



Our Park, Too!

By Rachel Delgado



Rachel Delgado at Paseo por El Westside 2023.

The water fowl thrive around the lake. Right now Birds are fighting for their nesting area. Whereas Bird Island was once a source of pride, it is now under attack.

The birds are happy to share the park with humans. People come to enjoy the beauty and peace of nature. But at the end of the day, they will go home. While the

are left. There were pesticide sprays but that stopped when it made park goers sick.

Some people like us here but others are determined to drive us away.

Time will tell what happens next.

Remembering the Legacy of Labor Day

Small businesses are sometimes forced out of the competition by large corporations. Chief executive officers fatten their salaries at the expense of employees on the bottom rung. Job scarcity makes it hard to switch employers so management can refuse to offer amenities beyond a subsistence level.

Samuel Gompers worked to change these injustices. Born in 1850, Gompers went from a factory worker to become the first president of the American Federation of Labor. His quest for workers to receive higher wages, shorter hours, and collective bargaining was cut short by illness. He died in San Antonio in 1924 after attending the inauguration of Mexican President Plutarco Elias Calles.

A statue of Gompers used to stand across from the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center on Market Street in San Antonio. Sculptor Bette Jean Alden portrayed Gompers with a contract in his hand to symbolize the beneficial agreements that can come between capital and labor. The pedestal of the statue had a plaque which read:

“What does labor want? We want more school houses and less jails. More books and less guns. More learning and less vice. More leisure and less greed. More justice and less revenge. We want more... opportunities to cultivate our better nature.” – Samuel Gompers.

These are words to remember on Labor Day.

— Don Mathis



birds are Already Home.

Here is one bird's view of the situation:

.....I can fly around searching for food but I always come back. A great source for nourishment are people's picnics. I just stay close by to grab something when they are distracted. Me and some of the other birds will tag team to create diversions. Then we swoop in for the prize. We are a lot faster than those ducks waddling around. There are some kind humans who bring us veggies and breadcrumbs. As we keep losing our habitat, we must depend on the kindness of strangers more.

When I am not hunting, I will people watch. People ride their bikes, exercise and walk their dogs. Most of the time they pick up after the dogs. And there is usually someone fishing. I will let them keep their catch. That is unless the fish is so small that it would be embarrassing to take it home. There was also the time I saw two teens in a canoe in the middle of the lake. You could hear their laughter. After a while they tried to row back to the bank. They must have been tired because they just couldn't turn the boat around. They kept rowing and rowing and rowing around in circles. They remained calm and finally got back to the edge. I'm sure they were more embarrassed than scared.

We are no longer welcomed here. Sadly, the sign at the entrance of the park features an egret, one of the very birds that are being chased away. There is talk that our flight pattern is dangerous for aircraft. There are also complaints about too much poop on the sidewalks and in the water. Air cannons and other noisemakers are set off to scare us away. Trees are being cut down to prevent nesting. They have even hung flag streamers from the trees that