

Friends of Maybury State Park

2025 Annual Report

The Friends of Maybury State Park (FoM) experienced another successful year in 2025, enhancing the Maybury State Park experience for over 800,000 visitors. The organization sponsored 18 events that resulted in over 1300 individuals taking advantage of FoM free programming. Volunteers also participated in an additional 13 events to market the FoM and support our community partners such as the Maybury Farm and Schoolcraft Community College. The organization achieved significant milestones in completing several large projects and utilized grant money to help ensure program continuity. Additionally, the volunteer base experienced a growth spurt during the year, attracting 48 volunteers who committed over 1500 hours to the success of the organization. Furthermore, the FoM advanced in its goals of refining processes to enhance fiscal accountability and transparency and ensure the continuity of operations for years to come. The Friends of Maybury State Park looks forward to 2026 as it continues its mission of supporting and promoting recreational, natural, educational, interpretive, and accessible activities to enhance the public's experience at the park.

Free Events sponsored by the Friends of Maybury State Park

First Day Hike, January 1st

Full Moon Hike, February 8th: Cancelled due to icy trail conditions

Full Moon Hike, March 8th

Wildflower Walk, May 2nd and 3rd

Introduction to Nature Journaling, June 7th

Music on Mondays July 7th, July 14th, July 21st, July 28th, August 4th, August 11th, August 18th

Edible Plant Hike, August 16th

EnChroma Viewer Ribbon Cutting, September 13th

History of Maybury Sanatorium Hike, September 20th

Holiday Tree, Maybury State Park, November 26th – January 4th

Owl Prowl, December 6th

Hike Leader Training, December 13th – New Program

Events the FoM supported that were sponsored by other organizations

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MI DNR) Friends Summit, Virtual, April 4th

Eggstravaganza, Maybury Farm, April 12th

Earth Day Clean-up, Maybury State Park DNR, April 26th

Northville Township Police Community Bike Ride, Maybury State Park, May 14th

Northville Farmers' Market, Northville, May 15th

Maybury State Park 50th Anniversary, Maybury State Park, June 21st

Northville Parade, Downtown Northville, July 4th

DiversAbility Day at Maybury State Park, Oakland Co Parks/DNR, August 14th

Schoolcraft College School Daze Fall Festival & Resource Fair, September 22nd & 23rd

Scarecrow in the Park, Downtown Plymouth, September 26th – November 3rd

Great Fall Festival, Maybury Farm, October 11th

Northville Holiday Lighted Parade, Downtown Northville, November 21st

Major Initiatives

Seven mile nonmotorized entrance completion: In 2020, the Maybury State Park's General Management Plan identified a non-motorized entrance along the southern border of the park as a priority to provide community access from all directions and link current and planned trails in Southeast Michigan. The FoM received many generous private donations as well as two matching grants from the MI DNR. In 2025 the MI DNR made a commitment to covering the remaining costs and the entrance with traffic signal was completed in September 2025. Some beautification additions will be made in 2026 before the May 2026 official dedication.

EnChroma lens viewer installation: EnChroma lens viewers improve color vision for individuals with color blindness. The FoM applied for and received a grant from the Northville Rotary and also received a generous private donation for this initiative. The ribbon cutting for the two viewers was held in October. Maybury is one of only seven Michigan State Parks with an EnChroma viewer.

History of Maybury Sanitorium documentation: The History of the Maybury Sanitorium is one of the most popular FoM events each year. The FoM wanted to ensure the history is accurately recorded and the event continues for years to come. This initiative involved having the history narrative and photos professionally compiled into binders and digital format that can be used for hikes and classroom presentations. This project was made possible by using funds from an education grant from the Olin Family Foundation.

Other Programming

Educational Outreach: The FoM started using animal skins, that were already in the park's inventory, to draw people to their promotional table and provide education on the animals in Maybury State Park. These ethically sourced skins were used at the Music on Monday events and outreach events like the Schoolcraft College resource fair. This proved to be a cost-effective way to educate on local wildlife while engaging with the community about the mission of the FoM. Additional educational displays highlighting other park features are planned for the future.

Scout Projects: The FoM has a long-standing tradition of allocating money to partially fund scout projects in the park. During 2025 two projects were approved for FoM funding but were subsequently funded through outside donations.

Bluebird boxes: Over 100 hours were spent monitoring 81 boxes which resulted in 40 bluebird fledglings. Donations received during a targeted fund-raising campaign will provide for the replacement of many of the boxes as well as allow for the installation of predator guards to better protect the eggs and hatchlings.

Track Chair: The track chair program had 43 visits during the 2025 season. The FoM supported the program by providing guides when requested and by setting aside funds for track chair accessories.

Initiative generation and tracking: A membership survey was conducted in early 2025 to collect ideas for park initiatives. Many worthwhile ideas were received and are being considered

for future projects and programming. Ideas that were outside the scope of the FoM were provided to the Maybury State Park DNR for potential inclusive in their future initiatives.

Resources – The MI DNR, FoM members, donors, and the Maybury community count on the FoM to be responsible stewards of organizational resources. Therefore, the FoM puts a priority on financial accountability and long-term sustainment.

Membership: The FoM reaped the rewards of increased membership marketing and realized an 22% increase in overall membership in 2025. This increase in membership provides essential operating funds as well as a cadre of volunteers and event enthusiasts.

Fundraising/Donations: The FoM is an all-volunteer organization and relies on generous community support. Donations and grants help fund park enhancements such as the EnChroma viewers, the Seven-mile entrance, scout projects and special programming such as Music on Mondays and the Owl Prowl. Funds that are donated for a specific project are set aside for that purpose with 100% of the funds allocated towards that initiative.

Bluebird boxes: A special fundraising campaign was initiated in order to replace the boxes in the park that were decades old and past their life expectancy. As the result of thoughtful donations, and volunteer builders, new boxes will be installed in the spring, allowing the FoM to continue to protect this vulnerable species.

Brick Sales: The Purchase of a paving brick is a way to honor a loved one, a pet, celebrate a special event, memory, etc. Increased marketing of this program led to an increase of six brick sales in 2025 vs one 2024.

Money Minder: The FoM continues to use this web-based financial accounting system to ensure financial accountability and continuity. Usage was expanded in 2025 by also using it to track it's most valuable resource, the volunteers. This allowed the organization to have a more accurate picture of the manpower resources devoted to the park and specific programming and initiatives. This new database will also enhance the ability to thank volunteers for their efforts and invite them to future opportunities.

Zeffy: The biggest financial change made in 2025 was the mid-year transition to using Zeffy for financial contributions. Zeffy is a program for only nonprofit organizations and does not charge any transaction fees. It is easy to use for targeted fundraising campaigns and also has an event sign-up feature which was used to sign-up volunteers and participants. Use of a donation button with the event sign-up gave participants an easy-to-use option of making a contribution towards the event, while keeping it free for others. Zeffy provides the organization with many features that it was previously being charged an annual fee for from a different platform.

Volunteer recruitment: Volunteers are the FoM's most valuable resource. The organization works hard to foster a welcoming environment that promotes opportunities for every skill level. The volunteer base grew in 2025, attracting many veteran and first-time volunteers. Efforts were made to make opportunities visible to a wide audience and to attract volunteers willing to learn a new skill. In addition, to better understand our volunteers, individuals where asked how they

heard about the opportunity and why they volunteer. This information will help target communication and guide volunteer retention efforts in the coming years.

Hike Leader Training: A new initiative in 2025, the Hike Leader Training was created to encourage more people to lead FoM hikes and to ensure our leaders had the necessary skill and knowledge to safely lead a group event. Topics covered included how to promote a hike, choose a route, and emergency procedures. The training was very well received and will help ensure participant safety at all FoM events. The positive turnout for our new Hike Leader Training demonstrated that many individuals aspire to contribute but desire additional guidance. 2026 efforts will continue to focus on bridging the gap between the 1000s of regular visitors to the park and those that become members and volunteers.

Marketing/Communication: The FoM prides itself on its work to optimize its marketing and communication to ensure the members and Maybury State Park community receive information that is accurate, timely, and value-added.

Email: As shown during surveys, this continues to be the most popular way members acquire information. Periodic informative emails are sent to members to succinctly educate members on current happenings while not flooding their inbox with repetitive material.

Website: The team that maintains the website continues to be one of the hardest working group of volunteers. After rescuing the website from catastrophic failure in 2024, 2025 saw a plethora of improvements including an easier to navigate format, fresh content and enhanced security and back-up protection. One popular new feature is the News Blog which provides a way to communicate feature articles in a timely and easy to read format. Website analytics are also being used to better understand how individuals are using the website and where improvements could be made.

Social Media: Followers on both social media platforms were up in 2025. The FoM continues to use social media as a way to market the park and organizational initiatives and engage with the community. Site analytics are being used so future content can maximize viewer engagement.

Scarecrow: The FoM participated in the Scarecrow in the Park in Downtown Plymouth for the second year. This low cost, fun, and high visibility marketing opportunity supported a neighboring community and resulted in donations to the organization.

Holiday Tree: The FoM engaged with the community by decorating a tree in the park. Ornaments were made by attendees at the August 18th Music on Monday, by a local memory care unit, as well as several other local organizations. This was the second year for the tree and is a festive way to engage with the community and to encourage family hikes to see the tree.

Thank you for being a part of the Friends of Maybury State Park. 2026 will be another exciting year full of engaging programming and projects that enhance the park for all users. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be able to serve the community. For more information, please visit friendsofmaybury.org or contact us at mayburystateparkfriends@gmail.com. See you at the park!

The Maybury State Park Volunteer Board of Directors