



FRIENDS OF

# Pine Grove Furnace News

STATE PARK Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation

WINTER 2022

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

## FIRST DAY HIKE 2022

First Day Hikes have become a tradition at Pine Grove Furnace State Park. This year the weather was pretty wet, but that did not stop 41 hikers from spending New Year's Day on the trails of Pine Grove Furnace. The group, accompanied by four dogs, covered about three miles on the Hiker-Biker-A.T., Mountain Creek, and Koppenhaver Trails with a stop at the remains of the Girl Scout swimming pool built in 1934.

The afternoon began with hot beverages and snacks as Debbie Laughman of the DCNR central office talked about First Day Hikes held in state parks throughout the country since 2012. More than fifty hikes were held in Pennsylvania alone! Many thanks to Andre Weltman and Rob Shaw of the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace for organizing and leading this popular hike.



*The wet and dreary weather did not dampen the enthusiasm for taking a hike on January 1, 2022!*

## SALES BY THE FRIENDS SUPPORT THE PARK



The Friends group raises funds to support environmental, educational, and recreational programs in a number of ways. One of our biggest fundraisers is the sale of firewood at the Family Campground. In 2021, we netted more than \$12,000 through the efforts of our volunteers who spent about 200 hours splitting, stacking, and hauling firewood.

*The Friends woodshed is conveniently located in the Family Campground*

## FIREWOOD \$5

Sold by the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

All proceeds stay at this park to support environmental, educational & recreational programs throughout the year.

Another way we raise money is through the sale of merchandise including clothing, books, and maps. Popular items include our annual patches for \$5 each. The first patch was a way to promote the 100th anniversary of our park. The 2022 patch features a young raccoon along Old Railroad Bed Road. Stop by the Park Office to see all ten of our annual patches and perhaps start your own collection.



While you are at the Park Office, check out the lovely ceramic mugs handmade by Marcy Prejean, a local artist. The mugs feature pine trees on one side and the name of our park on the other side. Please note that merchandise sales in the Park Office are *cash or check only*; sorry no credit cards.

*Each handmade mug is slightly different from the others*



*The 2022 Annual Patch is now available for sale in the Park Office*

## 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)

*Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park formed in August 2010 as a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Official registration may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

## 2022 WITH THE FRIENDS OF PINE GROVE FURNACE STATE PARK

We have all learned over the last two years that we need to remain flexible with scheduling. That said, below are the major events planned for 2022. Please check the DCNR calendar online, the monthly schedule on park kiosks, and the Friends' Facebook page for updates.

**EARTH DAY, SATURDAY, APRIL 23:** Volunteers needed to help with trail maintenance, planting trees, and other tasks to help improve the park.

**WOODSY OWL, A SATURDAY IN MAY:** A morning of volunteering in the park to remove invasive plants and other tasks. Please check the schedule at the Park Office for more information later this spring.

**IRON RUN AND CHARCOAL CHALLENGE, SATURDAY, JUNE 11:** The annual Friends fundraiser foot races—the Iron Run Half-Marathon trail run and the Charcoal Challenge 5K run/walk—return in 2022. Online registration via RunReg.com will open at the end of February. Volunteers are needed for registration and checkpoints.

**NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24:** Volunteers are needed to help maintain trails and structures in the park and to replace invasive plants with natives.

**FALL FURNACE FEST, OCTOBER 15 AND 16:** A fun family weekend with food and craft vendors, entertainment, and historical demonstrations. Saturday night will feature the annual pumpkin parade followed by the Legend of the Hairy Hand. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Diane at [pgfvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:pgfvolunteers@gmail.com).



Scan QR code for more information on park events

– or go to –

[https://events.dcnr.pa.gov/pine\\_grove\\_furnace\\_state\\_park](https://events.dcnr.pa.gov/pine_grove_furnace_state_park)



Scan QR code to join the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace and to help support our state park.



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.

## THE 2020 TRAIL BRIDGE HAS BEEN POPULAR

Across the country, many people used parks as an outdoor respite during the pandemic. In 2021 we had over 350,000 visits. As people explored our state park, the pedestrian bridge between Koppenhaver and Mountain Creek Trails allowed various new loops and connections.

Chris Houck, our Park Manager, recently noted: *"I have received a lot of positive feedback about the bridge and easy access to Koppenhaver Trail. Aside from how great everything looks, people comment that the new trailhead makes it easier to access an area they were not familiar with."*

In order to better understand how the new bridge was being used, we attached a trail counter to it on July 1, 2021. The use of the bridge exceeded our expectations. In the last six months of 2021, there were 20,745 crossings of the bridge, or an average of 3,457 per month. We plan to keep the counter in place into this summer to give us data for an entire 12-month period.



As part of the First Day Hike, participants crossed Mountain Creek on the 2020 trail bridge