



Save the Date: Annual Meeting 2022

Attention members: Please mark Thursday May 19th on your calendars for our annual member's meeting. (This annual meeting date has been adjusted to better align with our financial year). On May 19th we will be conducting the meeting at the Mansion beginning at 5:30 pm. A very special member's only reception will take place at the Guest House (adjacent to the Mansion) following the meeting. We are excited to unveil almost two year's worth of work restoring this beautiful lodging, and want to share it with our members first. Light refreshments will be served.

Look for official meeting notice and proxy information in the mail mid-April.

Board Nominations (New annual meeting schedule!)

ATTENTION MEMBERS: Under the By-Laws of Friends of Knox Farm State Park, Inc., the Governance Committee of the Board of Directors is charged with the responsibility of recommending to the Board candidates for election to the Board at the May Annual Membership Meeting. Any member who wishes to be considered by the Committee for nomination, or who wishes to recommend a person to the Committee for consideration, should forward the name and resume of the prospective candidate to Kathleen York, the Friends' Executive Director, at the following address: P. O. Box 601, East Aurora, New York 14052 or at admin@friendsofknoxfarm.org.

Information should be submitted by April 5, 2022.

More Save the Date: Bark Bash is Back! Saturday August 6th, 2022

Vendors and NPO's please visit:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/barkbash2022>

Interested in volunteering? contact: rstepien1204@yahoo.com



Executive Director

KATHLEEN YORK

Director, Event & Facilities

MARCIA MCNALLIE

Board of Directors

JERRY IRVING

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DAVE SCHIFFERLE

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CHARLES KETTNER

LINDA LAMANNA

PAUL BATTAGLIA

ROBIN SHANAHAN

JODY VALDES

JACOB MERRILL

DAVE NORTON

“Resiliency; the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.”

This is how I describe our “Friends” group. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we have recovered. With the coming of spring I am very excited about how our Park, and The Friends will blossom this year.

First I want to look back on 2021 and recognize the many contributions by our staff, board and members.

- The Garden club beautified the grounds in spite of losing Parks personnel.
- We had more weddings last year than ever before!
- The summer Friday concert series, Borderland and the Holiday Craft Show really showed what a remarkable venue the Stables can be.
- The renovation of the Guest House is nearly complete, and it will be a marvelous attraction!
- At our annual meeting the Board created a new award, The “Betsy Graves Volunteer of the Year” award. Betsy was a dedicated Friend and Board member. We had so many great volunteers, that for the first award we had to recognize 3 of them; Martha Augat, Charlie Kettner and Dave Schifferle. They have been the driving forces for the Guest House Project. We also had great support from the East Aurora Rotary Club’s Pat Shea who organized volunteers to help with painting the Guest House. It looks great! We thank them all.
- Sadly we lost one of our most dedicated volunteers Barry Darin who passed away last fall. You will be sorely missed Barry!
- I especially want to thank our terrific staff, Kathleen York and Marcia McNallie. In August the mansion was converted into a movie set and Kathleen spent >60 hours a week supporting that activity. That’s just one example of how hard she works for us.
- Marcia pulled off the biggest and best Craft show in our history along with the aforementioned boom in weddings. We are blessed to have them both.
- Jody Valdes lead our Strategic Planning refresh which we will be sharing at our next Annual meeting. By the way, we have moved the Annual meeting to May from October, so that when we present our financial reports they aren’t nearly a year old. Please look out for the Annual Meeting notice. The date is set for May 19th.

Board member Alexis Friess has reluctantly resigned, so we are looking for her replacement. Alexis had her first child last fall, so we understand that she has her hands full. We thank her for her contributions. If you would like to volunteer for the Board please contact the office: admin@friendsogknoxfarm.org

Perhaps the most exciting thing to look forward to is the grand opening of the refurbished Guest House, which should happen in April. We will provide an Open House for members.

I’d like you all to know that our Mission is to preserve the entire park, not just the buildings. We use the income generating properties to invest money back into the entire park, either through direct funding or matching grants. We do this in partnership with NYS Parks. For example we were able to influence them to install the walking trails because we obtained grants to refurbish the red barns, thus freeing up Parks funds for the trails. Thanks to all our “Friends”. Together we can overcome any challenge because we are resilient!

JERRY IRVING
President



Executive Director's Report

We are excited for the 2022 season. Spring always brings a sense of renewal and promise, and this year is no exception.

- The newly renovated Guest House is scheduled to be in use for wedding guests by May.
- The barn restoration project has actually been progressing all winter (inside foundation work and window repairs). Painting and siding will continue with the warmer weather.
- This spring we will be planting 20 mature trees throughout the park as a result of our tribute tree program; <https://www.friendsofknoxfarm.org/plant-a-tree.html> .
- We are bringing back our bee keeping project this spring and hope that it will bring a heightened awareness to the importance of pollinators, and provide educational opportunities.
- I Love My Park Day has just been announced! See below for sign up link. Mark your calendar for May 7th.

I am grateful for our relationship with NYS Parks and the incredible staff here at Knox. Our investments and projects often make additional work for park staff; I want to make sure they receive lots of credit and appreciation.

Your Friends of Knox board of directors work hard all year round insuring that this organization operates by the highest standards. If you know one of the board members listed above, please join me in thanking them.

And finally; Members and volunteers are the backbone of The Friends. Your support and involvement create opportunities for improvements- THANK YOU!

KATHLEEN YORK

Executive Director

admin@friendsofknoxfarm.org

I LOVE MY PARK *days*



Friends of
KNOX FARM
STATE PARK™ 

Saturday May 7th, 9am-noon

Registration opens early April:

<https://www.ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day>



Honey Bee Report

I am happy and excited to report that Knox Farm will again be supporting local pollinators with honeybee colonies in 2022! With the equipment that has been previously purchased by The Friends, and the recent procurement of two (2) nucleus honeybee colonies, Knox Farm will be supporting the preservation and protection of these critical creatures! The nucleus colonies are expected to arrive in late April or early May. The initial objective is to create two healthy hives that will grow and stabilize in the park. We will not expect to collect honey in the first year, but only to grow a healthy bee population. With luck, our bees will survive the harsh WNY winter and 'bee ready' to produce some limited amount of honey next year! We have registered Knox with the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets as a Hobby Beekeeper.

The current plan is to place the hives within the fenced tennis court area to help discourage people and other creatures from disturbing the hives. We will also be reinstalling the solar powered electric fence as an additional barrier to help deter any migrating bears. The park naturalist will offer informative and interpretive lessons about the bees and other natural features of the park from time to time.

Honey bee Facts (most from the Texas A&M University Honey Bee Information Site)

Did you know that...

- Bees are important because they pollinate approximately 130 agricultural crops in the US including fruit, fiber, nut, and vegetable crops.
- Bee pollination adds approximately 14 billion dollars annually to improved crop yield and quality
- Bees have 5 eyes
- Bees have 2 pairs of wings
- Bees are insects, so they have 6 legs
- Bees fly about 20 mph
- Female bees in the hive (except the queen) are called worker bees
- Number of eggs laid by queen: 2,000 per day is the typical high
- Losing its stinger will cause a bee to die...they don't want to sting you !!
- Bees have been here about 30 million years!
- Bees carry pollen on their hind legs in a pollen basket or corbicula
- An average beehive can hold about 50,000 bees
- Foragers must collect nectar from about 2 million flowers to make 1 pound of honey
- The average forager makes about 1/12 th of a teaspoon of honey in her lifetime
- Average per capita honey consumption in the US is 1.3 pounds
- The principal form of communication among honey bees is through chemicals called pheromones



Respectfully,

Jim York - volunteer beekeeper and Friend of Knox Farm State Park



Garden Club

There is a Spanish proverb that states: “More grows in the garden than the gardener sows.” In the Knox gardens we find friendship, beauty, serenity, patience and gratitude to name a few. These “unsown seeds” are not only found by the Knox Garden Club members but also visitors to the gardens. We hope you will visit the gardens at Knox Farm State Park and see what grows for you!

We are always looking for new members and would love to have you join us! The Knox Garden Club tends the gardens Thursday Mornings from 9:00-11:00 from mid-May-October, weather permitting. Gardens are also available to be adopted and tended to on your schedule.

For more information please contact Lisa at dlschiff@roadrunner.com or <https://www.friendsofknnoxfarm.org/volunteer-with-us.html>.

LISA SCHIFFERLE
Friends of Knox Member



Be on the lookout for early spring flowers-snowdrops, daffodils, hellebore, hyacinth, primrose and more!

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 Updates

After a year and a half of investment in time, materials, volunteer efforts and Parks partnership, we are VERY excited to be putting the finishing touches on the complete renovation of the Guest House. This house, which sits adjacent to the main house, was originally built in 1934 as a lodging for visitors of Seymour Knox Jr., including polo players and hunting partners. In 1953 it was remodeled with additions and used as the primary home of Northrup and Lucretia Knox and their children. They used the house for 50 years, but with the exception of a short park employee residence, it has remained empty for almost 20 years. The house is now almost ready to receive guests and fulfill its original purpose. We will begin by offering this beautiful home as a lodging option for wedding couples and their guests during wedding weekends. Since the fall of 2019, the following improvements and repairs have been accomplished with Friends funding, NYS Parks partnership, donations, and volunteer efforts:



New roof

New HVAC system with separate room controls.

New hot water system

Addition of water pump/storage tank to insure adequate water pressure for lodging guests.

Complete scraping and painting of exterior. (40+ Gallons of paint)

All windows re-glazed and storm windows repaired

New ceilings in dining and living room.

Patching and painting of all interior rooms.

Entire new kitchen

New fire alarm system

Tile work in bathrooms as well as installed exhaust fans

Remodel of bathroom off kitchen to be ADA compliant

Complete furnishing of all living spaces.

New garage doors and outside coach lights.



We are extremely proud of this accomplishment and excited to share it with you. Friends of Knox members are invited to a member's only reception at the Guest House following the annual meeting on May 19th. What a great reason to become a member today!



2022 Mansion Rental Season

This year is shaping up to be a very busy year yet again! We were voted the Best Outdoor Wedding Venue in The Buffalo News Best of 716 last year, so it's no surprise! The word is out!

We have thirty-one events booked so far and three events are penciled or in the process of booking. Although the majority are weddings, there is also a baptismal party and retreat, the Borderland VIP Party, and a 70th birthday party booked. Two fundraisers are penciled/in the process of booking.

In addition, we have some exciting new developments! The Guest House is now available for bridal parties to rent. Secondly we are adding a gazebo to the secret garden to enhance this potential ceremony site or photo op.

I would be remiss if I didn't recognize all our volunteer mansion monitors for their assistance at all the events! Without them, we would not have such successful seasons year after year! We are forever grateful! If you are interested in volunteering to monitor, please email Marcia at info@themansionatknoxfarm.org.

MARCIA MCNALLIE
Director, Events & Facilities



Mansion Monitors needed:

We have a number of opportunities for Mansion Monitors during the 2022 wedding season. This is a fun way to volunteer with The Friends of Knox Farm Stae Park. Spend an evening assisting wedding guests; (responsibilities include directing guests to the restrooms, and closing up at the end of the evening). If you are considering a wedding here in the future; this is a great way to help The Friends while experiencing the magic of a wedding at Knox.

For available dates please contact:
info@themansionatknoxfarm.org

Volunteer Tribute: Barry Darin

On January 13th of this year, we lost an incredible Friend and volunteer. (Kenneth) Barry Darin honored The Friends of Knox Farm by giving generously of his time as a Mansion Monitor (assisting wedding guests) and as a Holiday Art Show volunteer.

Barry's welcoming demeanor and love for the Mansion made him a perfect ambassador for The Friends. His willingness to help whenever needed made him our most popular mansion monitor. Between 2013 and 2021 Barry represented The Friends at over 36 weddings; guiding guests around the house, answering questions, and sharing the history of the house and estate. His was often the first friendly face; greeting you as you entered the mansion for our holiday art shows. We are grateful to have known and worked with Barry; he will be sorely missed.



Knox Nature News

Warmer weather is on the horizon and with it comes a fresh perspective of the park. Butterflies will once again be found visiting flowers in both the fields and forest, dragonflies will be dashing above the ponds, and birds will be filling the air with their spring songs. Speaking of birds, Knox Farm is now part of the newly created New York State Birding Trail!

The new state birding trail isn't a physical trail perse, but rather a collection of promoted birding locations across the state that can be accessed by anyone, providing rich opportunities to go and find birds amid beautiful and diverse settings. Locations can be accessed by car or public transportation, providing an inclusive experience for all.

Knox Farm was chosen to be a part of this newly created trail as the park boasts some of the best grassland birding one can find in western NY! In fact, in June 2021, we launched our first ever community science grassland bird surveys, which took place on the 17th and 24th. During our survey days, five groups set out to conduct point count surveys of designated fields throughout the park. Surveyors were to record all birds heard and seen during their survey time. In total, 10 fields were surveyed. The data collected will better help us to understand the extent of breeding grassland bird species in the park and the importance Knox Farm plays to their continued success. A few species documented from our surveys include; Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Savannah Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Eastern Bluebird, Tree Swallow, American Kestrel and Sedge Wren.

Unfortunately, biologists estimate a 40% decline in many grassland nesting species in North America, due to habitat loss and declines in insect populations, which is the primary food source for many of these birds. With Knox Farm having some of the best grassland habitat in western New York, it is important that we do our part to ensure we protect and respect the critical habitat the park provides. Simple ways we can all do our part while visiting the park is by staying on the designated trails and keeping our pets leashed. Most of our grassland breeding bird species nest directly on the ground and nest disturbance or destruction by humans and pets is a real concern. Always remember to leave no trace while visiting Knox Farm and all our incredible natural spaces.

If you want to have an experience with many of these spectacular grassland birds while visiting Knox Farm, the Library Trail that leads directly across the field from the main parking area is the best place to go. One of the great things about birding is, you don't need a lot to get started, a pair of binoculars and a desire to explore is all you need. Keeping a checklist of what you discover is a fun activity as well, every visit could yield something new. Be sure to head out and enjoy another wonderful spring season in the park this year and see how many birds you can discover while exploring the New York State Birding Trail.



MATT NUSSTEIN
Park Naturalist



Knox Farm State Park INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS *March - April 2022*

**Wednesday March 23rd
10:00am-12:00 pm
A Sugary Spring**

Enjoy a walk through the Knox Farm sugarbush to learn about maple trees and the sweet treat they produce. Along the way we will search for other signs of springs arrival.

Call 716-549-1050 to register

**Wednesday April 6th
2:00pm-4:00pm
Wednesday Woods Walk**



Mourning Cloak Butterfly

Spring is finally here! Enjoy a scenic walk through the park to look for some of the first butterflies, songbirds and wildflowers of the season.

Call 716-549-1050 to register

**Wednesday April 6th
8:00pm-9:30pm
In Search of the Labrador Twister**



American Woodcock

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

Call 716-549-1050 to register

**Saturday April 16th
7:00pm-9:00 pm
A Naturalist's View: Full Moon Meander**



Barred Owl

Bring your curiosity and sense of wonder as we go on a naturalist's meander to explore the world around us. We will enjoy all we see, making observations, following our curiosity, and learning from each other. Whether you are an experienced naturalist or just starting out, this series is for you. Everyone has something to learn and knowledge to share. So join for the first of this series as we explore the folklore of the pink moon.

Call 716-549-1050 to register



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Knox Farm State Park INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS *March - April 2022*

**Saturday April 30th
10:00am-12:00 pm
Springtime Bluebird Walk**

With over 400 acres of grassland, 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

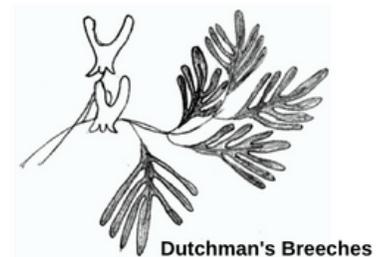
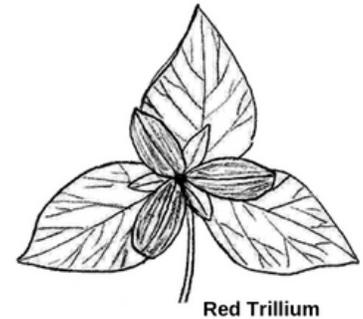
**Saturday April 30th
1:00pm-3:00pm
Spring Ephemeral Wildflower Walk**

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



Scan the QR code to sign up for our eNewsletter and stay up to date with all of our office's programming!



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

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

or mailed to:

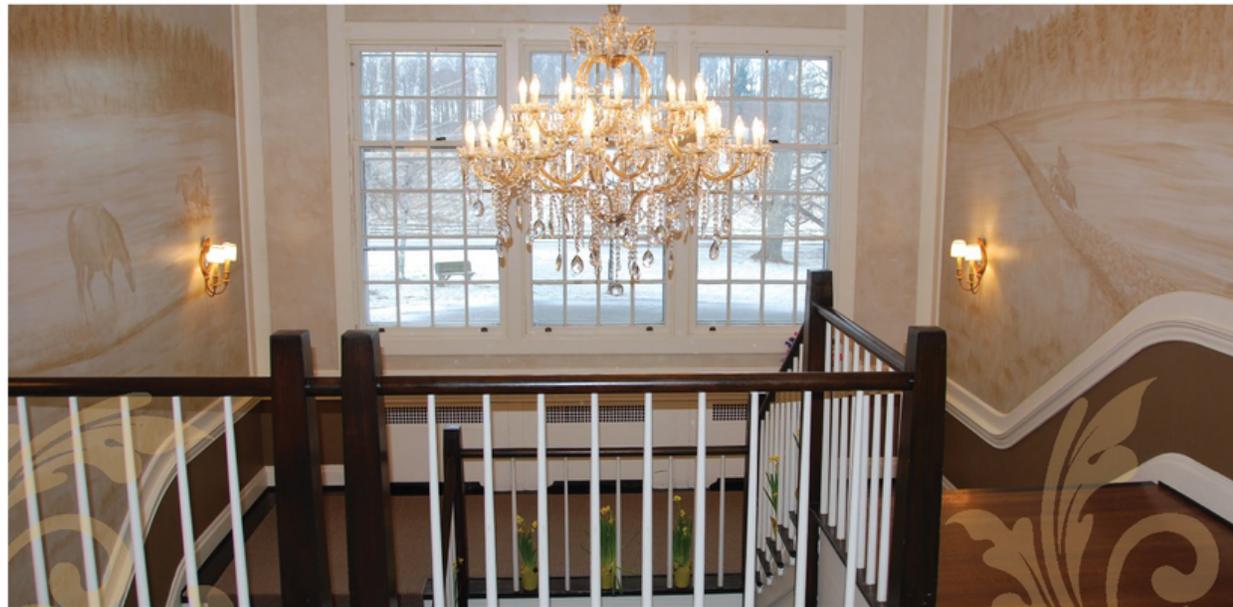
Friends of Knox Farm State Park, Inc.
P.O. Box 601, East Aurora, NY 14052

Questions? email: 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, friendsofknoxfarm.org/weddings



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 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

*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.