

Dear Friends:

Thank you for supporting the *Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park*. We hope you will renew your membership, or join for the first time. Members receive a discount card for our merchandise in the State Park Office. Memberships run March to March; if you join now, we'll extend your membership through March 2024.

We are a chapter of the *Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation* (PPFF) which has four dozen similar groups across PA. Friends volunteers and supporters provide some "value added" to State Parks and State Forests which serve the public using limited resources and personnel.

Our Friends group fosters volunteerism and supports education, recreation and conservation at Pine Grove Furnace State Park. Since 2010 we have improved the park for hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, with a notable spike in visitation during the pandemic (in 2020 more than 379,000, and in 2021 more than 350,000 — that's a lot of people for a park of less than 700 acres). We expect the visitor total for 2022, when available, will be similar. Pine Grove Furnace is a busy park, all year round!

Despite restrictions due to the pandemic, over the past few years we have been able to host a variety of outdoor events including history tours and a concert by musician-storyteller Van Wagner. We assisted the park with special volunteer efforts such as Earth Day, and except for 2020 have been able to continue the very popular Fall Furnace Fest — this year it will be October 21-22, always during the third full weekend of that month.

In 2022 we focused on history, hiking and conservation. We continue to work with DCNR to repair existing "wayside" displays and create new ones to better interpret the 250-year story of Pine Grove Furnace as first an industrial center then as a tourist destination since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. We also help maintain our park's hiking trails (excluding the Appalachian Trail), and purchase and help plant native vegetation. For example, last year we paid for new hemlock trees for the Group Campground after a 9-decade-old white pine plantation was removed for camper safety. The Friends financially supported native habitat restoration along Mountain Creek near Fuller Lake, led by the Michaux Forest Association. We also supported an Eagle Scout project to restore the old log building on Fuller Field, formerly a concession stand and lifeguard shack (now used only for storage).

We continue to cut, split and stack wood — selling firewood in the Family Campground is not simply a fundraiser for our group and a service to campers; locally sourced wood avoids long-distance movement of forest pests and pathogens. The Friends group supports special efforts such as Earth Day, National Public Lands Day, and Woodsy Owl. We are grateful for the volunteers who help maintain trails, remove invasive plants, and hold major events.

Our regular fundraisers include Fall Furnace Fest including the pumpkin float and Hairy Hand story at Fuller Lake; the Iron Run half-marathon and 5k; campground firewood sales; and merchandise sales. If you or someone you know is able to assist by volunteering for Fall Furnace Fest (weekend of October 21-22) or the Iron Run (Saturday June 10), please contact us at [PGFvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:PGFvolunteers@gmail.com).

Your membership helps Pine Grove Furnace State Park continue to be one of the best State Parks in Pennsylvania. Thanks for your support! As a chapter of the PA Parks and Forests Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, donations to *Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park* are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Sincerely,



André Weltman

Chairman, *Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park*

[PineGroveFriends@gmail.com](mailto:PineGroveFriends@gmail.com)

[www.FriendsofPineGrove.org](http://www.FriendsofPineGrove.org)

Visit us on Facebook: search [Friends-of-Pine-Grove-Furnace-State-Park](https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Pine-Grove-Furnace-State-Park)



**PLEASE NOTE OUR  
NEW WEBSITE**  
(Our email addresses  
remain the same)

Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park is a chapter of Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation (PPFF), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization -- contributions to which are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration of PPFF may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

## **Volunteer Events at Pine Grove Furnace State Park in 2023**

**Earth Day – Saturday, April 22** Volunteers needed for trail maintenance and other tasks to prepare the park for the busy Summer season.

**Woodsy Owl – date to be determined:** A morning volunteering in the park to remove invasive plants and other tasks. For the schedule, check with the Park Office in the Spring.

**Iron Run & Charcoal Challenge – Saturday, June 10:** Annual fundraisers, the *Iron Run Half-Marathon* trail run and *Charcoal Challenge* 5k run/walk. Participate as a volunteer or as a runner. Full information and a weblink for race registration will be posted on our Friends website by the end of February. Volunteers are needed: email [PGFvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:PGFvolunteers@gmail.com).

**National Public Lands Day – Saturday, September 23:** Volunteers needed to help maintain trails and structures in the park, and replace invasive plants with natives.

**Fall Furnace Fest – weekend of October 21-22:** Join us for a two-day family-oriented event with live music, craft & food vendors, history demonstrations, pumpkin carving, scarecrow making, hay wagon rides, and the pumpkin float and legendary story of the “Hairy Hand” at Fuller Lake. Most activities are free. Volunteers are needed: email [PGFvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:PGFvolunteers@gmail.com).

**Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities:** Volunteers are not just limited to helping during specific organized events. Throughout the year volunteers are needed to work on new or ongoing park projects and environmental education programs. Whether you are one person or 25, we can use your help. Please call the State Park Office to set-up a volunteer work day and talk about possible projects: 717-486-7174.

**Volunteer Registration:** The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has created a *Conservation Volunteer Database* as a way to solicit volunteers and keep track of their time. This is an important tool for Pine Grove Furnace to document the number of volunteer hours throughout the year. To sign up as a volunteer at Pine Grove Furnace or any other State Park or Forest, please visit the DCNR website and complete the volunteer application at [www.volunteers.dcnr.state.pa.us](http://www.volunteers.dcnr.state.pa.us)

Visit us on Facebook, or at our **NEW website:** [www.FriendsofPineGrove.org](http://www.FriendsofPineGrove.org)  
Email us at [PineGroveFriends@gmail.com](mailto:PineGroveFriends@gmail.com) and [PGFvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:PGFvolunteers@gmail.com)

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