

Winners Announced and Registration Open for the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation Awards Banquet

Enjoy an evening to celebrate the tireless efforts of volunteers and staff who enhance our public lands.

CAMP HILL, PA, UNITED STATES, March 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation \(PPFF\)](#) is excited to announce its

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Marci Mowery

16th Annual Awards Banquet, celebrating outstanding contributions to Pennsylvania's state parks and forests. The event will take place on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at Little Buffalo State Park in Newport, PA.

This year's banquet will honor individuals, groups, and programs that have demonstrated exceptional dedication to the stewardship of Pennsylvania's natural resources across various categories. Attendees will enjoy an evening to celebrate the tireless efforts of volunteers and staff who enhance our public lands and take part in a silent auction

to support removing barriers to engaging in outdoor recreation.

"The banquet is an exciting time to celebrate the collective accomplishments of the people working to conserve and improve not just state parks and forests, but the natural assets we all need and enjoy" said Marci Mowery, President of PPFF. "Collectively, when we work together, we affect change"

Tickets for the event are now available at \$50 per person. The Foundation also offers sponsorship opportunities for awards, tables, and various aspects of the banquet. Interested parties can find more information on the PPFF website, PAParksAndForests.org/event/banquet-2025/.

The award categories for 2025 include:

Cliff Jones Keystone Legacy Award—Dwight Lewis Lumber Co./Lewis Lumber Products:

Dwight Lewis Lumber Company and Lewis Lumber Products are dedicated to the preservation and enrichment of the timberland environment.

Joseph Ibberson Government Award—Chris Kemmerer:
As Section Chief overseeing educational, interpretive, and recreational programming in all 124 state parks, Chris saw the April 2024 eclipse as an educational opportunity and created a team to plan to teach how to safely watch this incredible event. He did this while also focusing on aligning programs to new education standards. Chris has tirelessly worked to advance environmental education in Pennsylvania.

Chair's Award—Keith Russell:
Keith has studied birds since he was in the third grade. It's the lucky young person whose passion is so ignited by experience that they can turn their passion to a career. Keith has done that—and more—bringing members of his community along for the educational ride.


President's Award—Steve Stroman:
Steve turned his passions for trails, rails and conservation into a career that has spanned decades, both professionally and a volunteer. An active advocate for the issues about which he cares, Steve reminds us always that stewardship means using your outside voice.

Park of the Year—Hills Creek State Park Complex:
Leonard Harrison, Colton Point, Denton Hill, Lyman Run, Patterson, Cherry Springs and Hills Creek, oh my! The staff at these parks are balancing major projects, visitor needs, and unusual weather events while providing a positive visitor experience.

Forest of the Year—Loyalsock State Forest:
With its diverse array of recreational opportunities along with management of forest resources, the staff at Loyalsock have also had to contend with several severe weather events.

Volunteer (Individual)—Charles Pinardi:
Charles began being a host at Shawnee State Park 27 years ago with his wife, Beena. Both of them became a fixture of the campground and is the reason many people come back. Beena


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FOR THE ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET



MAY 13 | 4:00 PM TO 7:30 PM
LITTLE BUFFALO STATE PARK

HONORING THE PEOPLE THAT MAKE A
DIFFERENCE THROUGH THEIR WORK
AND VOLUNTEERISM.

REGISTER NOW (OR DONATE) AT:
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Help us celebrate the award winners and join us May 13, 2025.

passed away in 2012, but Charles has continued their tradition of hosting at the park.

Volunteer (Group)—Eastern PA Climbers Alliance (EPCA):

EPAC's dedication to fostering a community of responsible climbers that contribute their time and energy to sustainable outdoor recreation initiatives is exemplary. From trail maintenance and clean-up efforts to educational workshops and safety training, EPAC volunteers are deeply involved in activities that enhance and preserve natural landscapes.

Education—Allen Dieterich-Ward:

Allen, a long-time member of the PA Conservation Heritage Project, recently wrote his second book, *Cradle of Conservation: An Environmental History of Pennsylvania*, a synthesis of Pennsylvania's environmental history from ancient Indigenous peoples to the social distancing (by going outdoors!) of the COVID Era.

Improvement—Paul Yost:

For over 20 years, Paul has been an integral volunteer member of the Friends of Milton, investing his time, energy, and personal resources into the revitalization and care of the park's trail network. The story of Paul's efforts to transform the park from the overgrown devastation wrought by Hurricane Agnes and years of neglect into a thriving natural space is truly inspirational.

Young Volunteer—Mikyala Traini:

As an intern at Marsh Creek State Park Mikayla worked with park staff to design a trail paving project that would greatly increase accessibility and then worked to receive funding to make the project a reality.

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation invites all outdoor enthusiasts, conservationists, and supporters of Pennsylvania's natural heritage to join in this celebration. Your attendance not only honors the award recipients but also supports the ongoing mission of PPF to protect and enhance the Commonwealth's parks and forests.

For more information, to purchase tickets, or to explore sponsorship opportunities, please visit [PAParksAndForests.org/event/banquet-2025](https://paparksandforests.org/event/banquet-2025) or call 717-236-7644.

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About the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation supports 124 state parks and 2.2 million acres of forest by coordinating volunteers, activities, and donations through its 45+ chapters. The mission of the foundation is to inspire stewardship of Pennsylvania's state parks and forests. To learn more about PPF, visit <https://paparksandforests.org/>.

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