



Friends of Pine Grove Furnace S.P.
1100 Pine Grove Road
Gardners, PA 17324
January 2025

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 for our merchandise sold in the State Park Office. Memberships run from March to March; if you join now, we'll extend your membership through March 2026. We offer "Lifetime" memberships in addition to Individual memberships (\$10 per year) and Family (\$15 per year). Lifetime memberships are \$200 for individuals and \$300 for families.

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

Since 2010 our Friends group has fostered volunteerism and supported recreation, education and conservation at Pine Grove Furnace State Park, a very busy spot in the South Mountain region. Over the past decade Pine Grove Furnace averaged over 350,000 visits annually, quite a lot for a park of less than 700 acres.

One of our major activities each year is working with State Park staff to hold the Fall Furnace Fest which saw record attendance in 2024. The fun-filled two-day family event includes craft and food vendors, history demonstrations including making candles, apple cider and charcoal, hayrides, live music, scarecrow making and pumpkin carving, and the famous pumpkin parade and pumpkin float on Fuller Lake with the Legend of the Hairy Hand. The festival is always the 3rd full weekend of October – so in 2025 it will be **Saturday and Sunday, October 18-19**. Hope to see you there!

We are always looking for volunteers to help us with major events like Fall Furnace Fest, as well as trail maintenance and other park improvements. If you can help us help the park, please send us an email at PGFvolunteers@gmail.com

We also hope to see you around the park for the annual First Day Hike (this past January 1, we hosted 156 people), the Earth Day volunteer cleanup on Saturday April 26, and National Public Lands Day volunteer activities on Saturday September 27. We also support numerous educational activities and free concerts in the park, mostly during the busy season from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekends. Last year we supported three free family-friendly events by singer-storytellers Van Wagner and Matthew Dodd. In 2025 Matthew Dodd will return for two concerts in the Amphitheater off Bendersville Road, on May 24 and July 5. Please look for monthly schedules shared by email and posted on park kiosks and on Facebook, and the DCNR online calendar at https://events.dcnr.pa.gov/pine_grove_furnace_state_park.

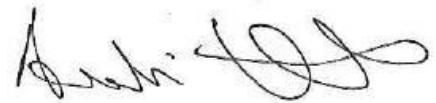
In 2025 we will continue to work with DCNR to improve "wayside" displays to help interpret the 250-year story of Pine Grove Furnace as first an industrial center then as a tourist destination. We also help with removal of invasive plants like barberry, and replacement with native vegetation – including financial support of native habitat restoration along Mountain Creek led by the Michaux Forest Association.

We continue to cut, split and stack firewood for sale in the Family Campground. This is not just a fundraiser; it's a service to campers so they have wood readily available when they arrive. Plus, using only *locally sourced* wood avoids long-distance movement of forest pests and pathogens that can be hiding in wood brought by visitors. Volunteers are needed for splitting, typically Monday mornings when the weather allows.

Thanks to memberships, donations, money raised during special events, and the sale of firewood and merchandise, the Friends have been able to contribute substantial amounts of money to Pine Grove Furnace State Park. We recently tallied our expenditures on park programs and infrastructure since we were founded in 2010. It came to more than \$350,000! That includes our direct funds as well as a few grants we obtained for major projects such as the hiking bridge installed in 2020 to connect Koppenhaver and Mountain Creek Trails at Old Railroad Bed Road.

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. Won't you please join us?

Sincerely,



Andre Weltman, Chairman
PineGroveFriends@gmail.com
www.FriendsofPineGrove.org
www.Facebook.com

“Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park”



Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation is 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 PA Dept. of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.