



Preserving History and
Nature at Valley Falls

Website: friendsofvalleyfalls.org

Facebook: The Friends of Valley
Falls, Inc Vernon CT

Dear Members and Friend

Wishing you a Happy New Year! Time flies, and as impossible as it may seem, 2025 represents our third year of being open as a Heritage Center. As always, your support, financially and in volunteer hours, is the reason the Friends of Valley Falls can continue to preserve history and nature.

A Sign for the Times

Exciting news! The Valley Falls Heritage Center sign has been installed at the corner of Bolton and Valley Falls roads. It's a great way to help



FVF volunteers Bob Felber & Bill Daric

promote the museum and the historic style of the sign complements the property. The sign was designed to be compatible with the one in front of Valley Falls Farm, and its beautiful metal hanging bracket gives it a vintage look.

On to Season Three

Opening day for the Valley Falls Farm and Heritage Center is June 14, but we'll kick off the season with a May 4 bird walk at Valley Falls Park, followed by flower and history walks later that month. This year we'll also hold our popular Artist's Day on September 7, when artists of all skill levels are invited to come out to the property, set up an easel and paint the beautiful outdoor vistas.



During a guided tour, volunteer Tom O

The new docent-led tours at the Heritage Center were a great success, and we hope to build on that with special topics about the farm and Valley Falls area being presented by these wonderful volunteers.

With six buildings to explore - each filled with items once used on the farm - the Heritage Center is the perfect place to learn more about the history of the area while enjoying the beautiful property. The eight acres are always open to those who want to enjoy a picnic lunch, read a book, sketch or photograph the property, or just sit and appreciate nature.

Thank you for your support as the Friends of Valley Falls remain committed to preserving the history and natural beauty of Valley Falls Farm and its Heritage Center, and to sharing this unique property.

A Successful Season



This year's Annual Meeting, held Oct. 29 in the Red Barn, was a great end to the season and helped to recognize those who ensured a successful second season at the farm and heritage center. During the short business meeting, it was

reported that 220 visitors came to the Heritage Center, which was open Sundays during the months of June and September. Bad weather caused us to close on two Sundays, but the Friends were pleased to see people visiting for the first time, as well as those back for a return visit.

The business meeting included a report from our beekeeper, Allan Valli, and a summary on the Bluebird Project managed by volunteer Sheryl McMullen. According to Sheryl's report, the 13 boxes on Valley Falls Farm successfully fledged 16 bluebirds this past summer.

Guest speaker Jane Seymour, a Wildlife Biologist with the Department of Environmental and Energy Protection, wrapped up the meeting by providing us with great information on how to attract birds, butterflies, and friendly insects to backyards. Her suggestions support the Friends' mission of preserving history and nature.

We Love Our Volunteers!



Bruce Dinnie & son Brian work on the walkway in front of the farmhouse.

A huge thank you to Building and Grounds Committee chair, Bruce Dinnie and his son Brian, for all the projects they recently accomplished this past year at the Farm and Heritage Center. In addition to cleaning the buildings and organizing our storage shed, removing invasive catalpa trees,

planting a new flower garden, and an eight-foot tulip tree, they enhanced the front walkway with sedum and decorative rock. Previously overgrown, the walkway was initially weeded and cut back by volunteers Lynn Lusardi and Nancy Steffens. As a result, the new look now showcases the vintage stone wall and provides a clear pathway for walking. Bruce (who is also a Board member) and his son Brian, are great examples of why the Friends value and truly appreciate its volunteers!

Out and About



Lynn Lusardi & Lisa Ouellette did double duty, representing Valley Falls Farm & Heritage Center, and Vernon Greenways, talking about volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers with the Friends of Valley Falls had a great time at the October Volunteer Fair at the Vernon Senior Center. The Friends joined other non-profit organizations in town, including Vernon Greenways, Arts Center East, the Vernon Historical Society, Civil War Museum, and Strong Family Farm.

Thanks to the Senior Center for hosting, as it allowed the Friends to connect with several people interested in helping out at the Heritage Center. Interests included providing research or grant assistance, lending a hand with building and grounds maintenance, and serving as greeters at the Heritage Center.

If you'd like to volunteer at the Valley Falls Farm and Heritage Center or want more information on how you could help, please call Ann at 860-875-4623 or Nancy at 860-614-9957.

Young Historians

We had a lot of fun in September when students taking part in a Vernon Youth Services program visited the Heritage Center. According to Program Coordinator Lauren Meares, the "Homeschool Hangouts" program is designed to promote positive youth development and includes field trips and activities for local home school families. Approximately 15 students, plus parents, toured the buildings, learned a bit of Vernon history, and gained an understanding of life on a Gentleman's Farm in the early 1900s. Although open house days for the Heritage Center are typically held on Sundays, groups of eight or more are always welcome to contact the Friends of Valley Falls by website or Facebook to inquire about individual tours.



After Bob Letendre explains how the pigs were housed, students rang the bell that was moved to the farm in the 1960s from Rockville's Springville Mill.

Photo Finish



Winter is still a great time to visit Valley Falls Park. Although it may be too cold now to relax near the pond, thanks to Friends of Valley Falls and Vernon Greenways volunteers, this bench near the water has been repaired and the brush around it

cleared to offer the perfect sitting spot. The bench is dedicated to Mary Glenn, founding member of the Friends of Valley Falls, and a treasured friend who donated her knowledge and countless hours to the park.

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The friends of Valley Falls, Inc Vernon CT

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