



Preserving History and  
Nature at Valley Falls

Website: [friendsofvalleyfalls.org](http://friendsofvalleyfalls.org)

Facebook: The Friends of Valley  
Falls, Inc Vernon CT

***Dear Members and Friends,***

It was picture-perfect weather for opening day of Season 2024 of the Valley Falls Farm and Heritage Center! On June 8, more than 40 visitors from Vernon, Tolland, East Hartford, and East Windsor stopped by to learn more about the Farm and the people who once lived there. If you haven't made it to the Heritage Center yet, it's open 1-4 pm every Sunday in July and August, and Sept. 8, weather permitting. Enjoy the grounds, bring a picnic, and check out the historic buildings. New this summer: a guided tour from 2-3 pm every Sunday!



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### ***Park News***

The Mary Glenn memorial bench in Valley Falls Park has received a refresh with new wood and paint. Friends volunteer Bob Letendre fitted the bench with some new wood after priming and painting the boards, while Lynn Lusardi cleared the brush that had grown around the sitting area. Mary was one of the seven founding members of the Friends of Valley Falls who met weekly at Park with their children in tow. Mary's daughters Betsy and Jess continue to support the Friends and have many happy memories of those early days in Valley Falls Park.

The quote on Mary's bench is from American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; For indeed, that's all who ever have."



*Refurbished Mary Glenn Bench*



*Mary's daughters, Betsy and Jess at the bench*

## Heritage Center Updates



Our revised Heritage Center Walking Guide has a new look! The hand-drawn map received a nice update, thanks to Austin Bach, Bob & Ann Letendre's grandson. A graphic designer, Austin also designed the



*Austin Bach working in stable - July 2020*

interpretive panels in the outbuildings at the Heritage Center (the red barn, piggery, ice house and manure shed). During Covid he also spent a summer month at the Farm helping to prepare the exhibit areas in the Heritage Center. Thank you once again, Austin, for all your contributions to our Heritage Center.

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### Heritage Center History – The Tack Room

Walk into the tack room in the stable and you'll be amazed at how many reins, bridles, and brushes were found there when the Friends began cleaning the entire building. Tack rooms are generally built to store equipment needed to groom and ride horses. The tack room in the stable had been left intact with its original paint, so we decided to leave it in this original state as an exhibit for the Heritage Center. Displayed items in the room include an early 20<sup>th</sup> century telephone that was left

on the wall, leaving us to wonder how it was used there. No evidence of telephone wiring is found.



The stable, with its impressive interior, including four stalls, a carriage room and the tack room, was built by Count Munchow in 1911 for his riding horses. He is remembered in local history books for the impressive image he struck as he rode through the

center of Rockville, perched on his horse and carriage, his Great Dane by his side. He later went into debt and mysteriously disappeared, leaving his wife to clear up the finances. Come visit and learn the whole story!

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### **Volunteer Spotlight**

We have great volunteers who donate their time to serve as tour guides, greeters, building cleaners, and grounds assistants at the Farm and Heritage Center. But we could use more help. If you want to volunteer with the Friends, we'd love to have you.



Volunteer opportunities include: museum greeters and docents, publicity and newsletter assistants, exhibit assistants, grant writers, clerical and computer assistance, building cleaners and maintainers,

landscape and garden maintainers, touch-up painting, carpentry and exterior building maintenance. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Lynn

Lusardi by phone or email if you'd like to help: 860-930-2451 or llusardi9@gmail.com

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### **Annual Meeting - Save the Date!**

Hope you can attend our 2024 Annual Meeting to be held **1-3 pm September 29** in the Red Barn. Brief business meeting followed by speaker Jane Seymour, who will talk about ways to make your yard friendly to pollinators, and simple ways you can help our environment.



*Bev York was our speaker at last year's annual meeting*

Jane, a Wildlife Biologist with the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, manages the state's Belding and Tankerhoosen Wildlife Management areas in Vernon.

We are very fortunate to have these two wildlife areas that preserve 730 acres of open space, and allow the public to enjoy peaceful hiking and fishing along the Tankerhoosen River. All are welcome to attend the meeting; join us for an interesting talk and light refreshments.

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### **Heritage Center Calendar**

#### **July 28:**

- 1-4 pm self-guided tours
- 2-3 pm docent-led tour with Nancy

#### **Aug 4:**

- 1-4 pm self-guided tours
- 1-4 pm photograph exhibit by local photographer, Tom Ouellette
- 2-3 pm docent-led tour with Denise

#### **Aug. 11:**

- 1-4 pm self-guided tours

2-3 pm docent-led tour with Don

**August 18:**

1-4 pm self-guided tours and sale of Valley Falls t-shirts, notecards, posters

2-3 pm docent-led tour with Jean

**August 25:**

1-4 pm self-guided tours

2-3 pm docent-led tour with Nancy

**September 8:**

1-4 pm self-guided tours and sale of Valley Falls t-shirts, notecards, posters

1-4 pm Photograph exhibit by local photographer, Tom Ouellette

1-4 pm Special Program: The Bug Lady (aka Miss Jan) will be in the Red Barn to talk about Beneficial Bugs and Pollinators, and help kids and adults decorate their own beneficial bug using pre-made templates and craft supplies.

2-3 pm docent-led tour with Denise

**September 29:** Annual Meeting 1-3 pm in the Red Barn

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**Membership Renewal Time!**

July is renewal month for annual memberships. Please renew your annual support of the Friends of Valley Falls, or join if you are not yet a member. To join or renew, visit our website, [www.friendsofvalleyfalls.org](http://www.friendsofvalleyfalls.org). Go to "membership/donations", or send us an email, using the form at the bottom of the home page. Thank you for your support!

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**Photo Finish**



*"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe around us, the less taste we have for destruction."*

Rachel Carson

***Stay in Touch!***

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