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Friendsofvalleyfalls.org

Dear Members and Friends -

The new year is well underway - we wish you a happy and healthy one, and hopefully you all have enjoyed the moderate temperatures so far. Although we are still in the grip of winter, the Friends are busy with the usual maintenance at 'this old house' and the outbuildings as well as preparing for the conversion of the stable into the Heritage Center.

Heritage Center Update -

We're moving along! Architect Bob Hurd has been discussing needed interior work for adaptive reuse with the contractors. An RFP has been issued to select a graphic artist for display panel work. We're making improvements in the woodshed to enable storage of items now taking up space in the future display areas. And research into the history of the illustrious prior inhabitants of VF Farm continues - many thanks to Jon Roe and Maryann Levesque!

The Wreath on the Stable and how it came to be -

Every December a large wreath is hung on the east end of the stable - have you noticed? It has become an iconic part of the Farm during the holiday season. We thought you'd like to know how it came about, and whom we should thank for this lovely holiday treat, a perfect addition to the winter scene at Valley Falls Farm. Board member Ginny Gingras tells us the story:

"After the Friends purchased Valley Falls Farm in 2000, I took my friend, Sally Katkaveck, to view the Farm from Bolton Road. She took one look at the Farm and said "Ginny, the stable needs a wreath". I agreed and asked if she would be willing to make one, and she has done so every year since. She gathers the greens from her yard in Ashford. When completed, Sally and her husband, Bill, drive to the Farm to deliver the wreath. Bill parks near the stable, climbs onto the back of the truck and with a pole (made especially for the "project"), places the wreath on the hook my husband, Paul, had made for it. I supply the ribbon. Sally is a terrific gardener, whom I met years ago at a meeting of the North American Rock Garden Society. She has made many wreaths and enjoys the delights they bring. This year will be the last one made for the stable."

THANK YOU, SALLY and BILL!

Hanging the Wreath, l. to r. Paul Gingras, Ginny Gingras, Sally Katkavech; Photo by Bill Katkavech



Valley Falls Dam Project Update -

The Dam Rehabilitation Project should be completed in April. The significant tasks that remain include the fencing along the new crest and installation of the ADA accessible fishing area near the new spillway. This work is currently on-going weather permitting. On a side note, the Vernon DPW will be milling and overlaying the parking area in late April or May to rejuvenate the existing surface which is showing signs of deterioration. Naturally, during that time access to the parking lot will be restricted and we appreciate everyone's patience while this very important work is completed.

Working on the Dam; Photo courtesy of Town of Vernon Engineering Dept.



Upcoming Events, mark your calendars -

Annual Hoppin' Hodges Race

The annual Easter morning race will begin at 8:00 a.m. The start is at the Church Street parking area of the Rail Trail. Proceeds from the race go to the Friends, for which we are ever grateful. Many thanks to Janit Romayko and Silk City Striders who organized and participate in this popular event. Come and join us... bring your bunny ears!

Three Walk Weekend May 18 and 19 Valley Falls Park -

Bird walk led by Denise Anamani, May 18, 7:30 a.m.:

Wildflower walk led by Ginny Gingras, May 18, 1:00 p.m.:

Rocks, Railroad and Industry walk led by Don Sierakowski. He will take us on a jaunt through the historic parts of Valley Falls Park discussing the history of the area, the cotton mill, the coming of the railroads, and the rock formations of the valley on May 19, 1:00 p.m.:

CT Open House Day - Saturday, June 8th, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We'll be participating in this event again this year and will be open for tours! Come and visit us!

Summer Farm Tours - on select Wed. and Sun. afternoons from 1:00-3:00 p.m. beginning on the last Sunday in June and ending on the last Sunday in August.

Artists Day at Valley Falls Farm - Sunday, August 18, 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
featuring art, music and history! Come and enjoy a peaceful afternoon at the Farm.

FVF Annual Meeting - Sunday, September 29, 1:00 p.m., stay tuned - we're working
on an exciting event!

As always - check our website for updates www.friendsofvalleyfalls.org

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