



DISNEY CEO MICHAEL EISNER, BETTE MIDLER'S NEW YORK RESTORATION PROJECT & COUNCIL MEMBER PHILIP REED TO REVITALIZE EAST HARLEM COMMUNITY GARDEN AND PARK

DisneyHand's New York VoluntEARS Take Lead in Transformation of Area

NEW YORK, NY, July 27, 2004 – Demonstrating a shared commitment to community service with lasting local impact, the New York Restoration Project (NYRP), Disney VoluntEARS and residents of District 8 today kicked off the revitalization of a long-neglected community garden and neighborhood park in New York City's East Harlem.

The 15,000-square-foot site – for years home to abandoned cars, graffiti and unusable equipment – is being developed as a neighborhood centerpiece for East Harlem children and their families. The design features an extensive garden and arbor; a children's playground and water play area; a multi-purpose court for basketball and other sports; an eating area with picnic tables; and open green space with benches.

The NYRP and The Walt Disney Company have worked closely with Reed and neighborhood representatives, along with various city agencies, as the project took shape over the past year. Key to its scheduled completion later this summer are more than 300 Disney VoluntEARS – representing all Disney, ABC and ESPN businesses in New York – who are taking on clearing, planting, building, painting and other restoration assignments in coming weeks.

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Among those officially kicking off the event at the 103rd Street and Park Avenue site today were Bette Midler, founder of the NYRP, Chief Executive Officer of The Walt Disney Company Michael Eisner, Council Member Philip Reed, Disney VoluntEARS, NYRP employees and schoolchildren.



“Today’s planting, mulching and watering will sow the seeds of a long-lasting, beautiful and much-needed facility for children and their families in East Harlem,” said Midler. “This will be a neighborhood treasure for all to enjoy.”

Added Eisner: “As our Disney VoluntEARS are showing, our company's heritage of creating magic goes far beyond our theme parks and movies. Here in East Harlem, real magic is being created as this park is being transformed from a source of blight to a thing of beauty. We feel privileged to play a part.”

Added Reed: “The development of this garden begins the revitalization of the East 103rd St. Cultural Corridor. My office is pleased to be working with Bette, Michael, the New York Restoration Project and Disney VoluntEARS to make this a special place for the community.”

The NYRP, founded by Bette Midler in 1995, is devoted to restoring, revitalizing and developing parks, community gardens and other open spaces in New York City. In addition to this latest effort in East Harlem, the New York Restoration Project also is instrumental in the development of other sites in Fort Tryon, Highbridge Park, Gorman Park and Fort Washington Park and unique New York City facilities such as Swindler Cove Park and The Peter Jay Sharp Boathouse.

About Disney VoluntEARS

Under the auspices of DisneyHand, The Walt Disney Company’s worldwide outreach program, the mission of Disney VoluntEARS is to develop opportunities for Disney Cast Members to contribute their time, expertise and effort to make a positive impact on our community while furthering the traditions and ideals of The Walt Disney Company. In 2003, Disney VoluntEARS around the world “showed their character” by participating in more than 1,050 volunteer projects and by contributing more than 410,000 service hours in communities in which they work and live.

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