

Friends of Pine Grove Furnace Board Meeting

Minutes for January 17th, 2015

Board in attendance: A. Weltman (president), M. Soderberg (vice-president), B. Breen (treasurer), D. Velozo (secretary), S. Breen, R. Shaw, and S. Benson (Park Manager and *ex-officio* Board member)

Park Manager's comments

- The software that runs DCNR reservations statewide is being upgraded. Watch for a brief "blackout" period when it is being installed, probably in February.
- Certain park pavilions will receive a small upgrade: counter space will be installed near the electric outlets to facilitate food preparation.
- At the family campground, vehicle waiting areas will be expanded at the RV dump station to minimize slow or blocked traffic near the exit.
- Ironmaster's Mansion needs a new innkeeper. Best wishes to departing innkeepers Roger and Kathy Stone, who have been a pleasure to work with over the past couple of years.

Treasurer's report and Budget for 2015

- Our current balance is \$30,148 (a detailed report is available upon request). The Board discussed the outlines of the budget previously prepared for 2014. We anticipate continuing to support the Ironmaster's Mansion (run by the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy) including their annual fundraising foot races and Goddard Legacy summer camp. We have enough money to begin major projects, described below.

Major projects

- We will seek to install a second playground in 2015, this time at Fuller Lake. (Laurel Lake is on our list for a third playground, in the future.) The cost will probably be well over \$18,000 from start to finish. Unlike the first playground built at the campground in 2014, this time the Friends will have to pay for the entire project out of our own money. The park itself does not have enough in their budget to help directly with money, but park staff will provide installation labor and some ground materials.
- A discussion was begun on repairing Mountain Creek Trail which is roughly parallel to Old Railroad Bed Road between the two park lakes. As its name suggests, portions of this trail sit in the creek floodplain and are subject to frequent damage; maintenance of this trail has been very difficult over the years. Moreover, the trail is currently cut in two because a bridge over Mountain Creek toward the Laurel Lake end is completely gone. Bridge replacement is necessary but will not be cheap. Additional possible work on this trail includes moving the official trailhead at the eastern end to avoid a long stretch of particularly wet and damage-prone terrain. This all will be a long-term project, probably stretching out over several years. We will begin to explore options for bridges.
- The park's historical interpretive signage (especially at the furnace stack) and the visitors center/museum in the park office need upgrades. The Friends President will contribute to this effort coordinated by the state park system and an outside contractor.
- We hope to install bicycle lockup racks at major areas such as the lakes.

New Merchandise

- New embroidered patch for 2015, continuing a series begun in 2013 for our 100th anniversary. This year's patch theme will be "Hairy Hand and Pumpkins at Fuller Lake."
- PGF oval bumper stickers continue to sell at the office and special events. We will now add a car magnet using the same oval design.
- Initial discussion of an orange T-shirt with Hairy Hand/Pumpkin cartoon, to be sold especially at each Fall Furnace Festival. We will explore possible designs.

Firewood campground sales

- We look forward to the 2015 camping season, which begins at the end of March. Another workday is needed to split logs at Fuller parking and stack wood in the campground shed, to get ready for robust sales which are a major portion of our income. (Thanks to Sue, Bill and Andre, this was done on January 20 a few days after the Board meeting. The shed is now very full of wood!)

Charcoal Challenge and Iron Run footraces in 2015

- The Board confirmed that we will hold these fundraiser races this year, on Saturday June 13th as previously scheduled. Gifts for winners will be simplified this year. A planning meeting will be held in March.

Park Schedule

- See following pages for the schedule of major events in 2015.

NEXT BOARD MEETING is scheduled for March 21st

Pine Grove Furnace State Park 2015 Volunteer Opportunities

Thank you to all who helped on Earth Day, National Public Lands Day, and/or Fall Furnace Festival this year!!!!

Volunteers play a huge role in the success of Pine Grove Furnace State Park. As well as giving back to the park and connecting folks to the outdoors, it allows people the ability to take ownership of their state park. Throughout the 2014 season volunteers both individually and in groups contributed 3,507 hours of service to Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

Service projects varied from litter pick-up, painting, plantings, invasive species removal, trail rehab, firewood splitting and bundling, grant facilitation, environmental education, Eagle Scout Projects and college externships.

If you were unable to volunteer this year or just became a new volunteer, we will need your help in 2015.

Earth Day Volunteer Event | Saturday, April 25 9am-12pm

Observe Earth Day by volunteering in to clean-up the park. There will be a variety of projects to cater to all age groups so bring out the entire family. Free camping (while sites are available) will be offered to non-profit groups that are interested in participating. Please meet at the Furnace Stack Pavilion. All tools will be provided, and participants should dress appropriately. Lunch will be provided by the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

New for 2015: Woodsy Owl Weekend May 8-10

Do you like to volunteer as much as you like to camp in PA State Parks? This 2 for 1 volunteer opportunity is perfect for you or your family. Two nights of free camping in the campground for one morning of volunteering (with lunch included). You must register for the Woodsy Owl Weekend by calling the park office. [717-486-7174](tel:717-486-7174)

National Public Lands Day Volunteer Event and Volunteer Appreciation | Saturday, September 26 9am-1pm

Volunteers around the nation pitch in on National Public Lands Day to show appreciation for the nation's valuable and beautiful public lands. Join the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace and other volunteers for a rewarding day of volunteering at Pine Grove Furnace State Park. Please meet at the Furnace Stack Pavilion. All tools will be provided, and participants should dress appropriately. After a morning of volunteering, all participants will be invited to celebrate with a volunteer appreciation lunch, beginning at noon. The main course will be provided to all participants courtesy of the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace Participants staying for lunch should bring a covered dish to share. During the lunch, the staff of Pine Grove Furnace will honor the dedicated volunteers that have contributed many hours to the park with a short awards presentation.

Fall Furnace Festival | Saturday and Sunday, October 17-18

Calling friends and neighbors of Pine Grove Furnace State Park! Volunteers are needed for the annual Fall Furnace Fest, the largest park event of the year. You can volunteer for a few hours or a whole day. If you are planning to attend the festival, please sign up to help for a couple hours while you are here? Festival hours are Saturday 11 am to 7 pm; Sunday 12 pm to 5 pm. Volunteers are needed to set-up, clean-up, help with activity stations, and be Smokey Bear. If you cannot attend the festival please consider donating adult or children's long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

Ongoing: Volunteers Opportunities

Volunteers are not just limited to helping at the park during the spring and fall volunteer days. Throughout the year volunteers are needed to work on ongoing park projects, new park projects, and environmental education programs. Whether you are one or 25 we can use your help. Please call the park office to set-up a volunteer work day and talk about possible projects. [717-486-7174](tel:717-486-7174)

For more information about programs and events at Pine Grove Furnace State Park, contact Lea Smith, Environmental Education Specialist, at [717-486-7174](tel:717-486-7174) or by email AngeleSmit@pa.gov.

If you need an accommodation to participate in PA State Park activities due to a disability, please contact the park before your visit. With at least three days' notice, interpreters for people who are deaf or hard of hearing are available for educational programs.



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