

PARKS FRIENDS UPDATE



A quarterly newsletter brought to you by Sun Prairie Parks Friends, Inc. (501.c.3)

1st Quarter of 2025 — Celebrating, Anticipating, and Dreaming



Celebrating - Invasive Plant Warriors

The Sun Prairie Parks Friends (SPPF) continued their partnership with the Sun Prairie Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department (SPPRF) to make an impact on our environment by removing invasive species from our City Parks. Crews of volunteers and city maintenance staff met monthly through the winter to remove invasive species like buckthorn, honeysuckle, and sumac from Smith Crossing Park and areas of Shehan Park to improve the survivability of native species in the wooded areas of our parks.

Interested in helping? The warriors generally meet on the 3rd Saturday of the Month for 2 hours. For more information and to sign up go to:

<https://cityofsunprairie.volunteermatters.org/project-catalog/62>



Anticipating – Earth Day Clean-Up

The Friends will conduct its annual Sun Prairie Earth Day Parks Clean-up on Saturday, April 26th. The goal is to reach every park in the city to pick up trash and debris that has accumulated over winter to help prepare parks for the upcoming seasons.

Volunteers will meet at Sheehan Park at 9:00 am for a welcome and instructions, then head out to the individual parks. Volunteers need to wear clothing for appropriate for the weather, bring a water bottle for hydration, and work gloves if you have them. The Friends will provide collection bags, water for refillable bottles, and some protective gloves.

This is an opportunity to help take care the city’s valuable resource – our parks. Volunteers can sign up as individuals, families, or groups from businesses, churches or other organizations. Here is the link and QR code for sign up:

<https://parksfriends.org/earthday/>

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Anticipating – Wyndham Hills Pickleball Sunshades Fund Raiser

The Friends are working with the Sun Prairie Pickleball Advisory Group to add sunshades at the pickleball courts at Wyndham Hills Park. With the increase of tournaments and activities being held at the courts and the growth of the sport, having shaded areas for tournament participants and organizers has become necessary. The advisory group brought the need to the City and Friends as a fund-raising opportunity to provide the improvements.

The pickleball group and the Friends have been raising funds since the fall and have collected over \$20,000 and are about halfway to the \$45,000 goal. The Friends website has details on the project and donation recognition levels for donors. The hope is to install the shades this year if the fund raising is successful.

Looking for more information and to donate to this project? Here is the link and QR code:

<https://parksfriends.org/pickle.html>

Anticipating – Disc Golf

The Friends recently obtained approval from SPPRF to improve the disc golf practice course at Wyndham Hills Park by adding three more tee boxes. This will allow expanded play of the course by adding additional ways to play the baskets on the course. Continued interest and play on the course has driven the desire for improvements.

The Friends also continued to advocate for other disc golf facilities in the city's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) and we still have SPPF discs available for purchase to raise funds for additional facilities. Look for us at the Farmers Market and other city events or reach out to us,

Interested in helping or would like more information? Go to our website:

<https://parksfriends.org/discgolf.html>



Dreaming – Upcoming Events and Initiatives

The Friends are continuing work to establish a fund to finance our operations and fund projects for the city parks. If you have experience or expertise in foundation work, consider joining the new investment committee.

Our major events for the year are:

- Earth Day – April 26th, 9:00 am Sheehan Park
- Pollinator Garden Installations – May 17, 2025, locations to be announced
- Invasive Warriors – 3rd Saturdays, at locations to be announced
- Community Playground Build – September – October 2025, location to be announced.