

The Concrete *Alternative*

A Newsletter to Supporters of The East Village Parks Conservancy

Winter 2004-2005



Photo by Robert Brenner

The above photo, taken on "It's My Park Day - 2004" by volunteer Robert Brenner, is just a reminder that Spring is around the corner in these short, dark, cold days.

This year was a great year for meeting new volunteers, some from as far away as New Jersey. And, of course, it's always fun to be with our volunteer "regulars". Thanks to all.

We'll resume our volunteer activities in the Spring. Give me a call to get on my list or to get an update. (212) 448-0588. Helena Adams, Volunteer Coordinator EVPC

MAKE YOUR MARK IN THE PARK

Parks Department Okays EVPC's Endowment Proposal for Tompkins Square Park

Two hundred and fifty dollars (you read it right, \$250) gets you a beautiful, permanent, engraved stone monument in Tompkins Square Park. Here's your chance to tell someone you love them, celebrate a friend or family member, or just say something brilliant for everyone to read!!!

The Parks Department has given us an awesome, groundbreaking challenge and opportunity. Have you ever noticed the hexagon-shaped pavers in and around Tompkins Square Park? They're serviceable; they do the job; but they're not particularly attractive. Well, EVPC came up with a plan to replace -- with a purpose -- those pavers. And the Parks Department has agreed.

The plan is to sell granite stones to replace the pavers and use the profit from the sales to create an endowment for Tompkins Square Park. We'll begin, first, with replacing the pavers around the base of the Temperance Fountain.

Here are the rules. Stones will be sold for \$250. Purchasers can engrave a personal message on the stone. Messages do have to be approved by the Parks Department. That's it.

The hope and expectation is that through this initiative, we'll create a significant endowment for the park, improve the looks of the park, and last but certainly not least, over the coming years create in Tompkins Square Park, a wonderful monument to the diversity and unique qualities of the East Village Community.

We'd like to make a serious effort to run a successful campaign and we can use help. If you have skills that can help, please get in touch with us. You can call the office at 212 353-9063 or Ellen at 212 533-6452 or Roland at 212 529-9327. Or write us at EVPC, P.O. Box 138, Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009. The same numbers work for purchasing a stone. (What a great gift!) Hope to hear from you soon.

FROM THE DESK OF MR. TOMPKINS....

Allow me to introduce myself. I am the "tom" in Tompkins Square Park (TSP). You may have, already, had the pleasure of meeting me. I reside full-time in Harry Greenberg's office in the TSP Parks Building. (He's our Park Supervisor.) I'm a touch over weight but, if I do say so myself, I have an absolutely beautiful grey coat; bright, intelligent eyes; perky ears and a way about me...

In the interest of inter-species communication, EVPC has offered me my own byline to present my personal insights to the public and perhaps advocate for Harry now and again.

As a matter of fact, Harry and I are currently working on getting the office in shape and we would most appreciate any office-type donations. It would seem that until recently we were as high tech as having a copier machine. Alas, the copier broke. Its purpose now is solely for my comfort. I have made it my afternoon perch. If you can help us out with a donation, let EVPC know.

And speaking of perches, I have noticed that the TSP squirrel population has commissioned local artists to build houses that rival any of the mansions with which I am familiar. One house, with its Greek sculpture, is the replica of the summer home of some of my cousins over on the Greek Island of Santorini. I, myself, prefer the shaded comfort and security of my home, sharing amenities with my human friends. However, one must admire this imaginative merging of form and function and even though squirrels are not part of my social circle, I have contacted *Architectural Digest* and *Better Homes and Gardens* to come peruse these palatial "nests". I hope, dear reader, you will take time to look as well. But, enough for now. I must take my catnap. Cordially, Mr. Tompkins