

The Valparaiso Parks Foundation provides opportunities for the community to support the continuing legacy of high quality experiences provided by Valpo Parks.



Spring 2014

# roots

A publication of the Valpo Parks Foundation

## Where Are My Handprints?



Never fear, all of the ceramic squares featuring hand prints of children and adults that were sold as a fundraising activity 20 years ago are not going anywhere. **The handprint wall is an integral part of the design of ValPlayso-The Next Generation** and a wonderful way to link the past and the present. Over time, the tiles have experienced wear-and-tear, but we want to make sure that the kids of 1994 (many of whom are now in their 30s) have a place to come back to.

To learn more about the new memory wall planned for ValPlayso-The Next generation, visit [www.valplayso.com](http://www.valplayso.com).

## Just Imagine...

A place where dreams come true.

Where will you find a Viking ship, a village, a volcano, and more? At ValPlayso-The Next Generation, that's where. These features and others sprang from the minds of Valparaiso's school children. A combined effort of the Valparaiso Parks Foundation and volunteers, VaPlayso-The Next Generation will be a premier play space that is safe, accessible and relevant to today's families.

## VALPLAYSO The Next Generation!

### It's Coming!

Twenty years ago, the Valparaiso Parks Foundation was in charge of the fundraising and creation of ValPlayso, a playground built by members of the Valparaiso community.

Like ValPlayso-The Next Generation, the original play space incorporated the ideas from local school children. At that time, more than 2,500 community volunteers completed the construction of the park.

Plans for ValPlayso-The Next Generation call for a **17,500 square foot play space located on an eight-acre parcel of land at the corner of Glendale Boulevard and Roosevelt Road.**

In addition to the play area, the space will include landscaping, a dry retention pond,

a pathway, four T-ball fields, a shelter, restrooms, and 126 parking spaces. The estimated cost for the full eight-acre project is \$1.2 million.

**The community build portion of the construction of ValPlayso-The Next Generation will be October 6 - 12, 2014,** however much work needs to be completed prior to that time.



Courtesy of the Post-Tribune. Photographer Michael Gard

To volunteer, visit [www.valPLAYSO.com](http://www.valPLAYSO.com).

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## Safe, Visible & Accessible

**V**alPlayso—The Next Generation is a completely new play space and park. Because of the age of the current equipment, we can't simply repaint it or clean it up. The wood on the play pieces splinters very easily and is a safety hazard. The new play equipment will be made of recycled, highly resistant plastic that follows size requirements for optimum safety.

One of the major improvements that will be evident in ValPlayso—The Next Generation is how accessible it is to all children. In fact, **a Special Needs Committee has been involved since the beginning to ensure children with disabilities can enjoy**

**a day at the park.** A family bathroom is also part of the overall plan, which ensures a parent or caregiver is available when assistance is needed.



## Passing the Torch

by Alane (Summers) Helmer

**T**wenty years ago I was a fifth grader, and I remember the excitement all over school about a new, big playground the community would build. How fun that I was chosen to join other students to represent my school in meeting with the design team.

I was impressed, because I had seen a TV program about another community build project, and I recognized our designer from that show!

As all of the kids sat on the floor at Flint Lake, the designer asked us what we wanted to see in our "dream" playground. Hands shot up, and ideas were shouted out. Months later, it was a wonderful feeling to see those ideas manifested into actual parts of ValPlayso. We were just kids, but our ideas were listened to and brought to life!

Most of the kids during the build were tasked with sanding. We were each handed

a sanding block and climbed all over the equipment, sanding every piece of wood we could reach. To this day, I can't pass ValPlayso without thinking about sanding blocks.

On the day ValPlayso opened, I remember a huge swarm of kids rushing the playground.

There were lines to go down slides and up towers. It was awesome!

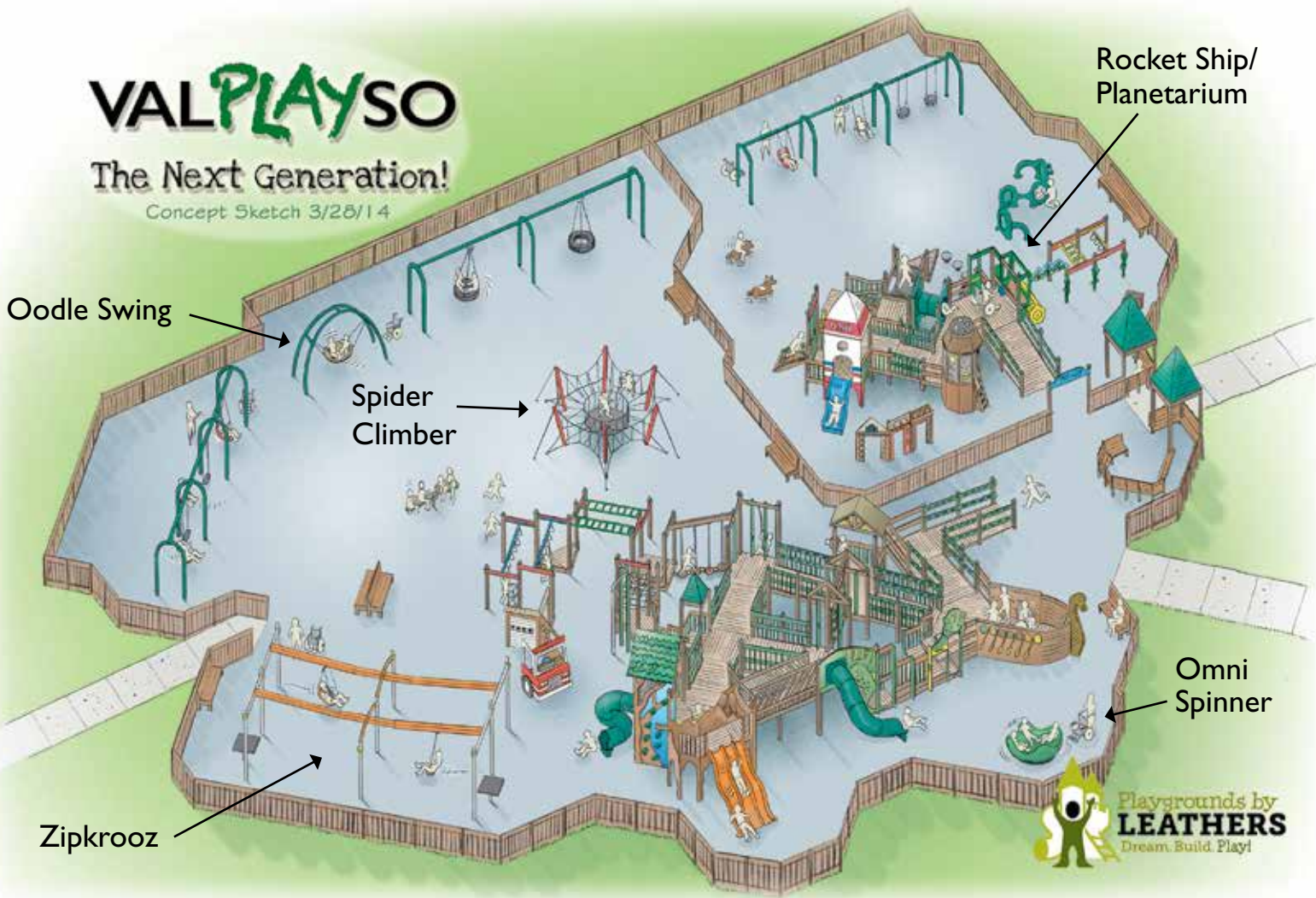
As I got older, I took the kids I babysat to ValPlayso, and I would always look for my handprint. I am so glad they are keeping

those. Next to my print are the handprints of my old neighbors, friends and classmates.

What a legacy – to see something materialize that once only existed in our drawings and ideas. I'm glad another fifth grade girl will have her voice heard and her family will get to experience the thrill of working together for something that will benefit them all.



# Community Build Days October 6 -12



## GET INVOLVED

### Make Valplayso-The Next Generation come to life

We need more than people to help us build the project, we need people to support us through committee membership, through the donation of materials and tools, and of course through monetary contributions.

**Connect:** [www.valplayso.com](http://www.valplayso.com)    **Follow:** [www.facebook.com/valplayso](http://www.facebook.com/valplayso)

### Best Face Forward

To help raise funds for Valplayso–The Next Generation, the Parks Foundation is offering you an opportunity to purchase a “Face Place Print.” We will use a picture of you, your children, or your grandchild and have it laser engraved on stainless steel. These pieces will be on permanent display at the park. Details coming soon.

*Valplayso–The Next Generation is a project of the Valparaiso Parks Foundation, a 501c3 entity. The project is funded through public and private partnerships and receives no taxpayer funding.*

### DONATE ONLINE

Be part of Valparaiso’s bright tomorrow, by sharing your passion time and money with us today.

Scan the QR Code to go to our online donation page.



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# Mark Your Calendars

Proceeds from the following Valpo Parks Foundation events support the Foundation and ultimately benefit the Valpo Parks system.

For more information regarding Valpo Parks Foundation events visit [ValpoParksFoundation.org](http://ValpoParksFoundation.org) or contact Barbie Johnson at 219.462.5144.



## Friends & Legends Reception

**Thursday, May 8, 2014**

**4:30 to 6:30 PM**

Butterfield Family Pavilion

Honoring Bruce Berner and Mary Leonard



## Creekside Classic

**Thursday, July 17th, 2014**

Creekside Golf Course



## Party in the Park

**Saturday, August 16, 2014**

Rogers-Lakewood Park

All Proceeds Benefit

Valplayso-The Next Generation

Visit us online at [www.ValpoParksFoundation.org](http://www.ValpoParksFoundation.org)