



## From the President

I hope you are all safe and healthy. A nice walk in our park really helps, doesn't it?

As I write this, the snow is melting, and while it's early March I have a feeling that we've passed the worst. I'm referring to both the gloom of winter and the pandemic.

There are lots of great things happening at Knox Farm! You can read about the activities at the "Guest House" in another article. Later in the spring we will be calling for volunteer painters, so stand by for that.

This spring work will begin to stabilize and re-furbish the red barns. This project is jointly funded by The Friends, Parks & Trails New York, and NYS Parks.

Please check out our new website: <https://www.friendsofknoxfarm.org/>. Many thanks to Kathleen York and Robin Shanahan for making this happen.

I am very optimistic for 2021, as we will be able to hold small weddings in the mansion starting in May. We had virtually no revenue last year due to the pandemic, yet we were able to invest in the park using our reserves. Now is the time to replenish, so please encourage your friends to join. The Friends Membership has been stagnant at <300 for the past few years. Thanks to everyone for your support.

Finally; I want to recognize Marcia McNallie, our long-time House Manager, who has moved to Ohio. We wish Marcia farewell, but not good-bye, because she has agreed to continue to manage the mansion, long distance for the next few months. Many thanks Marcia!



JERRY IRVING  
*President*

### Executive Director

KATHLEEN YORK

### Event & Venue Manager

MARCIA MCNALLIE

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# Executive Director's Report

Spring brings with it the promise of new possibilities, and this spring seems particularly hopeful. However, as we ease back into greater opportunities to work and play together, we do so, knowing that those opportunities will look a little different this year:

- Having a wedding this year? Guidelines seem to be revised on a weekly basis. We are doing our best to follow NYS mandates to ensure the safest gatherings possible while supporting our wedding couples. Our vendors are equally diligent and have been very helpful in keeping us informed and updated. We are currently focusing on our May weddings and expect those events happening in June and beyond to have updated guidelines. Patience is key...
- Hoping to support The Friends through one of our fundraisers?
  - Our Spring Wedding Show will be virtual this year. Please See Marcia's message below and join us on May 8th to support our wonderful Wedding Vendors.
  - Bark Bash? We hope so! VERY preliminary plans are starting. Stay tuned...
  - Holiday Arts and Crafts Show? No guarantees, but we have started discussing plans for an in-person event in the fall that will incorporate greater distancing opportunities.
  - We will be offering guided hay wagon rides throughout the park starting on May 7th and coordinating with other events throughout the summer.
- "I Love My Park Day" returns in 2021 on a modified level. We will be participating in this statewide day of volunteering to prepare our parks for the season. Attendance is limited, but a second day has been added. The park can accommodate 50 volunteers on each day; May 1st and May 2nd. Registration is now open at: [www.ptny.org/ilovemypark](http://www.ptny.org/ilovemypark).

And in other news...

While we cautiously await gathering opportunities, we will be making some big visible improvements throughout the park.

- As soon as the weather levels out, we will finally begin work on our greatly anticipated Barn Renovation Project. In partnership with NYS Parks, Recreation, and Historical Preservation, and with the help of a 2020 grant from Parks & Trails, NY, we will begin this project by focusing on the Heifer barn, Milk House, and small (formerly café) building. Siding replacement and painting will be the primary improvements on these buildings.
- If you walk around the area of the Mansion, you may have noticed a lot of activity around the adjacent Guest House. The Friends recently expanded our agreement with New York State to include management of the Guest House, and are in the process of bringing this building back to its original beauty. The progress on the restoration of this building is exciting, and details are below. Just a reminder: As we continue work on this building; it IS A CONSTRUCTION SITE. Please be respectful of the work crews and avoid entering the site; for your safety and theirs.
- The Knox Planting Program has been launched! With help from The Vogt Family Foundation, we have been able to implement a tree planting to program to benefit the park while offering a way to give tribute to loved ones as well as special memories. We have placed our spring order and look forward to planting over two dozen trees in May. If you are interested in purchasing a tree for the park, please refer to the flyer in this newsletter or on our website: <https://www.friendsofknoxfarm.org/plant-a-tree.html>.

All of these improvements have been made possible because of the incredible support received through The Friends of Knox Farm State Park. Your continued membership and donations create opportunities for grants as well as mutually beneficial partnerships with NYS Parks. If you know of someone who enjoys the park but is not a member; encourage them to join us! Enjoy Spring at the park!

KATHLEEN YORK  
*Executive Director*  
admin@friendsofknoxfarm.org

# A message from the Park Manager

Hello Friends! I've really enjoyed seeing so many of you out walking, skiing, snowshoeing and reveling in Knox Farm State Park this winter. Now, as we welcome warmer weather and longer days, I'm delighted to see even more of you coming to take respite in the park and indulge in all it has to offer.

As with every Spring when the snow melts, we're seeing lots of litter, mud, and work to do. When the ground dries out a bit more, we'll be closing one section of the dog park at a time while we aerate, seed, roll, and allow time for the turf to recover. Thank you for your patience while we accomplish Spring clean-up and a myriad of seasonal tasks as the weather and ground conditions allow.

In order to meet the needs of the coming season, I'm hoping to fill three vacant seasonal positions at Knox Farm this year.

- One "Carpenters Helper" position - moving and organizing materials and equipment, site clean-up and removing debris, operating basic hand tools, scraping and painting, and other general carpentry laborer duties, as well as assisting with other park needs as necessary and time allows.
- Two "general maintenance" positions - responsible for building and grounds maintenance including restrooms, garbage's, dog park, planting beds, weed whipping, and other duties.

The pay rate for those positions is \$12.50/hour. The dates are somewhat flexible and subject to change, but generally May through September. If you or someone you know may be interested in seasonal work at the park, please click [here](#) or call the park office for an application, (716) 652-0786. I also have open seasonal maintenance and Lifeguard positions at Evangola State Park. Please encourage anyone that may be interested in any of these opportunities to apply. I'd greatly appreciate you helping spread the word!

Looking ahead at the coming season, we have lots to accomplish. Park staff and regional maintenance forces will continue with interior and exterior renovations at the guesthouse, siding replacement and painting of the Sheep Barn, Milk House, and former "Farm Office" (small building next to the Milk house). We hope to replace the roof on the Milk House, complete the exterior painting of the park office and tackle a very long list of other smaller projects as well.

In closing, I want to thank you for your support of the Friends Group and Knox Farm State Park. The partnership between the Friends organization and the State of NY has grown and expanded and truly brings about great improvements at this place we love. I'm grateful for the positive relationship we have and look forward to making more progress as stewards of this beautiful park. That's all I have for now. Hope to see you all around the park!

ANDY HILLMAN  
*Park Manager*



Saturday, May 1 -  
Sunday, May 2, 2021



I LOVE  
MY PARK  
days  
[www.ptny.org](http://www.ptny.org)

Register to volunteer  
[www.ptny.org/ilovemypark](http://www.ptny.org/ilovemypark)



## *In lieu of flowers*

The Friends are grateful for members who opt to donate to the park when honoring loved ones. These memorial gifts make a lasting impact, and are a beautiful way to ensure that this remains a place to relax, recharge, and inspire. Tribute donations can be made on our [website](https://www.friendsofknoxfarm.org/donate.html) (link: <https://www.friendsofknoxfarm.org/donate.html>).

Simply click the “tribute” box towards the bottom of the page to let us know who you are remembering. Vikki Shantz shares why she donated to Knox Park below...



## **In Memoriam to Nancy Druelinger**

Knox Farm Park has a homestead adjacent to the farm on Knox Road. From the windows of this home my dear friend Nancy could look out and see the many deer, birds and other wildlife busying themselves in the fields and paths of the woods that lead to the Park. She and her eight siblings spent part of their young lives growing up there enjoying all the seasonal activities such as cross country skiing, hiking, biking, swimming in the pond, etc. as well as enjoying the beautiful sunrises and sunsets Knox Farm has to offer. That childhood home now belongs to her brother and his family. And still to this day this large, loving family continues to take advantage of the beautiful property hiking through the woods, picnicking by the pond, and playing the traditional broom hockey game at Christmas time.

Nancy had a zest for life, an energy that was contagious. She brought up three children whom she passed on her great love of the outdoors as well. And as a grandmother, she continued that role. She was interested in everything historical, taking me on a tour of Buffalo and East Aurora, regaling me in everything from the Industrial Revolution to the hometown stories of the town she loved. It was no wonder she became a docent with the Smithsonian! She was known in the community as a compassionate, caring individual helping those with disabilities and those that were victims of abuse.

Nancy fought a long battle with illnesses in her later years, but it never diminished her positive outlook nor her great sense of humor. She continued swimming and hiking with her family up until her last days. She will forever be remembered by those who knew her for being the kindest soul, spirited outdoor devotee, and supporter of the causes that meant so much to her. It is an honor to have contributed to the Park in her memory.

VIKKI SHANTZ  
*Friends of Knox Member*





# Garden Club News

Spring is here! Volunteering to help maintain the gardens around the mansion is the perfect way to enjoy the fresh air, make some new friends and beautify the park.

There are opportunities to garden with a group on Thursday mornings, or on your own schedule. We help the state keep the secret garden and the beds around the mansion looking great for brides, their guests and all park visitors to enjoy!

Whether you can dedicate a few hours a week or a few hours a year, we invite you to join us. We will be meeting on Thursday, April 8th at 10:30 am near the mansion to plan for the upcoming season and to coordinate our efforts with a few volunteer events happening in April and May.

If you would like more information or have questions, please contact Lisa at: [dlschiff@roadrunner.com](mailto:dlschiff@roadrunner.com).

LISA SCHIFFERLE  
*Friends of Knox Member*

**Help support the Garden Club by donating old garden tools. We'd be happy to put to use:**

- Gift Card to any area nursery- Support two places you love at the same time!
- Cordless leaf blower
- Cordless weed wacker
- Spear-head shovel
- Sturdy hand trowels
- Good quality hand pruners and loppers
- Neem oil
- Deer Stopper



# Guest House Update

The Friends of Knox Farm State Park has been busy, along with the outstanding help of the state park employees, to renovate the guest house. Since late fall, plumbing and electrical work has been steadily upgraded. Old baseboard heating was removed in preparation of the new HVAC system which is now underway with further planned work for the hot water system as well. The guest house committee has been securing donations of furnishings and interior decorations to provide a homey atmosphere as you look out onto the park property. The largest impact to date has been the tremendous work on the ceiling and interior preparation in the living room. A coffered ceiling was installed with recessed lighting and with the painting started, the room will be completed soon. While the interior work continues, the spring weather will afford us time to prep the exterior for a fresh coat of paint. Thanks to the Knox Farm employees for their great work. When renovation is complete we plan to rent out the rooms to wedding parties and other visitors to the park.



*Guest House coffered ceiling with lighting*

DAVID SCHIFFERLE  
*Board Member*



## Ever After - A Virtual Wedding Show

The Friends of Knox Farm is pleased to announce Ever After - A Virtual Wedding Show, taking place Saturday, May 8th from 10am – 2pm. The Facebook Event, <https://fb.me/e/3lsiQBGLC>, is a fundraiser for The Friends of Knox State Park, Inc. and all monies raised go to the betterment of the Park.

Our virtual event currently has eight vendors, four of which are sponsors. Big shout out to our sponsors: Knight Photography, Cardea Health Integrative, Creative Elegance Weddings and Frontier Catering. Thank you also to our other vendors; Services at Sunset, Bushel & A Peck Event Creative and Design LLC, McCarthy Tents & Events and DJ Michael Khoury. Please support these small businesses! Additional vendors are in the process of committing - stay tuned! Current vendors include a caterer, dessert caterer, photographer, wedding planner/coordinator, wedding design vendor, floral design vendor, DJ, band, wedding officiant, rental/tent company, hairstylist/makeup artist, glassware/giftware vendor and a spa.

Each vendor will supply its own video to be aired on the Facebook Event Page or will receive a free video of its services/products filmed at the mansion by a professional, Covid safe in the mansion. This video will be theirs to use in their own marketing. Anyone interested in being a vendor, please email Marcia at [info@themansionatknoxfarm.org](mailto:info@themansionatknoxfarm.org).

MARCIA MCNALLIE  
*Event & Venue Manager*

*Please share and spread the word!*



## 2021 Mansion Rental Season

This year appears as though it will be a very busy one at the mansion, even with Covid restrictions still in place. We currently have twenty-six weddings booked, along with Borderland's VIP Party. 2021 could be the year we bring in the most revenue ever.

We currently have nine weddings booked and eleven penciled in for 2022; a very positive outlook. There is also one wedding penciled in for 2023.

We are in dire need of mansion monitor volunteers this year. Volunteers ensure we secure more profit from rentals by saving us from having to hire monitors. Several monitors who have been volunteering for all eight seasons of mansion rentals can attest to how much fun it is, and the free meal is definitely an added bonus. Can you believe this is our ninth season? I can't! If you are interested, please email Marcia at [info@themansionatknoxfarm.org](mailto:info@themansionatknoxfarm.org).



## Hay Wagon Ride Fundraiser

Beginning Friday, May 7th at 2:00 pm, patrons of the park will have the opportunity to enjoy a COVID friendly hay wagon ride through the park. The tractor pulled tour will loop around the park trails and through the woods.

John Glenn, the former Knox Family Farm Manager, will narrate. He has extensive knowledge of the Knox Family and farm history and has been giving informal tours for years now.

The hay wagon rides will run every Friday as long as the ride fills to capacity. If the wagon is not filled, patrons will have the opportunity to reschedule. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under. Patrons can register online at <https://thefriendsoftknoxfarm.setmore.com>. The Friends of Knox reserves the right to cancel rides with the option to reschedule.

If you are interested in volunteering to check registration, drive the tractor or book a \$100 private ride for up to 10 people, please email Marcia at [info@themansionatknoxfarm.org](mailto:info@themansionatknoxfarm.org).

This is a fundraiser for The Friends of Knox State Park, Inc. All monies raised go to the betterment of the Park.



MARCIA MCNALLIE  
*Event & Venue Manager*

## Knox Nature News

Another interesting winter has passed, with the spring season on its way! From a natural perspective, this winter started off rather mild, with little snow and seemingly no hope for cooler snowy weather to enjoy. However, much of February made up for that as plenty of snow and cold was to be had for all!

As usual, we kicked off our winter programming in the park with our annual Knox Farm Christmas Bird Count, held on Saturday December 19th. Christmas Bird Counts are held nationwide between December 14th and Jan 5th and are the longest running community science projects in the nation. Data collected provides critical information to scientists about bird populations, species movements and even ecosystem health. For the Knox Farm count participants bird as a group and hike the trails for roughly 2 hours, recording all the species observed. For our 2020 count, we recorded 183 individual birds, represented by 17 species. Highlights of the count included a Carolina Wren (the first time we've recorded this species on our Christmas Bird Count), a Red-tailed Hawk, a flock of 25 Dark-eyed Juncos and 6 Eastern Bluebirds. The 2020 count was the second highest in terms of individual birds recorded, with our final tally of 183. Our 2016 count was the highest at 269 individual birds, represented by 17 species. Expected species that we missed for the 2020 count were Hairy Woodpeckers, Mourning Doves, Canada Geese and House Sparrows. A big thanks to those who participated!



*Carolina Wren*

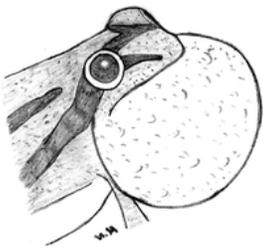
Jumping ahead to February, we hosted our third annual Great Backyard Bird Count on the 14th. This community science project invites birders to count birds for as little as 15 minutes on one or more days of the four-day event. Sightings are then reported online at [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org). As you might expect from the name, this is a great chance to take your love of watching your favorite backyard birds and contribute to real life science! Data collected helps biologists create a real-time snapshot of bird populations across the entire world. During our Knox Farm count, the group tallied 10 species and 23 individual birds during our 2 hour outing. Highlights of the count included a Red-tailed Hawk, 3 species of Woodpecker and observing a group of 3 Tufted Titmice fighting in the powdery snow.

If you're bummed you missed out on our birding programs, don't worry! Opportunities for birding in the park do not stop with the melting snow! This spring we are launching the parks first ever grassland bird monitoring project. Knox Farm is unique in that it has some of the best remaining grassland habitat in Western New York for grassland breeding birds, around 400 acres in total. Our monitoring will be conducted with point count surveys along 10 designated fields. Small teams will be assigned to a respective field and will record all the birds they hear and see during a 5 minute count period. Typically, each field will have 2 survey points for a total of 10 minutes survey time per field. Our hope is to reach a greater understanding of the diversity and extent of grassland bird species utilizing the park. For more information on getting involved, contact park naturalist Matt Nusstein, at [Matthew.Nusstein@parks.ny.gov](mailto:Matthew.Nusstein@parks.ny.gov).

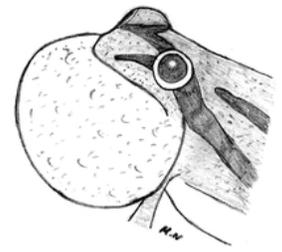
Enjoy the wonderful spring season in the park this year. With flowers at your feet and spring bird migration at its peak, there is plenty to enjoy.

MATT NUSSTEIN  
*Park Naturalist*





# Knox Farm State Park INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS Spring 2021



*Spring Peeper*

*Join a park naturalist on our free interpretive programs!  
All programs meet in the visitor parking area*

**Wednesday, April 7th**

7:30 p.m. — 9:30 p.m.

**In Search of the Labrador Twister**

Witness the marvelous display flight of the Labrador twister, Timberdoodle, Bogsucker and Mudsnipe, all names for our upland dwelling shorebird most people know as the Woodcock.

***Call 716-549-1050 to register***

**Saturday, April 24th**

10:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.

**Spring Ephemeral Wildflower Walk**



*Bloodroot*

Enjoy the sudden burst of color that carpets the forest floor before the new leaves of summer take hold.

***Call 716-549-1050 to register***

**Saturday, April 24th**

1:00 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.

**Springtime Bluebird Walk**



*Eastern Bluebird*

With over 400 acres of grasslands, Knox Farm is home to an incredible number of nesting Bluebirds. Join us as we monitor newly installed nest boxes and enjoy our state bird.

***Call 716-549-1050 to register***

**Wednesday, April 28th**

10:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.

**Fiddlehead Frolic**



*Sensitive Fern*

A walk through the woods to discover the unfurled fronds of a fern, otherwise known as fiddleheads!

***Call 716-549-1050 to register***

**Wednesday, April 28th**

1:00 p.m. — 3:00 p.m.

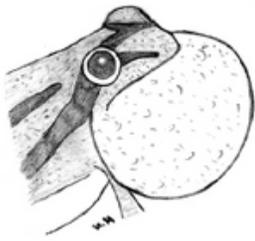
**What in the Woods is That?**



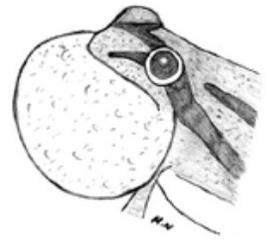
*Leaf of Baby Tooth Moss*

Delve into the world of the unknown, the world of lichens, mushrooms, mosses and plant galls!

***Call 716-549-1050 to register***



# Knox Farm State Park INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS Spring 2021



Spring Peeper

*Join a park naturalist on our free interpretive programs!  
All programs meet in the visitor parking area*

Saturday, May 15th

2:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.

Flowers n' Feathers

With spring bird migration at its peak, and flowers at your feet, take in the wonderment of spring as we walk through Knox Farm.

*Call 716-549-1050 to register*



Bobolink

Thursday, June 17th & 24th

8:00 a.m. — 10:00 a.m.

Grassland Bird Monitoring

Calling all birders! We need YOUR help in this community science project. Teams will conduct point count surveys for grassland bird species in Knox Farm. *Call 716-549-1050 or email coordinator Matt Nusstein at [Matthew.Nusstein@parks.ny.gov](mailto:Matthew.Nusstein@parks.ny.gov) to sign-up for a field team.*

Sunday, June 20th

9:00 p.m. — 10:30 p.m.

Dance of the Firefly

With fireflies to guide the way, set out to discover a light show unlike any other in the natural world.

*Call 716-549-1050 to register*



Firefly



Eastern Meadowlark

Please note that we do not allow pets on our programs unless otherwise specified.

This policy is in place as a courtesy to our program participants, as well as for their safety, those of the pets, and for the wildlife that we may encounter during the program. Thank you for your cooperation.

Friends of Knox State Park and NYS Parks Partnership:

# KNOX FARM PLANTING PROJECT

Improving the park one tree at a time

## HONOR A LOVED ONE- OR COMMEMORATE A SPECIAL EVENT.

### Plant a tree at the park:

Purchasing a tree as a gift to the park is the perfect way to remember special people and special occasions. Best of all, it supports the beauty and sustainability of the park. Your gift will be a lasting improvement to our landscape.

## WHY ARE WE LOSING TREES?

Many factors contribute to the need for trees at the park:

- Stress from insect infestations.
- Extreme weather conditions including drought, heavy rainfall and blizzards.
- Heavy recreational usage in certain areas.
- Natural attrition due to age and location.

## WHAT DOES MY TREE PURCHASE INCLUDE?

All donations are tax deductible and include:

- Cost of tree plus delivery, planting and maintenance.
- Tree wrap, stakes, irrigation bag, mulch.
- GPS coordinate of your tree once planted
- Engraved leaf plate to be placed on a memorial plaque inside Visitor's Center.

## DO I HAVE CHOICES?

Species and location decisions are ultimately a park decision:

Donors may choose between evergreen trees and deciduous trees. All trees planted at Knox will be mature, native species and will be planted within a pre-determined landscape plan. Plantings will occur twice a year; in the spring and fall. Species decisions may be determined due to seasonal availability.

**THIS PROGRAM IS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN NYS PARKS  
AND THE FRIENDS OF KNOX FARM STATE PARK, INC.**

Your stewardship of the park is greatly appreciated



Trees can be ordered online at:  
[www.friendsofknoxfarm.org](http://www.friendsofknoxfarm.org)

or mailed to:

Friends of Knox Farm State Park, Inc.  
P.O. Box 601, East Aurora, NY 14052

Questions? email: [admin@friendsofknoxfarm.org](mailto:admin@friendsofknoxfarm.org)



**Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation**

Friends - Please Share with anyone you may know who is looking for a unique venue to hold an event. Thank You!



WELCOME TO THE  
*Main House*  
AT KNOX FARM STATE PARK



This unique venue can be rented for  
weddings,  
corporate events,  
private parties,  
& fundraising events  
May through October.



For more information, availability and rates; please visit our website, [weddingsatknox.com](http://weddingsatknox.com)



## Friends, Please be Aware

A gentle reminder to please leash and clean up after your dog.



## Your Input Matters

We would like to hear from you. If you have thoughts about the park that you would like to share with the Friends Board of Directors and the readers of this newsletter, email them to us at [admin@friendsofknoxfarm.org](mailto:admin@friendsofknoxfarm.org) We will include them in a future issue of the newsletter as space permits.

### MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY \$40    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR \$20     | <input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT \$20   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PARTNER \$100   | <input type="checkbox"/> PREMIER \$300  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PATRON \$500    | <input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS \$250 |

For VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES or TO JOIN ONLINE

VISIT OUR WEBSITE [www.friendsofknoxfarm.org](http://www.friendsofknoxfarm.org)

\*Business members are listed and linked on our website

#### About The Friends of Knox Farm State Park:

The Friends of Knox Farm State Park, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation. Our primary mission is to promote, support, preserve and protect the recreational facilities, natural habitats, permanent green space and historic education programs and activities that develop an understanding and appreciation for the Park, nature and the environment. We work under a partnership with New York State Office of Parks and Recreation to facilitate our mission.