

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!*

Vinny Variano

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Brooklyn, raised on the north shore of Suffolk County on Long Island, matured in Ithaca, and ripened in the Hudson Valley.

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

I have been a Mohonk volunteer for about 15 years, helping as an Interpretive Guide by suggesting hikes and answering questions for visitors. Additionally, I volunteer at Special Events, assisting with race registrations, the benefit auction, and recently as the volunteer co-captain for Rock the Ridge race day registration.

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

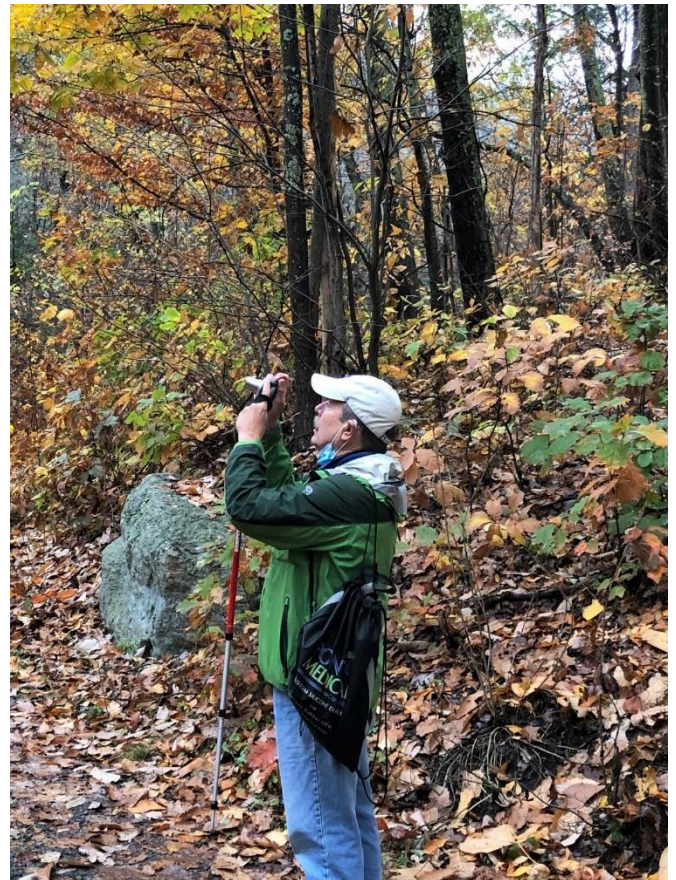
I chose to volunteer at the Preserve due to its unique and notable mission to maintain the beautiful land of the Shawangunk Mountain region. I have always enjoyed being outdoors and learning about the natural world. The people I interact with - the visitors and staff - are all friendly and share my love of nature.

What is a volunteer accomplishment you are really proud of?

When hikers return to the Visitor Center and let me know what a great time they had, based on my suggestions, I consider that the best feedback a volunteer can get.

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

So many trails, so little time... the Shongum Path is my current favorite – quiet and beautiful with a varied landscape. It leads to Split Rock, where a few hundred feet upstream, under the pines by the side of the creek, is my favorite spot in the Preserve.



Vinny Variano; photo by Denyse Variano