

Falkner Park free community concert event celebrates 25 years

The Village of Youngstown and event organizers announce the return of their free summer concert series in Falkner Park, beginning Friday, July 3. This year marks 25 years of the popular event, originally begun by late Mayor Neil C. Riordan.

Opening night will feature a performance by the Mackenzie Highlanders Pipes and Drums, along with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and rededication of the refurbished pavilion. The family-friendly event runs from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and offers a perfect way to kick off the Fourth of July weekend and America 250 celebrations.

Falkner Park is located at 340 Main St. Visitors are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets. This year's season will run from July 3 to Aug. 21. The full concert schedule features many of the region's top bands.

Falkner Park summer concert schedule
 ✓ Friday, July 3: Mackenzie

Highlanders Pipes and Drums
 ✓ Friday, July 10: Barroom Buzards

✓ Friday, July 17: The Taverners

✓ Friday, July 24: Claudia Andres and Friends (Jazz for Dennis)

✓ Friday, July 31: Joe and the Schmoes

✓ Friday, Aug. 7: Creek Bend

✓ Friday, Aug. 14: 2nd Time Around

✓ Friday, Aug. 15: Marsha and Monte

✓ Friday, Aug. 21: Brass Chance with Jerry Andres

The concert series, a cherished tradition since 2001, is made possible by the Village of Youngstown, dedicated volunteers, and generous sponsors. Admission is always free.

Street parking is available. The park is also accessible via the free Discover Niagara Shuttle. For more information, call the Youngstown village office at 716-745-7721.

Niagara Falls is waiting for you!

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to the falls, this is a great time of year to come out, come visit and see it, experience it for the first time anew."

She added, "People are welcome to come in for research appointments. If they're interested in coming in and doing research or learning more and going through these documents, we are open for public research appointments. Locals are welcome to do that, if the exhibit's not their thing or if they want to learn more and do more with us."

To make an appointment, email Courtney.Geerhart@parks.ny.gov (include "Research Request" in the subject line).

Lobby displays change each year and highlight a particular theme. In 2025, it was the 140th anniversary of Niagara Falls becoming a state park. This summer, the pieces on display are tied to "Power & Revolution: The History of Power in Niagara."

Geerhart said it's "the idea of the history of power in Niagara Falls, specifically, and how that affected the falls, the park. The dichotomy of preservation versus the power industry, and how there was kind of a clash at times, but also worked together to provide power for the community."

Berti emphasized the historic value of Niagara Falls State Park: "This is more than just water falling over rocks. We say it over at the Cave of the Winds: The world changed here. ... That is fact. A lot happened here. There would be no public parks if it weren't for this place."

She added, "People come from all over. They write about it. They paint it. They photograph it. And it's in our backyard."

•Crow's nest, FREE

One of the most unique views of Niagara Falls will come from the area near the Prospect Point park observation tower. State Parks is overseeing creation of a new crow's nest – and targeting a late-August reopening

"It's coming along. It's going to be, I would say, on par with Cave of the Winds in terms of access to the falls," Berti said. For the people walking right alongside the water, "It's an amazing view."

The existing platform area isn't optimized for viewing (let alone picture-taking). When finished, the new and improved crow's nest will connect the overlook with the area near where guests board the Maid of the Mist. During peak season, this elevator alternative also will help with moving people out of the attraction area. In the shoulder months, it will be a two-way staircase.

More affordable than you think

Of course, there is a fee to take part in Niagara Falls State Park's two most iconic attractions – but the price is less than two movie tickets ... or leaving a vehicle in downtown Buffalo on event nights.

✓ The **Cave of the Winds** ticket price fluctuates depending on time of the year, with adult passes ranging from \$14 to \$23. Youth entry starts at \$10 and increases to \$19. State Parks is offering a new "Cave & Save" promotion wherein Cave-goers can save on admission tickets to the Aquarium of Niagara, Old Fort Niagara, Rainbow Air Helicopter Tours & Niagara Virtual Experience, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Martin House.

✓ The **Maid of the Mist** ticket is just \$30.25 for adults (\$19.75 for youth ages 6-12) and includes a souvenir rain poncho. A favorite for celebrities, athletes and dignitaries for more than 100 years, the tour boat "ferries past the base of the American Falls, and onto the basin of Horseshoe Falls – the dramatic passage leading you through the roiling waterfall whitewater and massive rock formations," the Niagara Falls State Park website notes. "The Maid of the Mist returns guests to shore with newfound appreciation of the power and grandeur of Niagara Falls."

For years, a sticking point for locals interested in exploring Niagara Falls has been the price to park – but it's actually only \$10 on Goat Island.



Pictured, top to bottom: "Power & Revolution: The History of Power in Niagara" at the Niagara Regional Archive. • The crow's nest is under construction, with a late-summer reopening planned. • "Voices of the Falls" inside the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Welcome Center at Niagara Falls State Park. • DiCamillo Bakery products at the welcome center.

Moreover, people can:
 ✓ **Park for free at the Schoellkopf Power Station Ruins** site and walk or take a trolley into Niagara Falls State Park. The former Schoellkopf Power Generating Station also offers free access to the Niagara Gorge.

✓ Park for a nominal fee at the Aquarium of Niagara and walk or take a trolley into the park.
 ✓ Take the free Discover Niagara Shuttle.

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