Reco Bembry

Beatrice Booth, Audubon WA liaison

Josh Chaitin

Tom Grismer

Chuck Lennox, Audubon WA liaison

Melinda Mann

Chanel Reynolds Hernando

Heather Rogers

Yalonda Sindé

Denise Stiffarm

Paul Talbert,

Friends of Seward Park liaison

Venus Velázquez

Board and Committee Position Openings

The Seward Park Environmental & Audubon Center is seeking to expand its community leadership boards, committees and advisory groups including:

- Educational Programming Committee
- Development and Event Planning Committee
- Community Outreach and Marketing Committee
- Stewardship Board
- Advisory Board

If you are interested in helping launch and guide the Seward Park Center for the next few critical years, please send an email expressing your interest and specifying which board or committee to Lori Jerome at ljerome@audubon.org or (206) 652-2444, x100.