

Dear Friends,

I was recently asked, “Why should people become involved with the Friends? What can they do to support the Garden?”

The Friends of the Wild Flower Garden is a diverse and engaged community of people from all over the Twin Cities and beyond.

Our members deeply appreciate the Garden and want to support the vision of an extraordinary educator and scientist, Eloise Butler, who first sought to preserve this place over a century ago. We provide resources for public events in the Garden sponsored by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, including Mother’s Day weekend programming and Showy Lady’s Slipper Days. We have a fantastic website that routinely receives between 3,000 and 4,000 unique visits each month, and a newsletter that is informative and beautiful.

Friends members and donors have the satisfaction of knowing that the Garden is stronger because of their involvement. The Friends recruits, equips and trains volunteer staff to help visitors in the Shelter and on trails, and to work with the invasive species removal teams inside and outside the Garden. The organization also raises funds for special projects, like new plantings, that enhance the quality of the visitor experience. Also, the Friends is energetically raising funds to help the Park Board complete Phase II of the award-winning Garden boardwalk, which will provide additional space for outdoor education. Over the last

ten years, only 5.1% of Friends’ revenues have gone to administrative and fundraising costs. The rest has gone to fund programming that advances our mission.

To support the Garden, please join the Friends if you aren’t already a member – options for joining are included in this newsletter. You can get in touch with me at gardenfriends@earthlink.net or

Jennifer Dunne, Volunteer Coordinator, ebwgshelternvolunteers@gmail.com, to find out about giving time and/or donating funds now or as a memorial or bequest. It’s also helpful if you let your Park Board commissioner and the at-large commissioners know you value the Garden, and please let them know if you are a Friends member, as well.

You can also support the Garden by telling others about it and bringing them for a visit. Set expectations for the season. Unlike a formal English garden or a cottage perennial garden, the structure and beauty here are more subtle. Spring brings the fleeting charms of the ephemerals and the exposed graceful contours of the land. Summer has its orchids and other showy blooms. Autumn impresses with burnished grasses and bursts of solidago and asters. Come visit the Garden – I know you and your guests will find something here to delight.

Sincerely,

Kathy Connelly



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