FRIENDS OF EDEN PRAIRIE PARKS

In 2024, FEPP grew from 70 newsletter subscribers and 25 active volunteers to over 200 subscribers and 66 active volunteers (increases of 190% and 164%, respectively). These volunteers contributed over 360 hours of time removing invasive species, rescuing native plants, and planting seeds for the future. FEPP's growing membership is made up of a variety of Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, forestry and ecology professionals, and citizen scientists. This year, we have made many accomplishments to fulfill our mission and objectives:

- *Hosted 5 educational events open to the public (Mar, June, Aug, Oct, Nov)*
  March - Milk Jug Seed Sowing, hosted by Native Plant Chair Lynsey Owen
  June - Board & Park Stewards Meet and Greet
  August - Mid-year Review, featuring updates from City of Eden Prairie Parks Liaison
  October - Meet and Greet with new Outdoor Center Director Max Melby
  November - Seeds, Seeds, Seeds! presented by Lynsey Owen

- *Led 27 volunteer events to remove invasive species*
  FEPP's Park Stewards targeted garlic mustard in spring and buckthorn in fall, both of which are listed on the state of Minnesota Invasive Species list, using the current environmental standards with oversight from Eden Prairie Parks Department. Volunteers contributed over 280 hours of their time helping remove buckthorn and garlic mustard from 8 parks and conservation areas.

- *Rescued and transplanted native plants*
  FEPP volunteers, under guidance from the FEPP Native Plant Chair and City of Eden Prairie Parks & Recreation Department, rescued hundreds of native woodland plant species from an area of Dell Road that will be redeveloped in late 2025 during 6 plant rescue events. Rescued plants were transplanted in Richard T Anderson Conservation Area. Species included Dutchman's breeches, bloodroot, bellwort, Solomon's seal, jack-in-the-pulpit, sedges, and zigzag goldenrod. Transplanting native plant species helps preserve the biodiversity within our parks and conservation areas.

- *Hosted 2 native seed harvesting events*
  Another key aspect of restoration after invasive species removal is replacing them with native plants. Gathering seeds from native plants that are already resilient to the environmental conditions within a certain geographical area is a well-researched strategy to building a resilient and diverse ecosystem. FEPP hosted 2 seed harvesting events, one at Prairie Bluff Conservation Area, which has a highly valuable remnant prairie seed bank, and one at restored prairie patches around Neill Lake. Seeds gathered from Prairie Bluff will be used to bolster the seed bank at Richard T Anderson Conservation Area, while the seeds gathered from Neill Lake will be used to refresh and restore the education prairie near the Eden Prairie Outdoor Center.

- *Expanded digital reach through monthly newsletter, Facebook and website*
  Monthly newsletters reached an additional 133 new subscribers this year, with a 58% average open rate. The FEPP Facebook page followers increased to 116.

- *Fostered growth of Park Steward initiative*
  Park Steward representation expanded to 14 parks and conservation areas in 2024. Park Stewards are the primary reason for FEPP's success and increased community volunteer engagement.