



---

**“The View from the Forge”**  
**A Monthly Podcast of the News & Events at Valley Forge NHP**

Hello, my name is Mike Caldwell, Superintendent of Valley Forge National Historical Park. I'd like to welcome you to “The View from the Forge” – a monthly podcast of news and events from Valley Forge National Historical Park. Here, with this month's edition, is park volunteer, John Grossman.

This summer's Revolutionary War Teachers' Institute is sold out! The week-long institute provides hand-on training in teaching and interpreting the revolution, as well as time with top scholars such as Gary Nash and Thomas Fleming, insiders' tours of historic sites, and access to historic museum collections. Twenty-four teachers have been accepted into the program from both local schools and around the country. The park already is working on plans for the institute to be held in 2008.

The 2nd Annual Revolutionary Run and Walk were held on Sunday, April 22, kicking off National Park Week. Almost 1,300 athletes participated. As a result of the run, approximately \$16,000 will be donated by the race organizers to the Friends of Valley Forge Park for trail maintenance. Next year's run will take place on Sunday, April 20.

The park has developed a number of potential public service projects for interested high school students. Our projects have the following goals:

- Provide students with choices so they can demonstrate strengths
- Create a valid, equitable, and reliable learning experience for all students
- Create an opportunity for students to self-direct and reflect on their work
- Encourage students to explore a topic of personal interest to promote lifelong learning skills

For more information about this program contact Ernestine White at 610-783-1065

The first podcast related to the park's historic collections was completed this month. The podcast, titled, "It Was a Continual Drill..." tells the story of Baron von Steuben's training of the troops at Valley Forge. The podcast includes images of the park's rare copy of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1779 Drill Manual written by von Steuben. The podcast is available on iTunes or on the park's website.

The park completed its 10th annual spring deer count. With the help of 13 volunteers, park staff conducted three nights of deer counting. The total population estimate is

approximately 1,025 deer in the park. Since the park is five square miles, this means the estimated density of deer within the park in 2007 is 205 per square mile. Three problem areas for deer crossings continued to be apparent this year: on Route 23, the area between the Gulph Road and River Road intersections and the Defender's Gate area on the Washington Memorial Chapel; and on North Gulph Road, the area between the park's main entrance and the Ranger Station. When you are driving in the park, always obey the speed limits and be especially watchful in these problem areas.

The park is the recipient of a \$3,000 grant from the Garden Club of America. The funds will be used for a survey to confirm the presence or absence of special status plant species that previously were documented in the park. For those species that are documented and still present, we will look at distribution and options for protection.

The NPS Exotic Plant Management Team was in the park this past month to cut and treat the *Wisteria* infestation on the western boundary of the Washington Memorial Chapel property. Like other invasive, non-native vines, wisteria smothers and chokes native vegetation, destroying habitat for native animals. The crew will return in May, June, and July to continue their assault on invasive non-native vegetation.

The park completed an application for Federal Highways Public Lands Discretionary Program funds for the proposed "missing link" trail. The application was ranked number one for Pennsylvania, and is now being considered at Federal Highways headquarters in Washington DC. The missing link trail will connect the current dead-end trail at Knox' parking lot across Valley Creek to the Mount Misery system of trails, as well as to the future Chester Valley Trail in Tredyffrin Township. This will provide another loop trail within the park and also allow more visitors to arrive by foot and on bicycles, rather than by vehicle.

That's all for this month's "View from the Forge." As always, for more information visit the park's website at [www.nps.gov/vafo](http://www.nps.gov/vafo).

This is park volunteer John Grossman. Thanks for listening and we'll see you in the park!