

From: Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails friendsscandiaparks@gmail.com 
Subject: Friends of Scandia Parks Year in Review
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To: friends@parksandtrails.org



As we look back on 2019, Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails (FSPT) had a busy year. We continued to work towards enhancing public green spaces in Scandia at Wind in the Pines Preserve, Lilleskogen Park, and Swenson Park. We hosted three educational presentations in Scandia and we partnered with the MN Department of Natural Resources to do a pollinator survey training at William O'Brien State Park - a new and very successful event. We also continued working with the city to advance in the GreenSteps City program. Please read on for details!

We'd also love to hear your ideas or have you take part in our activities, please get in touch with us at friendsscandiaparks@gmail.com. Gratefully,
The Board of Directors, Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails,

Brad Borg -President

Karen Schik - Past President

Rich Burton -Treasurer

Cristina de Sobrino - Secretary

Sonia Borg, Leila Denecke, Mary Hooley,

Lisa Philippi, Lisa Schlingerman, and Tom Vogen.

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We appreciate any and all support from our community!

2019 Highlights

Educational Programs

We started off the year with a presentation on April 30 by Angie Hong from the East Metro Water Resource Education Program. Angie shared actions to take to build resiliency to climate change on our land and in our

actions to take to build resiliency to climate change on our land and in our community. Her focus was about planning for extreme events and managing woodlands, gardens and lawns for the changing climate stressors.

In May, a rapt audience was fascinated by biologist Eric Mottl, who delved into the details of Minnesota's giant silk moths - cecropia, luna, and polyphemus. Cecropia is the largest moth in North America, with a 6" wingspan. All of them overwinter in cocoons in the leaf-litter - another good reason not to rake leaves from the garden!

In June, Todd Arnold from the University of Minnesota spoke about the status of bird populations in Minnesota. He showed that while many bird species are declining, some are doing quite well. Bald eagles and other species recovering from DDT related population declines continue to increase and birds of prey in general are increasing. However, other groups of species, especially grassland songbirds, continue to decline. Some species have declined 50 percent in the last 50 years. People can help bird populations by planting native plants that provide food for birds and the insects they prey on, by avoiding insecticides, and more expansively, by supporting efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change.



The last educational program of the year was in August, when we lead a pollinator survey training, in partnership with the DNR at William O'Brien State Park. Over 20 people attended to learn simple methods



developed by the Xerces Society to survey for pollinators. The highlight of the day was finding a tri-colored bumblebee.

Park Stewardship

Swenson Park

FSPT continued to work on the 1.5-acre Swenson Park (Oren & Olgilvie) pollinator planting, in its third growing season in 2019. Prairie Restorations Inc. burned the prairie in early May as part of the regular establishment process. Additional seed was also broadcast after the burn to fill in some of the sparse areas. We also did a major weeding effort at the demonstration garden and planted 136 plants to replace those that had died.



Lilleskogen Park

Friends continue to work on improving the butterfly garden at Lilleskogen Park. Some of the plantings have not thrived in the compacted clay soils that were brought in for the planting area, but gradually many of the native plants are establishing. We experimented with supplemental soil to try to establish more plants. We dug large planting holes, removed the existing clay, filled them with fresh garden soil, and installed about 75 plants. If successful, we will do more plantings in 2020. We also removed weeds throughout the growing season.

Wind in the Pines

We once again rallied against buckthorn this fall, cutting and treating stumps. There's not much left - we're gaining on it!



Other Activities

Minnesota



GreenSteps City Program

Scandia's GreenSteps committee continued to pursue steps to advance the city in the program. Several of the activities of FSPT helped the city reach step 3, including our work to manage and maintain Scandia natural areas, and our speaker series, focused on topics such as recycling, building resiliency to climate change on one's land and in the community, the affects of climate change on native trees and what we can do to be better stewards of our natural areas.



Due to the hard work of the committee, Scandia was certified a Step 3 GreenStep City in 2019! We join only 27 other cities at this level, with a total of 124 GreenStep cities in Minnesota. Initial steps have already been taken towards Step 4 with committee members and Scandia's new city administrator learning about the metrics that will be used to measure progress. More information on this program is available at the Minnesota GreenStep Cities website.

Gateway Trail

Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails continues to track progress of the Gateway Trail expansion and lend support to the city and Cycling Scandia as needed. We provided a letter of support for the legislative proposal that was put forth in spring. We also assist Cycling Scandia in some of their cycling events.

Welcome baskets FSPT continues to contribute information about promoting nature in our community in the welcome packets available to new city residents.

2020 Vision

- * Maintain pollinator plantings in Scandia parks
- * Educational Presentations to include Walking the Red Lake Peatland, and Water Quality and Perennial Crops, and Nurturing Urban Forests with Gravel Beds
- * Promotion of the Gateway Trail expansion.
- * Invasive tree and shrub management at Wind in the Pines
- * Advance Scandia's participation in the GreenStep Cities program
- * Continue collaboration with Cycling Scandia and the Scandia Parks and Recreation Committee

Hello and Goodbye!

In 2019 Friends bid a sad farewell to Janie O'Connor, who was on the board since 2013. Janie was tremendously helpful at whatever task she took on, and will be especially remembered as the primary instigator of the Lilleskogen butterfly garden. She served as president for one year and the group was never so organized! We will miss you Janie, but look forward to seeing your next endeavors with Cycling Scandia!

In 2019 we also have an enthusiastic "hello again" to Lisa Phillippi! Lisa was on the board a couple of years ago, but stepped down as life intervened. We are delighted to have her back!

How you can help

If you have an interest in assisting with any of our plans, or would like to suggest some of your own, we always love to hear from you! We will always need help with weeding and buckthorn control, and planting. Please contact us at friendsscandiaparks@gmail.com.

Please also consider a tax deductible donation to FSPT.
Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails
P.O. Box 251 Scandia, MN 55073

Make checks payable to "Parks and Trails Council of MN" & write 'Scandia Parks' on the memo line.

Thank you for your continued membership and participation in
Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails!





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