

NEWS RELEASE | June 6, 2012

_[surfaces in Wirth Lake!

Beloved Minne, the Lake Creature, will drop anchor in historic Minneapolis park, Wednesday, June 6, through September 2012

Minneapolis, Minn. – A friendly and familiar, if somewhat unusual, figure greeted the Twin Cities today, when _ [(affectionately known as **Minne, the Lake Creature**) surfaced in **Wirth Lake**, near **Highway 55 and Theodore Wirth Parkway**, in Minneapolis. Equal parts regal and whimsical, a dinosaur-like dignitary with a Mona Lisa smile, Minne is an annual public art project of the [Minneapolis Parks Foundation](#).

This is the first time that Minne has cruised Wirth Lake, a popular swimming, fishing and canoeing destination at the heart of **Theodore Wirth Park**, which straddles Minneapolis and Golden Valley and draws visitors from throughout the region.

Also a first in 2012: Minne will moor in a single lake for the entire season. In previous years, Minne has visited two or more Minneapolis lakes (there are 16 total); this year, her summer-long stay in Wirth Lake will offer the thousands of people who experience Wirth Park a chance to really connect with the Loch Nessie look-a-like.

“Minne has truly captured the imagination of Minneapolis residents and visitors. Children delight and grown-ups wonder in seeing her for the first time, and she continues to captivate even after many sightings,” says Mary deLaittre, President of the Minneapolis Parks Foundation. “Public art is like the modern day campfire: community members naturally gather around intriguing, approachable pieces like Minne.”

_[is a 13-foot fiberglass sculpture by Minneapolis artist Cameron Gainer, who was inspired by the infamous 1934 “Surgeon’s Photo” of the Loch Ness Monster. In Minneapolis, Minne first made a splash in 2009 when she mysteriously appeared in Lake Harriet. In subsequent summers, she visited a number of the city’s lakes, including Powderhorn Lake, Lake of the Isles, Lake Hiawatha, and Brownie Lake. Prior to her 2009 adoption and naming by the Parks Foundation, Minne also made appearances in Brooklyn, New York, and Tampa, Florida.

Well “Wirth” An Extended Stay

At 759 acres, **Theodore Wirth Park** is the largest regional park managed by the **Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board**, drawing more than 60,000 annual visits. “Wirth Lake is a lovely location, and Wirth Park draws so many visitors, sightseers and even commuters, that it makes an ideal ‘home’ for Minne this summer,” says deLaittre. “We look forward to seeing how the community responds to her presence, and to exploring opportunities to partner with neighborhood organizations to actively engage children and youth in activities inspired by her.”

Located minutes from downtown Minneapolis, Wirth Park is larger than New York City’s famed Central Park and has an even more diverse and serene landscape. Among Wirth Park’s many draws are its winding wooded parkway; 40-acre lake and nearby **Birch Pond**; two gardens – **Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden** and **J.D. Rivers’ Children’s Garden**; two golf courses; several summer and winter recreation facilities and trails; indoor and outdoor picnic areas; and **Wedding Hill**, a picturesque ceremony venue in an urban forest.

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Wirth was also impacted by the 2011 North Minneapolis tornado, which tore up many old-growth trees and devastated the newly renovated **Wirth Lake Beach**. After undergoing restoration this year, the beach and adjacent wetlands will have a **free community grand opening of Wirth Lake Beach, 10:30 AM – 12 Noon, Saturday, June 9.**

Public Support for Public Art

Minne is a free public art project made possible by generous donations to the Minneapolis Parks Foundation, an independent 501c3 organization. The public is invited to help support Minne, and the Parks Foundation's **Next Generation of Parks™** mission and initiatives, by making tax-deductable contribution.

About the Minneapolis Parks Foundation

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation is focused on the Next Generation of Parks™, with an emphasis on parks design education, innovation and implementation. Beginning in 2010, MPF co-sponsored the globally renowned Minneapolis Riverfront Design Competition, the largest in the state's history. In 2011, Parks Foundation projects included the Next Generation of Parks™ lecture series, the 4th Avenue North Playground along the Upper Riverfront, and more.

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