



**MEMORIAL PARK CONSERVANCY
SECOND ANNUAL FUN RUN & PICNIC
SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 2011**

Purpose and Objectives of the Program

The Memorial Park Conservancy, in cooperation with the City of Houston and Houston Parks & Recreation Department, will host its third annual “4 The Park” Fun Run on Saturday, April 2, 2011. Again, we will include a post-race party sponsored by Michelob Ultra, featuring a live band, local restaurants with food tastings, and children’s activities. This post-race party has been hailed as “the best post-race party ever”.

Plan of Action and Time Frame

We anticipate 2,000+ runners and guests will participate in this year’s event, which will benefit the programs and services of Memorial Park Conservancy. The Fun Run will begin with the Kid’s K Run at 8 a.m. and with the 4 mile run at 8:30a.m. The Party begins when the first runner crosses the finish line until approximately Noon. The will require only one lane of Memorial Drive to be closed for the running portion of the event. Police officers will be stationed on each corner turn of the course.

The event is both a public relations and fundraising opportunity for Memorial Park Conservancy; proceeds will benefit the ongoing activities of the Conservancy and its partnership with HPARD.

Memorial Park was established in 1925; its 1,503 acres were deeded at cost to the City of Houston in May, 1924, by Mike & Will Hogg, sons of James Stephen Hogg, former governor of Texas (1891-95). Memorial Park was created in reaction to letters to the Editor of the Houston Chronicle by Ilona Benda and Catherine Mary Emmott, asking the city to consider a park as a tribute to the soldiers who trained at Camp Logan and those who died in World War I.

At the behest of philanthropist Ima Hogg (sister to the two donors), several stalwart protectors of park lands (Terry Hershey, Frank C. Smith, Jr.; Sadie Gwin Blackburn, Dr. John D. Staub) were charged with protecting Memorial Park from various encroachments and development concepts ranging from a fish hatchery to a university to oil drilling. Mrs. Hershey, Mr. Smith and Mrs. Blackburn are still active members of the MPC Board of Directors. The park has served generations of Houstonians as a meeting ground, playground and place for quiet reflection.

The Memorial Park Advisory Committee, a cadre of friends of Miss Hogg and community representatives, served Houstonians dutifully by protecting Memorial Park and fulfilling the wishes of Miss Ima Hogg since her death in 1975. For over 25 years, the group met monthly with Houston Parks and Recreation Department directors and city leadership to quietly and capably ensure the protection of the park.

In 2000, the enlarged Memorial Park Advisory Committee was established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The Conservancy created and championed a Master Plan for Memorial Park designed by Wallace, Roberts & Todd from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Funds raised provided the base conservation, archeological, vegetation, soil, erosion and traffic flow studies helped the group establish itself among the growing friends of parks groups.

A volunteer community board works in tandem with Houston Parks and Recreation Department on fund raising and assisting with volunteer efforts to improve Memorial Park in accordance with the Master Plan. Acquiring volunteers and influencing key community leaders takes time and effort, but the case for support of Memorial Park is strong and we believe the surrounding community will take up this heartfelt challenge.

Public use of the Park increases every year with the increase in Houston's population. Money directed to the park from Municipal and tax dollars is simply not meeting the needs for maintenance, renovations and repairs at Memorial Park. Tax dollars can only provide minimal maintenance in Memorial Park. Private funding is needed to further the improvements necessary to meet the needs of the growing user population. In the words of historian and author, Sarah Emmott, "As long as the public remains alert, informed and loud in its opposition to future encroachments, Memorial Park will remain a priceless legacy for generations of Houstonians to enjoy."





