

Friends of Pine Grove Furnace Board Meeting

Minutes for March 21st, 2015

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

Park Manager's comments

- Campground is opening the last weekend of March, despite the cold weather.
- Upcoming volunteer events: Earth Day on Saturday April 25, and new Woodsie Owl weekend May 8-10 (free camping for registrants who agree to a volunteer work session Saturday morning May 9). Pre-registration is required for these events. Friends will support both events with a grilled lunch after the work sessions on Saturday mornings. Please bring a covered dish to share.
- The Park will host a meeting for leadership of various partners (AT Museum, AT Trail, Central PA Conservancy, South Mountain Partnership, Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau, Michaux Forest Association, and Friends group) to share updates and ideas, and promote cross-group cooperation.
- Ironmaster's Mansion new innkeepers Mike and Mary have moved in and are already very busy.
- Control of invasive plant species (such as for the thorny and abundant barberry which is choking out native plants and obstructs use of many areas in the park) will continue this year. The park will do mowing, manual root removal, and when necessary spraying. Forestry will also conduct plant control activities in several areas adjoining park boundaries.

Treasurer's report and Budget for 2015

- Our current balance is \$29,715 (a detailed report is available upon request).
- Major outlays in 2015 already due include \$18,924 for the new playground at the Fuller Day Use Area. Other expenditures include buying merchandise to sell, and preparations for our Iron Run/Charcoal Challenge races.
- We will continue to support the Ironmaster's Mansion (run by the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy) including their annual fundraising foot races and the Goddard Legacy summer camp. As previously voted, we will send CPC \$1000 now in conjunction with their upcoming foot races on April 26, and later this year another \$1000 to support the Goddard Legacy camp.
- The Board discussed an update of the budget previously prepared for 2014. We should start setting aside money for the Mountain Creek Trail project.

Major projects

- The unassembled playground kit for the Fuller Lake area was delivered from the factory, but installation is pending improved weather. The park found enough in its budget to pay for the necessary ground materials, thus allowing \$2175 of Friends money to be budgeted instead toward the Mountain Creek Trail project. Park employees will perform the playground installation work. Note that a 3rd park playground is anticipated (for the Laurel Lake area) in another couple years when we have adequate funds.
- Discussion continued 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. Ideally we would also install a second bridge near the western trailhead of Mountain Creek Trail, allowing a connection with Koppenhaver Trail and tying together a trail *system* between the

two lakes. This all will be an expensive long-term project, stretching out over several years. In order to provide a formal overview of options, we obtained a proposal from an outside consultant for initial project assessment (essentially, “Phase 0”) which will cost \$1150 -- this consultant’s offer is pending further review and a vote by the Board. The overall project is expected to be sufficiently expensive that we will need to obtain serious grant support. This initial consultant report would be very useful to indicate our serious intent and “scope of project” for grant applications.

- Preparations continue for our 5th annual fundraiser races on Saturday June 13, the Iron Run half marathon and Charcoal Challenge 5k run/walk. Registration is open via www.runreg.com/5505 and www.runreg.com/5507. Required paperwork with DCNR is almost finalized and insurance has been arranged via PPF as in the past. Sponsors and donors are being arranged, and work is in progress to design and buy pint glasses as awards in addition to making patch-ribbons and, for top winners, donated gift cards. The Board discussed trying to be more ecologically friendly in marking the half-marathon course.
- A separate planning meeting for Fall Furnace Fest will be scheduled.

New Merchandise

- A new embroidered patch for 2015 is now available for purchase at the park office: the theme is “Hairy Hand and Pumpkins at Fuller Lake.”
- A new “PGF” oval car magnet (using the same oval design as the oval bumper stickers) is now available for purchase at the park office.

Firewood campground sales

- The 2015 camping season has begun! Firewood sales are a major portion of our group’s income. Though our storage shed is starting the year nicely full of wood, we will eventually need to schedule firewood cutting and splitting sessions to re-fill it.

Park Schedule

- See the following page for the schedule of Spring events in 2015.

NEXT BOARD MEETING is scheduled for May 16th



March, April & May Programs

Every Monday from March 30 to April 20: Hound Hike | 6:15 PM

Meet at Fuller Lake Bath House

Along the trail, hikers will have an opportunity to learn about dogs in the outdoors and how to keep your pet safe when hiking. During the program the dogs will be able to socialize and get quality exercise outdoors. Only one dog per hiker. Please wear sturdy shoes and bring water. Dogs must be leashed and should be friendly with other dogs.

Tuesday, April 7: Pine Grove Half-Pints Slimy Salamanders

Tuesday, April 14: Pine Grove Half-Pints Tail Tales | 10:00 AM or 11:30 AM

Tuesday, April 21: Pine Grove Half-Pints Worm World | Meet at Fuller Bath House

The Half-Pints program series is back on Mondays in April. The program is for children ages 2-6 and will include a story, activity, craft and songs. The 10:00 AM and 11:30 AM programs will be identical, but the topic will change from week to week. All Pine Grove Half-pint programs are free of charge. Please dress for the outdoors. Program will be held rain or shine. Siblings are welcome; however, when registering, only count the number of children between the ages of 2-6. **Registration is required.** Please register at the park office or by calling 717-486-7174.

Friday, April 10: Nocturnal Amphibians | 8:00 PM | Campground Amphitheatre

Not all four-legged nocturnal animals are mammals. Amphibians have busy night lives as well. Find out what these amphibians are doing on a spring evening and watch your step as we search for them.

Saturday, April 25: Earth Day Volunteer Clean-up | 9:00 AM | Brickyard Pavilion

The park will observe Earth Day with a volunteer day to tidy up the park. There will be a variety of projects to cater to all age groups so bring out the entire family. 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. **Registration is required.** Please register at the park office or by calling 717-486-7174.

Saturday, May 2: From Past to Present: Historic Walking Tour | 10:00 AM

Meet at Old Stone Furnace Stack

Pine Grove Furnace was not always the scenic mountain getaway you see today. Take a walk through the past to discover the history of Pine Grove Furnace. Please wear sturdy shoes.

Saturday, May 2: Amphibian Night Hike | 7:30 PM | Meet at Fuller Lake Bath House

The night forest is full of life. Take a short night hike on the mile-long Koppenhaver Trail to search for amphibian night life. Please wear sturdy shoes and bring a flashlight.

Friday, May 8 to Sunday, May 10: Woodsy Owl Weekend

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 and your family: two nights of free camping in the campground for one morning of volunteering (with lunch included). **Join the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace and other volunteers for a rewarding day of volunteering at Pine Grove Furnace State Park on Saturday, May 9th from 8 AM to 12 PM.** All tools will be provided, and participants should dress appropriately. After a morning of volunteering, all participants will be invited to 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. **You must register for the Woodsy Owl Weekend by visiting the park office or calling 717-486-7174**

Sunday, May 10: From Past to Present: Historic Walking Tour | 10:00 AM

Meet at Old Stone Furnace Stack

Pine Grove Furnace was not always the scenic mountain getaway you see today. Take a walk through the past to discover the history of Pine Grove Furnace. Please wear sturdy shoes.

Find all upcoming events at: www.visitPAParks.com

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