



FRIENDS OF

# Pine Grove Furnace News

STATE PARK Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation

SPRING 2019

[www.pinegrovefriends.org](http://www.pinegrovefriends.org) • 1100 Pine Grove Road, Gardners, PA 17324 • [pinegrovefriends@gmail.com](mailto:pinegrovefriends@gmail.com)

## Kayak Launch at Laurel Lake

The kayak programs offered at Laurel Lake by both staff and volunteers have been very popular. The programs have included beginning kayak, historical tours, and bird watching. Although you do not have to have a lot of experience kayaking for any of the programs, one of the challenges for young and old alike has been getting into the kayaks.

To make it easier for everyone to get into the kayaks, the Friends have purchased a kayak launch for Laurel Lake. Park staff are installing the launch between the boat concession area and Laurel Lake beach. Watch the event schedule for more information of the kayak programs including beginning kayak, historical tours, and bird watching.



Park staff push the kayak launch into position at Laurel Lake

## Van Wagner Returns to Pine Grove Furnace State Park

After a very successful performance last year, the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park have invited Pennsylvania folk musician, storyteller, and singer Van Wagner to return to Pine Grove Furnace later this summer.

Join Van Wagner for a performance at the Furnace Stack Pavilion on Sunday, August 25 at 1 p.m.



Van Wagner's music and stories are about Pennsylvania history. He has released 23 original albums and published a book titled *Coal Dust, Rust & Saw Dust*.

Bring the entire family and your lawn chairs for this performance!



## Golf Cart



The Friends purchased an electric golf cart for the volunteer campground hosts to use for making their rounds through the campground.

The cart will also come in handy for the volunteers managing Fall Furnace Fest!

*Roberta and Bob have been volunteering as campground hosts for several years*

## Iron Run / Charcoal Challenge Trail Races

Online registration for the June 8 Charcoal Challenge 5K (run or walk) and the more challenging Iron Run Half Marathon trail race will be open until June 3. Usually about 250 runners participate in the races. Timing is provided by Pretzel City Sports, and the Friends provide a variety of pre- and post-race snacks. This is a fun event for both the participants and the volunteers.

Online registration is available through [www.Runreg.com](http://www.Runreg.com), or same day registration opens 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 8.

If you are interested in volunteering to help out with the water stations, road crossings, and registration, email us at [pgfvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:pgfvolunteers@gmail.com).

## LEADERSHIP

Andre Weltman, *Chair*  
Mary Soderberg, *Vice Chair*  
Josh Burleigh, *Treasurer*  
Diane Velozo, *Secretary*  
Crystal Hunt  
Rob Shaw  
Brett Weiser  
Donna Weiser

## OUR MISSION

*The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park (FOPGF) exists to keep history alive and promote educational and recreational programs at the park and surrounding areas through special events and trail development while protecting the park's natural resources.*

### Email us at:

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

### Visit us online at:

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

### Follow us on Facebook at:

[Friends-of-Pine-Grove-Furnace-State-Park](https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Pine-Grove-Furnace-State-Park)

*The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park (FOPGF) was formed in August 2010 as a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). PPFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions to PPFF are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.*

## Infrastructure Needs in our Parks and Forests

Did you know that the acreage of our state parks and forests is *twice the size of the state of Delaware*? We are fortunate to have an amazing network of parks and forests in Pennsylvania—about 40 million people visit our parks every year.

Last year, out of concern that our parks might be being “loved to death”, the PA Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF) compiled a report on the infrastructure needs of our parks and forests. According to the report, “The Legacy of Pennsylvania’s State Parks and Forests: The Future is in Our Hands”, the infrastructure associated with our parks and forests system is massive. Within the 2.5 million acres of parks and forests, there are 3,000 miles of roads; 8,000 miles of trails; 864 bridges; 3,912 boat slips; 6,537 camp sites; and more than 30,000 picnic tables!

Even our own Pine Grove Furnace State Park has infrastructure issues. The staff works very hard to keep the park clean and welcoming for everyone to enjoy, but like many state parks, some of the infrastructure is old and requires constant maintenance. The water main for the park has broken several times in the last two years. The six-inch cast iron pipe is more than fifty years old and serves the entire park; a serious break would force the closure of many of the park’s facilities.

There are a number of historical buildings and structures in the park which require constant upkeep. Just this winter, a small portion of the kitchen ceiling in the Ironmaster’s Mansion collapsed, revealing the 1829 wood lathing behind the plaster.

This all takes time and money. Today there are fewer staff working in our parks and forests than in 1970 when there were 44 fewer parks. The backlog in maintenance of infrastructure projects is estimated to be \$1 billion. Funds that had once been used for maintenance are now being used to supplement operating expenses. According to the PPFF report, DCNR needs about \$100 million per year of regular and predictable investments in its infrastructure and sufficient staff to maintain its facilities.

PPFF has shared the infrastructure report with the Governor and the General Assembly. Please reach out to your state elected officials to let them know the importance of investing in our parks and forests.



**FOLLOW US**  
ON FACEBOOK

To keep up with the State Park and the Friends, follow us on Facebook. The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park Facebook page is a team effort of volunteers and park staff to provide you information about the park and the region.

## —Activity Calendar 2019—

### MAY

18 Woodsy Owl Weekend—two nights of free camping in exchange for a morning of volunteering.

### JUNE

8 9<sup>th</sup> annual fundraiser trail races—Iron Run Half Marathon and Charcoal Challenge 5K run/walk.

### AUGUST

25 Pennsylvania folk musician Van Wagner will present a one-hour program at 1 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER

28 National Public Lands Day—a morning of volunteering followed by a potluck lunch.

### OCTOBER

19-20 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Furnace Fest—a family weekend with food and craft vendors, entertainment, and historical demonstrations. Saturday night will feature the annual pumpkin parade and the Legend of the Hairy Hand.

• For more information and updates, go to [www.pinegrovefriends.org/home/upcoming\\_events](http://www.pinegrovefriends.org/home/upcoming_events). •

# Earth Day

Earth Day has become a joint effort of the park and the Friends every year. This year, more than 60 volunteers signed up to help plant 30 white pine trees, spread mulch, improve trails, remove invasive vegetation, and do a little weeding. In addition to leading some of the volunteer crews, the Friends purchased the trees and the mulch.

After a morning of volunteering, everyone gathered for a potluck lunch hosted by the Friends.

