

Loop-the-Lake Eco Fest – A Community Celebration

By Fred Peters

On June 13th, the Friends of Swan Lake Park hosted the “Loop-the-Lake Eco Fest”, an event in the park to increase community awareness and celebrate the biodiversity of Swan Lake Park. Activities included several children’s nature events, sale of native plants as well as birding, turtle and nature walks throughout the park.



Fred Peters, Danny Fantini and Danny’s 1929 Dodge Brothers firetruck.

Friends of Swan Lake Park raised over \$1,000 from event participants and donors and we thank Park People Canada for their \$2,000 grant to support our 2026 events. Our thanks to our event partners, Amica Swan Lake, the Markham Lions Club, York University Citizen Science Lab, and the Markham Urban Nature store for their support.

A special thank you to the Swan Lake Village residents who generously supported our efforts including Palette Club members Gayla Halkusis, Peter Anastasiades and Judy Cipin for their donations of original artwork and to local nature photographers Cindy Fowler, Phil Walton and Kathleen Noel who contributed their work as prizes for our donor draw and to Danny Fantini for bringing his 1929 Dodge Brothers firetruck.



Gayla Halkusis with the “The Dock at Swan Lake”

Markham Council Recognizes FOSLP’s Contribution

At Loop-the-Lake Eco Fest event, Mayor Frank Scarpitti, on behalf of Markham Council, presented a certificate of appreciation to Friends of Swan Lake Park which states:

“In recognition of your dedication to protecting and restoring Swan Lake and its surrounding parkland, and your commitment to environmental stewardship through community engagement and education. We commend your leadership in raising

awareness of habitat restoration and fostering conservation through initiatives such as the Loop-the-Lake Eco Fest, which unites the community in support of a healthier ecosystem.

On behalf of the City of Markham, we extend our sincere gratitude to the Friends of Swan Lake Park for your valuable contributions to environmental conservation and community engagement”.



(L-R) Regional Councillor Alan Ho, FOSLP leaders Andy Allen, Kathleen Noel, Julie Yeager, Fred Peters, Toronto Nature Stewards leader Marta Donnelly and Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Markham Approves \$900,000 5-Year Water Quality Program

In June 2026, Markham Council approved a \$900,000 budget for an updated Phase 2 water quality program for Swan Lake that will help sustain water quality over the next 5 years of a 25-year plan. The initial 5-year Phase 1 water quality management program resulted in significant improvements in water quality, but staff have advised Council of the need for a continual management program to maintain lake conditions.

To strengthen the habitat in the park, FOSLP has initiated a Nature Stewards program to identify and remove invasive plant species and replanting of the area with native species. We are following the approach of the Toronto Nature Stewards, volunteers who help manage over 50 parks throughout Toronto. Markham staff are reviewing our proposal. We hope to be able to start the removal of invasive plant species in 2027 but in the meantime are kept busy taking inventory of the plants throughout the park.