

THE CASCADE

FRIENDS OF
CUNNINGHAM
FALLS AND
GAMBRILL STATE
PARKS

Photo courtesy of Carol Burger



Photo courtesy of Rick Canter

Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks is a non-profit 501c3 organization. Our Mission is to support and enhance the programs and recreational offerings of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks through charitable contributions and in-kind donations.

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PAGE 10~ PHOTOS FROM A FRIEND VOLUNTEER, ROB. CHECK OUT HIS VIDEO @ CUNNINGHAM FALLS.

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PAGE 14~ WHAT'S COMING UP? MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

PAGE 15~ 'LOOK AT US!' WE APPRECIATE AND VALUE YOU! OUR BIRDS, TURTLES, AND SNAKES @ THE AVIARY NEED YOUR HELP!

CONGRATULATIONS!



Photo courtesy of Bill Green

**From the desk of:
Mark Spurrier, Park Manager
Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks
promoted to
South Central Regional Manager, Maryland Park Service**

Happy Fall! This is my favorite time of year. I love hiking in our parks, watching the brilliant colors of the changing leaves and feeling the crisp chill in the air. This is also when I tend to reflect and remind myself of the many blessings that I have been given. There are many. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our volunteers for their dedication and commitment to assisting the staff in making Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks welcoming and safe for all. Fall events like the Friends 5K/10K, community camp-outs and Spirits of the Furnace would not be possible without you.

I also want to make a special mention to our community partners who have provided us with so much support over the years. **The Catoctin Furnace Historical Society** has been responsible for ground breaking research and bringing to new light the story of the Catoctin Furnace and those who lived and worked here. They continue to honor and protect the voices of the enslaved workers.

The Catoctin Forest Alliance has sponsored the SUCCESS Program and through their partnership we have been able to provide job training opportunities for young people with intellectual disabilities in the field of natural resources and park maintenance. They have also supported the Artists in Residence program to highlight the experiences of nature through the fine arts.

Cont'd. Page 4.

THIS IS THE NEXT LEVEL



Photo courtesy of Mark Spurrier

Cont'd. from Page 3.

We have outstanding professional relationships with Frederick County Public Libraries, Frederick County Public Schools, Frederick County Parks and Recreation, The Town of Thurmont and the Thurmont Business Network, The Catoctin Mountain Tourism Council, Visit Frederick, Catoctin Mountain Park and the National Park Service, Maryland Department of Agriculture Pest Management, The Department of Juvenile Services, The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, Maryland Environmental Services, The Ausherman Family Foundation, The Friends of Maryland State Parks and so many more. These public agencies and community organizations have provided us with technical support and funding on so many of our projects and programs that they are too numerous to mention here but know that without their assistance we would not have been able to accomplish many of our most significant accomplishments.

We also have outstanding relationships with our sister agencies in the Department of Natural Resources. I rely heavily on their expertise on a daily basis and know we are stronger as a park complex with their help. Finally, I want to thank the Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks, Inc. for all that they have done to benefit the park. I sincerely count each of you as friends in the truest sense. We have shared so much and your dedication to the parks has allowed us to take risks and try new things that have made these two parks more accessible to all.

Much like the changing of the seasons, life provides us with new opportunities. It is with this thought that I am announcing that I will no longer be the manager of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks as of November 27th. **I have accepted a promotion to be the Southern Central Regional Manager in the Maryland Park Service. Assistant Manager Ranger Sarah Rodriguez and Maintenance Chief Tom Cavey will be the supervisors of the parks moving forward until a new manager is officially hired.** Many of you have worked with them in the past and know that they are great professionals who care deeply for the parks. Change is inevitable. What we do with the change is what makes us great. I am so appreciative of everyone's support. It is because of you that this opportunity is possible and I am humbled by what this team has done over my tenure here. I am very excited to see what the next season of growth will bring. Happy Thanksgiving and thank you for all you do for your state parks.

**CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR PROMOTION TO
REGIONAL MANAGER OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL
REGION, MARYLAND PARK SERVICE!**

**~WE SINCERELY THANK YOU FOR YOUR
LEADERSHIP OF THE 'FRIENDS OF CUNNINGHAM
FALLS AND GAMBRILL STATE PARKS' NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION~**

Mark Spurrier makes the 'impossible, possible'!

CONGRATULATIONS RUSH WILLIAMSON! HONORED BY DNR WITH 'TRAIL OF FAME' AWARD! PRESENTED BY CLAUDIA PADILLA, LEAD RANGER.



Photo courtesy of PATC

The Potomac Appalachian

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

November 2024 - VOLUME 53, NUMBER 11 - ISSN 098-8L54

Rush Williamson Receives the Trail of Fame Award Article by Jess LaPolla

PATC Supervisor of Trails, **Rush Williamson**, recently received the Trail of Fame Award.

Presented by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, this award recognizes and celebrates exemplary service and commitment to the improvement and maintenance of trails on our public lands.

Rush started working on the Catoctin Trail around 2002 as a member of the South Mountain Crew. After his 2008 AT thru hike, Rush became a Trail Maintainer on the Catoctin Trail. In 2012 he formed the Old Scouter Crew, which became a traveling Crew in the Maryland and Pennsylvania area, still primarily focused on the Catoctin Trail.

The Crew has grown from four to 11 regular crew members who meet on Thursdays. When the Maryland District split into the AT and Side Trails MD and Catoctin Districts in 2019, Rush became the District Manager of the Catoctin District.

According to Rush, "The award is largely based on the fact I lead the effort to go through the paperwork to restore the badly eroded trail going up Bobs Hill which will require 500+ steps, rolling grade dips, and check dams. We have been working on this project for about a year and at present put in around 258 structures, it is anticipated the work will be completed within the next year depending on the availability of timbers."

PATC would like to warmly congratulate



Rush and Claudia Padilla, Lead Park Ranger Cunningham Falls & Gambrill State Parks
Photo by Curtis Bailey

Rush on this well-deserved award, and thank him for his years of service in caring for the lands and trails we all love. Congrats Rush!



PATC Council Report September 2024 Meeting

by Anstr Davidson, Secretary

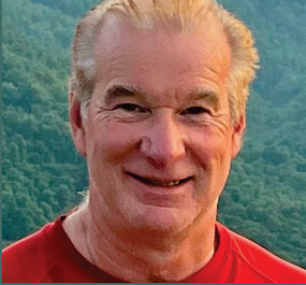
Council adopted a Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy and accepted the donation of easements for the

path of the Tuscarora Trail at its September meeting. Council also decided who will receive most of the club's top awards.

Continued on Page 3

Link to PATC
Current
Newsletter.





From the Desk of Rick Canter
Past President, Board Member
'The Friends'

It is a great time to be involved with the Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks. We are engaged with the park staff, funding for park needs, getting our administrative tasks done and providing public-facing events.

On October 12, in the William Houck Area of Cunningham Falls Park, we held the latest in a series of "Hayrides and S'mores" events. Children...and some adults...cooked and ate S'mores over an open fire...and we gave participants a ride through the North Beach loop area. Half fundraiser, half educational event, everyone enjoyed a pleasant Saturday afternoon by the lake.

Later that evening, we held our second event of the day, this time in Gambrill Park's High Knob Scenic Area. "The Blair Witch Project" was projected in the open air on our silver screen; the perfect movie for combining the outdoors with some Halloween spookiness. We provided free popcorn and bottled water to our moviegoers. Over the last two summers, we have fielded several movie nights at the High Knob Scenic Area, and providing a spooky movie in October fit just right. Over 100 people attended our viewing of "Blair Witch".

It feels great to attract patrons to the parks for special events in the off-season. On a typical October 12, not many people would have been in either park, so it was nice to get folks out ...children and adults...enjoying our outdoor spaces.

If exercise was more your interest, we fielded the 9th annual Friends 10K / 5K and Fun Run-Walk on November 3. The 10K and 5K started simultaneously and the Fun Run- Walk was a leisurely untimed 1.4-mile stroll. All events were in the William Houck Area of Cunningham Falls State Park. The fall colors were just past peak and it was a beautiful if chilly morning in the park. Because the race course is spread out over most of the pavement of the William Houck Area, it was an "all hands on deck" event for volunteers and park staff in various locations of the lake area.

The Friends 10K / 5K enjoyed record attendance, with 202 total registrants. Records were broken in the 10K female, 5K female and 5K non-binary categories. We also had a 12-year-old girl win the 5K outright.

We have many people to thank for making the Friends race such a success. We have our corporate sponsors, Charm City Run, Amber Hill Therapy Centers, VisitFrederick, and FirstEnergy. This was the first time our event was chip timed and the timing was performed by the Frederick Steeplechasers Running Club. Our MC for the event was Bill Susa of WF Running, and our photographer was Missy Grimes of Mindful Focus Photography. The Cunningham Falls Park rangers worked diligently alongside the Friends to ensure the safety and enjoyment of the running public. Finally, many runners donated to us online over and above the registration fee, and we are grateful to those runners who generously gave back to us for our efforts.

As we head into winter, the Friends will re-tool with nominations for 2025 Officers and Directors. Soon after, we will plan our biggest annual event, the **Maple Syrup Festival, which will be held on March 8, 9, 15 and 16 in 2025.**

We are grateful to serve the public through our Mission: To support and enhance the programs and recreational offerings of the parks. In 2025, we will continue to provide events, support park management and staff, and help protect the park amenities and environment we all enjoy.

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From left to right: Rick Canter, Mary Miller, Sarah Rodriguez, Mel Poole, Chris Trane, and Claudia Padilla

**The Maryland Park Service
'Valor Award' was presented to**

CAMP HOST PHIL WILGUS

Assistant Manager Sarah Rodriguez presents Camp Host Phil Wilgus with the Maryland Park Service Valor Award for the lifesaving efforts he exhibited while volunteering in the park. His wife Peggy Wilgus is pictured here as well.



Photo courtesy of Claudia Padilla

**The Maryland Park Service
'Valor Award' was presented to**

**PARK PATRON
JASON FULLEN**

Park Manager Mark Spurrier presented Park Patron Jason Fullen with the Maryland Park Service Valor Award for the lifesaving efforts he exhibited while visiting the park this past summer. He is pictured with members of his family.



PhotoCrtesy of Claudia Padilla

**The Maryland Park Service
'Honorary Ranger Award' was
presented to**

RICK CANTER

**Park Manager Mark Spurrier presenting the
Honorary Ranger award to Rick Canter for his many
contributions to the park including serving as 'The
Friends' President and Past President for 16 years.**



Photo courtesy of Claudia Padilla



Video courtesy of Rob Burdette

***FOLKS LIKE YOU MAKE FRIENDS LIKE US!
THANK YOU ROB, JOHN, NATALIA, JORGE AND FAMILY FOR
VOLUNTEERING AND JOINING 'THE FRIENDS'!***



Photo courtesy of Rob Burdette



**10K/5K RACE
RUN/WALK IN THE PARK
NOVEMBER 2024**

**THANK YOU RICK CANTER,
RACE DIRECTOR, AND TO ALL
VOLUNTEERS AND
PARTICIPANTS FOR MAKING
THIS EVENT AMAZING!
WE'LL SEE 'YA NEXT YEAR!**

FALL EVENTS FROM 'THE FRIENDS'

MOVIES UNDER THE STARS @ GAMBRILL SP



Photo courtesy of Rick Canter



Photo courtesy of Mark Spurrier

'THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT' MOVIE
FEATURED IN OCTOBER~A HUGE SUCCESS
WITH OVER 100 ATTENDING.

'PAW PATROL' IN SEPTEMBER.
LET'S SEE IT AGAIN!

FALL HAYRIDES W/S' MORES N CIDER IN THE PARK @ CUNNINGHAM FALLS SP

A FEW HUNDRED ATTENDEES ENJOYED
'LEAF PEEPING' DURING THE CHANGING OF
THE SEASON.



Fun

HOUSE



Photo courtesy of Claudia Padilla

Park staff in costume joined together on Halloween for a hike to the falls. Claudia Padilla, Sarah Hemstreet, Ben Gantz, Zach Opishinski, Justin Calhoun, and Stacey Jones.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!

***THE MSF IS MARCH 8TH, 9TH, 15TH AND
16TH, 2025!***

54TH MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL

LET'S GET READY TO RUMBA!

~OVER 50+ YEARS AND LARGER THAN EVER

~LEARN HOW MAPLE TREES ARE 'TAPPED' FOR SAP

~LEARN HOW MAPLE SYRUP IS MADE FROM TREE TO KETTLE TO TABLE

~TAKE A HAYRIDE AROUND NORTH BEACH TO THE 'SUGAR GROVE'

~VIEW THE 'COOK DOWN' OF THE SAP

~ENJOY A PANCAKE BREAKFAST WITH MAPLE SYRUP

~LIVE BLUEGRASS MUSIC UNDER THE TENT

~RAIN OR SHINE

More information coming soon. Check our Fb page for updates.





Your donations help to feed the animals in the Aviary @ the Manor Area. Photos courtesy of Claudia Padilla, DNR and Rick Canter.



BE A PART OF OUR JOURNEY! YOUR CONTRIBUTION CREATES OPPORTUNITIES~



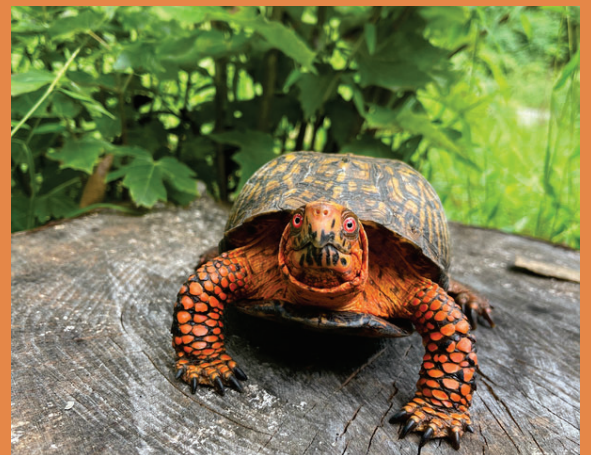
Please Donate



***FOLKS LIKE YOU MAKE
FRIENDS LIKE US!***

JOIN THE FUN!

***BECOME A PART OF
'THE FRIENDS'!***



TO VOLUNTEER OR TO RECEIVE OUR EVENTS CALENDAR VIA EMAIL EACH MONTH:

**Email Claudia Padilla, Lead Ranger:
claudia.padilla@maryland.gov**



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