

A Gift of *Beauty*

The Margaret Annis Boys Trust



OKLAHOMA CITY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Helping you help the community

Margaret Annis Boys

- An only child, Miss Boys was born in Anadarko, Oklahoma on June 27, 1909 to A. Thompson Boys, an attorney, and Mabel Parish Boys.
 - The family moved to Oklahoma City in 1911.
- Miss Boys graduated from Central High School in 1927 and the University of Oklahoma in 1930.
- As a teacher, she taught at several Oklahoma City elementary schools before serving as principal at Madison, Putnam Heights and Buchanan elementary schools. She retired in 1972 after a 42-year career.
 - Miss Boys loved to travel. With friends, she traveled to Europe and then to Alaska. She also traveled extensively throughout the United States but always said her favorite place was Oklahoma. Known as a gracious hostess, she had a wide circle of friends. She loved to take weekend excursions to different parts of the state. She especially enjoyed the Oklahoma sunsets.
 - As a principal, students and co-workers say she was meticulous about her appearance and the appearance of the school. She believed that praising a child had a stronger impact than scolding a child.
 - Miss Boys died on February 16, 1990 at the age of 80.



Beauty can be defined in many ways. For Margaret Annis Boys, beauty was found in the native trees, flowers and landscapes of Oklahoma. Thanks to her, many public parks, medians, neighborhoods and schools have benefited from beautification projects funded through the Margaret Annis Boys Trust at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.

The Story

A 1930 graduate of the University of Oklahoma, Miss Boys taught and served as principal at several elementary schools in Oklahoma City during her 42-year career. Never married, she traveled with friends to Europe and Alaska but always said Oklahoma was her favorite place in the world. Miss Boys loved to go on Sunday drives into the Oklahoma countryside where she would identify the native flowers and trees for her companions.

She worked with her bank trust officer, James L. “Mike” Early, on her estate plans. Knowing she had no immediate heirs, Mr. Early asked Miss Boys what she wanted to do with the bulk of her estate. Thinking back to the countless hours spent with family and friends driving along Oklahoma roads, Miss Boys determined she wanted to create an endowment to fund projects that would beautify and care for public parks and medians within Oklahoma County. Mr. Early was already a donor to the Oklahoma City Community Foundation and he suggested it to Miss Boys as the perfect organization to accomplish her goal.

Miss Boys died on February 16, 1990 at the age of 80. Soon after, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation received a gift of \$1.5 million from her estate with the request to establish the Margaret Annis Boys Trust. In order to accommodate funding requests, a grant program was put into place along with an advisory committee comprised of citizens knowledgeable about landscaping and the care of public land. To be considered for funding, it was determined that projects must be easily visible and accessible to the general public, have a permanent impact with low maintenance efforts, be appropriate for the area and must demonstrate a strong and committed volunteer component.

From 1991 through 2009, the endowment has funded more than 170 beautification grants at schools, public parks and medians in neighborhoods and assisted with community-wide projects such as dog parks, public gardens and arboretums. One of the intangible benefits of the endowment is that it has raised awareness and support for the use and appearance of public spaces in the area.

In commemoration of what would have been Miss Boys' 100th birthday in 2009, this publication provides a highlight of the tremendous impact of one woman's simple and thoughtful gift and illustrates how anyone can make a lasting difference.

Thank You

The Oklahoma City Community Foundation would like to thank the following friends and advisors of Miss Boys for their help through the years: Doris Orahoad, Sam Dykeman, Roy Chandler, Rodd Moesel, Dick Clements and Janet Kennedy. We would also like to thank the following current and past Trustees who have chaired the Margaret Annis Boys Trust Advisory Committee: Jim Tolbert, Christian K. Keese, Paul Odom Jr., Jane Jayroe and Leslie Hudson.

Public Parks

Margaret Annis Boys Trust grants have helped to enhance the appearance and overall usefulness of more than 50 public parks. While owned by the City of Oklahoma City, neighborhood associations and schools have agreed to the care and maintenance of the parks. We work with these citizen groups to ensure the proposed plant material is appropriate for the park and that a strong volunteer commitment to long-term maintenance exists. We are pleased to highlight two of the park projects that have benefitted from a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant.

Edgemere Park is a 15-acre public park that sits in the heart of a historic Oklahoma City neighborhood of 325 homes between Northwest 32nd Street and Northwest 36th Street and Harvey Parkway and Hudson Avenue. The park is in continual use by residents of Edgemere Park and surrounding neighborhoods. The park features a pavilion and playground and an ample amount of open space that provides room for a variety of activities. In 2002, the group established the Edgemere Park Preservation Area fund, a charitable organization endowment at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. An initial Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant in 2005 allowed the neighborhood to replace trees lost in an ice storm. In 2008, a second grant was used to further enhance the park and neighborhood.



Perle Mesta Park is a public park nestled in the heart of two Oklahoma City historic neighborhoods and is located at Northwest 18th Street and Shartel Boulevard. The park is named for Perle Mesta, an American socialite and diplomat who served as the U.S. ambassador to Luxembourg from 1949-53 and was the daughter of oilman and developer Bill Skirvin. The one-square block park serves as a valuable resource for the area and features a playground, gazebo and sand volleyball courts, as well as sidewalks and open space. The care and maintenance of the park is overseen by the Mesta Park Neighborhood Association. Since 1997, the association has utilized three separate Margaret Annis Boys Trust grants to assist in their efforts to enhance the appearance and usability of the park. In addition, the group established the Mesta Park Neighborhood Association endowment at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation to ensure the neighborhood and the park remain viable for generations.



Perle Mesta Park

Public Medians in Neighborhoods

Well-maintained public medians not only keep streets looking aesthetically pleasing, they also help reduce heat and glare from concrete, reduce erosion and storm water runoff and improve the economic value of neighborhoods. The Margaret Annis Boys Trust has funded nearly 40 grants for beautification of public medians across the county. Below are two examples.

The Miller Neighborhood Association is comprised of residents living between Northwest 10th and Northwest 16th streets and between Villa and May avenues in Oklahoma City. The neighborhood features 25-foot wide public medians on Northwest 12th Street and 30-foot wide medians along Miller Boulevard. These medians, which were once home to trolley tracks, are a key feature of the neighborhood and are used by residents to walk and jog or to just simply enjoy the outdoors. By 1999, a number of trees had been lost due to ice storms and the association utilized a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant to replace the trees in the medians along Northwest 12th Street and Miller Boulevard and to enhance the entrance medians. The association leveraged the grant to raise additional funds to replace four neighborhood entrance signs.

Putnam Heights Preservation Area was named a Historic Preservation District in 1972. The district is located in a highly visible area between Northwest Classen Avenue and Northwest Blackwelder Avenue and Northwest 35th and 38th Streets. The 105 homes within the neighborhood offer a wide variety of architectural styles with the majority built more than 70 years ago. The neighborhood is fortunate to have three acres of public medians and common areas that are well maintained by the residents and provide ample green space. In 2001, the neighborhood developed a beautification plan to enhance the medians and common area in stages. Three separate Margaret Annis Boys grants have allowed the residents to plant trees and shrubs within these public areas thus helping to sustain the natural beauty of this historic neighborhood.



Miller Neighborhood Association



Putnam City West High School

Schools

Schools occupy a tremendous amount of public land and the appearance of school grounds can be a significant factor in how the surrounding neighborhood and community, visitors and students perceive and value the quality of education and the quality of life in that area. Schools who apply for a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant must demonstrate a commitment from faculty, students, maintenance workers, parents and nearby residents and businesses. We are fortunate to have worked with nearly 90 schools through the Margaret Annis Boys Trust including the two featured here.

In 2001, two **Putnam City West High School** students organized a campus-wide beautification effort that would have a lasting impact on the school located in western Oklahoma City. The students brought together administration, faculty, student groups, district maintenance staff and parents to work to improve the school grounds not only with adding plant materials but also through a recycling program. With a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant, the student-led group added 60 trees and shrubs throughout the 27-acre campus. A long-term maintenance plan was put into place with the majority of the responsibility falling upon student committees to water, pick up trash and remove weeds.

Moore's Brink Junior High School is located at 11420 S. Western Ave. and is home to more than 800 eighth and ninth graders. In 2003, the students, faculty, parents association and maintenance staff created a long range plan to revitalize the campus that included scheduling regular cleanup days, renovating the flag plaza and planting perennial beds. To build upon their initial beautification efforts, in 2004 the school received a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant to purchase and install more than 100 trees and shrubs along the 25-acre campus. "The goal of our grant proposal was quite simple," explains Janet Southard, principal. "Our campus was devoid of any landscaping character, had been neglected for some time and was in desperate need of character and beautification. This grant provided the Brink community with the impetus to develop an ongoing beautification program that will serve our community for years to come."





Hope's Crossing Park

Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations may apply for Margaret Annis Boys Trust grants if their project is visible and accessible to the public as a park might be. Since 1997, more than 22 nonprofit organizations have utilized a grant to enhance their location and add to the quality of their neighborhood.

Hope's Crossing, a Central Oklahoma Habitat for Humanity development located in northeast Oklahoma City, features a 2.2-acre park that offers both adults and children of the 217 homes green spaces and play areas for relaxing and recreation. The first phase of 31 homes was completed in 2006 with an additional 58 finished in 2007. The final phase of homes will be completed in late 2009. The park features a playing field, a quarter-mile walking path, picnic tables and benches and the park is wheelchair accessible. Because the park is an integral part of the development and benefits the surrounding community, Habitat received a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant in 2007 to fund the purchase and planting of more than 70 trees in the park.

PAW Park, Oklahoma City's first off-leash dog park, is two acres of heaven for the community's canine residents. Thanks to a Margaret Annis Boys grant in 2002, dogs and their two-legged friends enjoy the shade provided by 40 trees planted throughout the park. Based upon similar parks in major U.S. cities, PAW Park provides a multitude of benefits to both owners and pets alike. The park was initiated by Partners for Animal Welfare of Oklahoma (PAW), a nonprofit group who wanted a place where city-dwelling canines of all shapes and sizes could safely exercise and play while learning to socialize with others. Whether it's chasing their favorite tennis ball or swimming in the duck pond, Oklahoma City's dogs now have their own slice of heaven.





Margaret Annis Boys Arboretum at Will Rogers Park

Signature Projects

To acknowledge the significant impact of Margaret Annis Boys Trust grants, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation established the Margaret Annis Boys Signature Project Program to fund large projects in parks and on public lands that include exemplary landscaping and enhancements to the area that will be considered permanent improvements to the site.

Described as a “plant zoo,” the 10-acre arboretum at Will Rogers Park in Oklahoma City is a showcase for native trees including those species used for timber, valued as sources of food and medicine or treasured solely for their beauty. Horticulturist Henry Walter planted the arboretum’s first trees in the 1930s. Today it stands as one of the loveliest arboretums in the state. In the spring of 2009, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation proposed to city officials they consider naming the arboretum for Margaret Annis Boys in consideration for the significant impact her fund has had on public parks and lands throughout the community. In addition, the request provided a \$50,000 grant from her fund to create a more accessible path through the arboretum as well as the establishment of a permanent endowment to provide for long-term maintenance of the arboretum. The request to rename the arboretum the **Margaret Annis Boys Arboretum** was accepted and approved in July 2009. “It is a fitting tribute to her and a real gift to the park and its visitors both now and in the future,” says Nancy B. Anthony, executive director of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.

Located in Bickham-Rudkin Park in Edmond, the **Margaret Annis Boys Centennial Arboretum** is a fully functioning teaching arboretum. In 2007, the Tree Bank and the City of Edmond jointly submitted a grant request to fund the purchase and planting of 60 trees as part of phase one of a renovation of the park. In reviewing the grant, the staff recognized the potential impact of the project and the collaborative efforts among public and private partners and recommended that it be funded as a Signature Project. The project received a \$50,000 grant to purchase and plant the entire 275 trees planned for the overall project. The arboretum serves as the perfect setting for the Tree Bank and the City of Edmond to educate the public on proper tree selection, care and planting techniques.



Brian Dougherty

An important component of the Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant program is Brian Dougherty, a well-respected landscape architect and horticulturist who has served as director of the Parks & Public Spaces Initiative since 1998. Brian's expertise, hands-on approach and true appreciation of Miss Boys' gift has helped to make the Margaret Annis Boys Trust an effective program that has a wide impact on the metropolitan area.



“Margaret Annis Boys spent 42 years helping to make a positive impact on the lives of children in our community,” Brian says. “Through her tremendous gift to the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, she continues to enrich our community through beautification projects that impact the quality of life for all residents.”

Applying for a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant

Guidelines for applying for a Margaret Annis Boys Trust grant are available for review at www.occf.org/boystrust. Groups interested in applying must discuss project with Brian Dougherty prior to submitting the grant application. Boys Trust grants focus on the installation of permanent plant materials.

Projects must meet the following goals:

1. Demonstrate initiative and responsibility for caring for public lands, cooperation among groups and innovation in the use of landscaping in cost-effective and low-maintenance ways.
2. Be highly visible to the general public, in areas generally open to the public, and help instill a sense of pride in the appearance of the community in those who live in the area as well as those who visit.
3. Have a long-term impact on the appearance of an area and represent thoughtful consideration and planning regarding the appropriateness of beautification for both current and future use.
4. Educate citizens about the importance of beautification, which will build a foundation for future activity and investment of resources by other individuals and groups.



About The Oklahoma City Community Foundation

Founded in 1969, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation was created to help donors meet their charitable needs and to encourage the development of permanent endowment funds for the benefit of the community. We administer more than 800 permanent funds, like the Margaret Annis Boys Trust, with the highest standards of accountability and good stewardship. For more than four decades we have been helping donors like Miss Boys help the community.

We offer a variety of gift options that allow donors to make both current and planned gifts to the particular type of fund that best suits their charitable and financial needs. Donors can establish their own fund for a scholarship, for support of a specific charity or charities or to support a personal interest area like that of the Margaret Annis Boys Trust.

Why Give Through Us

Simple

By establishing a fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, donors avoid the legal and accounting complexities of a private foundation or trust. We take care of all of the administrative details and the reporting requirements. Because we are a 501c(3) public charity, donors receive the maximum tax benefit allowed for a charitable gift.

Flexible

We are able to accept a wide variety of gifts including cash, appreciated stocks, mutual funds and other marketable securities, life insurance policies, retirement plan assets, oil and gas royalties, and other business-related assets. Donors can make a charitable gift or bequest and modify the purpose or use of the fund as their charitable interest change.

If you are interested in discovering how you can help your community with a charitable gift, please contact us at 405/235-5603 or visit our Web site at www.occf.org. We offer specific information about bequests and planned gifts at www.occflegacy.org.

For more information, contact Brian at 405/606-2908 or b.dougherty@occf.org.



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