

Volunteer Vibes - *Volunteers play many crucial roles at the Preserve. They maintain trails, welcome visitors, conduct research, educate youth groups, support special events, beautify our gardens, capture breathtaking photography, and much more, contributing their time, talents, and thousands of volunteer hours annually. We will be regularly featuring our volunteers in Talus Talk so that we can all learn who they are and why they do what they do for the Preserve. Let's meet our volunteers!*

John Schrenk

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Philadelphia and raised in Bucks County, PA just north of Philly. In the mid-1980s, my wife and I found New Paltz to be the perfect location to raise our two daughters.

What is your volunteer role(s) here at Mohonk Preserve?

I started as an Interpretive Guide and Trailhead Ambassador, and I absolutely loved it. Last year, I added Backcountry Patrol and helped the Invasive Species team study the Southern Pine Beetle migration. I also enjoy helping with the Preserve's fundraisers such as Rock The Ridge, Pfalz Point Trail Challenge, and the Shawangunk Grit Bicycle events each year.

Why did you decide to volunteer your time and talents at Mohonk Preserve?

My daughters grew up thinking of Mohonk Preserve as their playground. Trips to the Crag, Table Rocks, Giants Workshop, and Lemon Squeeze were annual staples. I hope to inspire others to recognize and enjoy the beauty, serenity, and ecological diversity that the Preserve has provided me and my family for the last 35 years.

What is a volunteer accomplishment you are really proud of?

I am so proud of the Preserve's action on invasive species threats. For example, if we can stop the Southern Pine Beetle from destroying those beautiful Pitch Pines on Milbrook Ridge and the Crag and allow future generations to see them, I would consider that a job well done.

Where is your favorite place/trail on the Preserve and why is it your favorite?

My absolute favorite place in the Mohonk Preserve is Eagle Cliff via the Eagle Cliff Scramble. It is a day hike from any of the Preserve's trailheads and affords amazing views of Trapps, Smiley Tower, Mohonk Lake, and the Mountain House. And, if you go on a windy day, especially in the Spring or Fall, the thermal soaring raptors will put on a show for you.



*John Schrenk volunteering as a Trailhead Ambassador
Photo by Carol Natoli*