

# MFA NEWS

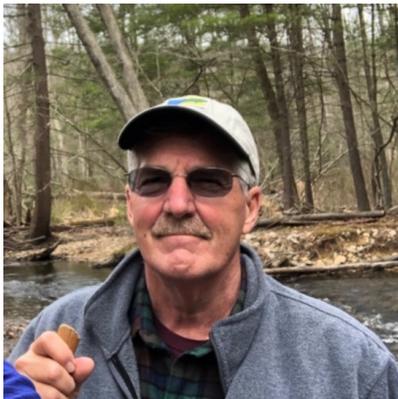


THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHAUX FOREST  
ASSOCIATION

Editor: Judy Prescott  
Web Master: Mike Romano

Fall 2020

[www.michauxforestassociation.com](http://www.michauxforestassociation.com)



President's Column  
By Gerry Ahnell

The Fall is here,  
the air is clear,  
the leaves fall down  
red, yellow, and brown.

The short poem above was instilled in me by my mother while wrestling to finish my homework as a young boy, many years ago. I will never forget the ease at which her words flowed about the Fall season that she and I love so much.

It has been a tough year for all of us because of the pandemic, which promises to extend into the coming months. I believe all of us are exceedingly grateful we have our cabins and the Michaux Forest for escape from the confines and restrictions of our hometowns and normal everyday dealings. While the economic

impacts of the pandemic have not escaped the budgets and planned projects within the Park and Forest, we continue to see how the Park's beaches, picnic grounds, forest trails, and camping sites continue to provide a welcome relief for all to enjoy.

Many planned events this year have been cancelled. For the first time in several decades, the annual MFA picnic had to be cancelled due to concerns over health and safety for the large numbers of our members and friends who normally attend the June event. Although the picnic was cancelled, the MFA Board members did meet that day in the open-air pavilion with ample social distancing measures to conduct its annual business. After Robert Shenk (past MFA President) led the formal installation of the MFA officers and board members for another year, we had an opportunity to hear from Forest and Park personnel on various issues impacting the 453 cabins in the Michaux Forest. Chief among these issues voiced were challenges Forest and Park personnel face when leased campsites/cabins change ownership. Often there is little to no communication between Forest/Park personnel and the new owners until after the ink has dried on the transaction. Only then are the constraints on cabin improvements and other costly concerns identified. The MFA posts the "Guidelines for

Leased Forest Campsites" on its webpage, but we all need to help to ensure local realtors and potential buyers communicate with Forest and Park officials before finalizing the transaction.

We have a new Park Manager- Chris Houck, who came on board this summer and hopes to continue pressing the need for more funding to improve the Park's recreational features and activities. The "Friends of the Pine Grove Forest" group is continuing work on the bridge connecting the Koppenhaver Trail to the Mountain Creek Trail. All plans/permits have been approved and the prefabricated bridge is expected to be installed sometime in October or early November. Thanks to all who have participated in the undertaking.

While a lot of the events didn't or won't occur this year (like the Fall Furnace Fest, Pumpkin Float and Hairy Hand), I hope we all look back at this year as a time we had ample opportunity to enjoy the scenic beauty and tranquilly our cabins and the Forest had to offer. Enjoy the coming season and be safe.

**Postscript:** Did you see the Comet this summer?



**MFA  
Patrol  
Report**  
*By Richard  
Baish*

Greetings!

We are now entering the fall season and the mountains are really changing. What an awesome time of year! Despite the increased activity in the park and mountains, the summer season, while pandemic strange, was relatively incident free for our member's lease sites. I did discover one break-in to a cabin in the month of May. The perps stole a widescreen TV, and other items including tools and ammunition. Upon further investigation to neighboring cabins, I did not find any other signs of vandalism; thus, it appears the burglary was an isolated incident. The State Police investigated, but to the best of my knowledge have yet to make an arrest.

Since I don't have much more to report, I would like to share a brief personal experience

I had this summer. It linked generations of family that have loved and enjoyed the cabin where I grew up and now own and cherish.

Anne McKellar, the daughter of my great Aunt Maude and Uncle Charlie Goodyear, passed away in July at the age of 100 years. Anne was several years older than my mother, Nancy Goodyear Baish, but as first cousins, they had many glorious times playing and splashing in and around Laurel lake in their younger years. Anne's father Charlie, and my Granddaddy Norton Goodyear, were responsible for the construction of the family cottage across from Laurel lake. That was in 1928, and they called it Laurel Lodge. Maude and Charlie Goodyear's family and friends enjoyed the cabin for nearly 40 years during their ownership. In 1967, Aunt Maude decided it was time to pass the treasured cabin on, and my mother and father were blessed to be offered and able to purchase the treasured cottage.

I know I must keep this re-

port brief; therefore, I will now address the summer experience I referenced earlier. Anne's daughter, Laurie Anne, came in from Michigan this past September to lay her mother to rest in Westminster Cemetery. My family was honored to join her, along with my out of town cousins Cindy and Maude (cousins I had never been able to meet before!). We shared stories and challenged our memories about days gone by in the precious Pine Grove Furnace area...and of course the cabin that anchored so many of those memories. It was a blessed reunion!

Well, thanks for indulging my family tale. I know it is bit out of the ordinary for my report, but it made me think how important the roles these cabins play in each of our lives. And I just wanted to share how my beloved Laurel Lodge has been instrumental to my family's delightful and marvelous memories of the Pine Grove Furnace area for nearly 100 years!

Take Care!

Richard Goodyear Baish



"Pine Grove Furnace c.1900" by artist Stephen G. Stroup

Nathan Yocum  
Forester  
Pa. DCNR

Happy Fall/Autumn everyone! I always tell people that, by far, my favorite two-month stretch in Pennsylvania runs from the beginning of October to the end of November. The leaves are changing, it's "sweatshirt weather" which is oddly comforting, football season is underway, and we are going to start seeing the early holiday porch lights/retail sales/Christmas music soon. It's an overall great time to be a Pennsylvanian, and I think a lot of you would agree, worldwide pandemic or not. As bad as these last six months or so has been, one good point we will take away from it will be people's reconnection to nature. Across the entire DCNR, and specifically Michaux State Forest, we have noticed a much higher level of recreation as individuals retreat to the ultimate safe haven outside of their home, which I think personally

is fantastic.

In the leased campsite world, we are noticing definitive higher usage and, interestingly, a much higher level of transfers of our leased campsites here in the Michaux. Something many members may have also observed. As we all understand, the influx of new cabin owners could end up being a blessing and a curse, and I'd encourage all of you to do your best to meet these individuals, welcome them into your "community", and do your best to inform them, as I will do as time goes along. To give you all an update with personnel in our office, we have recently switched the cabin program from Recreation/Maintenance section to under the Forest Management section. Mike Wright, whom many of you probably have met in the past, has received a promotion and now will inherit the supervision of myself and leased campsite program. Comments/questions will still be passed to me moving forward, but Mike will be doing a lot of background work and advising some of the

more complex issues. Mike has been here over a decade and has overseen a lot of our timber sales, wildlife management projects, and the Camp Michaux, or "Bunker Hill Farm" project earlier this year on Michaux Road. It'll take Mike a little while to learn the ins and outs of the complex leased campsite program, but we're definitely in great hands. If you see him around, say hello!

Many of you have noticed an increasing generator "issue". We have had a couple installations in the Pine Grove area, and I've received many phone calls asking for clarification on the generator policy. First off, thank you all so much for keeping us updated, as I would have stumbled upon these new installs much later, had you not informed me. As of the time of this writing, I think our personnel has come up with a great policy, which includes a wattage/sound decibel cap, a "quiet time", and restricts permanent installation. We've spent a couple weeks researching different USFS and research studies to make sure we get this correct. This will be bounced off the MFA and our superiors for advice. We are also working amongst our staff to decide on the actions to take against the individuals that have installed permanent, whole-home generators without our approval at their leased campsites. As always, please keep in touch with me, and if you ever need anything, feel free to reach out ([nayocum@pa.gov](mailto:nayocum@pa.gov)). Happy holidays and stay safe!



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No Job Too Small

Litter Patrol Report  
By Diane and Bob Shenk

2020 was the 27<sup>th</sup> year that the MFA participated in the Adopt-A-Highway Program, and it was a year that made us change and adapt. Our April date was cancelled due to restrictions in Cumberland County, but we were happy to be able to pick up trash in June, August, and September. Because of the CDC guidelines, we limited the number of volunteers, were careful to be socially distant and wear masks while distributing supplies, and did not meet at the end of the clean-up. We had heard about the increased use of the Park and Forest, so we were pleasantly surprised that the amount of trash did not increase.

One change we did notice is that we were now finding discarded masks and small bottles of hand sanitizer along road. We appreciated our gloves provided by the program! One thing that didn't change was how wonderful it is to be in the woods on a Saturday morning and leave the road looking better than when you started.

Special thanks to our great group of volunteers who helped this year:

Patti & Jim Deppen, Douglas & Deborah Duke, Lyle & Judy Herr, and Tom & Linda Reidenbaugh

Our 2021 dates will be set early next year. If you are interested in volunteering, please email us at [dlshenk@comcast.net](mailto:dlshenk@comcast.net) with "MFA" in the subject line.

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*Sharon L. Spencer, Owner*

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## Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park

*By Mary Soderberg,  
Vice-Chair*

During this very unusual year, we have had to cancel our Iron Run Trail Race, Fall Furnace Fest and a number of volunteer days. Even so, we have kept busy preparing for the new trail bridge and keeping up with the demand for firewood at the campground and merchandise sales.

In January, the Friends began working with the park staff, DCNR engineers and Gannett Fleming engineers to plan for the new trail bridge to connect the midsection of the Koppenhaver trail to the western trail head of Mountain Creek Trail. The goal being to create a trail system out of the existing network of relatively short unconnected trails in the park.

Toward that end, the Friends were awarded a grant from the Cumberland County Land Partnerships Grant Program for \$30,000 and a second grant for \$40,000 from the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau of the Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation. These funds were matched with Friends' funds and the in-kind work provided by the Park staff to grade the site and prepare the foundation for the bridge.

During the last week of October, the new trail bridge finally became a reality. On the morning of October 29, the first truck brought in the precast concrete abutments and steps. A crane was used to lift the abutments and steps into position on either side of the creek. As park staff worked to backfill around the abutments, a second truck arrived with the 50-foot bridge. Again, the crane was used to position the prefabricated bridge onto the abutments.

In spite of the heavy rains

throughout the day, the installation went pretty smoothly. Everyone was very cold and wet, but that seemed to make everyone work a little faster! The park staff working alongside the Eisenhart Crane crew and the engineers from Gannett Fleming and DCNR finished the bridge in the early afternoon.

The remaining tasks include rails for the steps, some landscaping and signage. We are excited about the new hiking opportunities that this bridge creates in Pine Grove Furnace State Park! In addition to connecting the Mountain Creek and Koppenhaver Trails, the bridge allows for easy access to the nearby section of the Appalachian Trail, Pole Steeple, and Old Railroad Bed Road.

**First Day Hike 2021:** The hike has not been scheduled yet, please check with our Facebook page or the Park office as the date gets closer.



MFA Board of Directors

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Gerry.ahnell@verizon.net

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Newsletter Editor:

Judy Prescott

Past President: Mark Colucci

Directors

Lyle Herr

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The summer Board Meeting was no picnic!  
Although we got all the necessary "business" completed ...  
we missed the pleasure of spending time with the  
wonderful people who make the  
Michaux Forest Association valuable!



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UPPER CAMPUS CABIN AT CAMP MICHAUX, GARDNERS, R. D. 2, PA.

If you have the history of your cabin and wish to share please consider submitting an article to future newsletters. Any old pictures you have are also welcome! I provided the vintage post-cards in this issue.

I would love to hear from you!!

Judy Prescott, Editor  
pressyhi@aol.com

## What's Cooking in Cooke Issues Around the Neighborhood



By Andre Weltman,  
Twp. Planning Committee

As a reminder, Cooke Township ordinances, resolutions and other information are available on the Township's website [www.cooketwp.org](http://www.cooketwp.org). Questions may also be emailed to [cooketwp@kuhncom.net](mailto:cooketwp@kuhncom.net).

Please feel free to attend Township Board of Supervisors meetings, usually held the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. at the Township building, 1700 Centerville Road. Your attendance and participation are always welcome. (Before dropping by, check for schedule changes on our website or on the bulletin board next to the front door).

### **BUDGET, ROADS & AN OLD BRIDGE**

Running a very rural jurisdiction with 20 miles of roads and aging infrastructure, but limited income, is a challenge. County-wide assessment of local bridges has made us aware that a mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century bridge in Cooke Township is in particularly bad shape. This is the short Quarry Road bridge crossing Mountain Creek in the State Park (but on a Township-owned road) that connects the old furnace stack with the Brickyard Day Use Area.

This bridge needs expensive permits before we can put some stone underneath where water has "scoured" its supports, and in the long run the bridge will need a full replacement. Inspections indicate it is currently safe to drive on -- there are no formal weight limits -- but we'd prefer not to have very heavy vehicles cross the Quarry Road bridge. All of this is to say, we anticipate that the expense to ensure the safety of this bridge will severely constrain Cooke Township's ability to engage in other worthwhile road projects in the next few years. Please bear with us while we juggle our annual budget and seek outside funding.

### **SOLICITATION ORDINANCE**

From time to time, we hear complaints that unknown and uninvited visitors come down local driveways to sell something or offer a service. In response, Cooke Township has followed the lead of neighboring jurisdictions and passed a "Solicitation Ordinance." Ordinance 2020-1 directs that "It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in business as a Solicitor, calling at residences or places of business without the previous consent of the occupant for the purpose of soliciting orders, sales, subscriptions, or business of any nature, or seeking information or donations without first having registered with the Township." Moreover, "Solicitation is not permitted if 'no trespassing' or 'no solicitation' or similar signage are clearly displayed at the property entrance or on a residence." The requirement for peddlers to be registered with the Township does not apply to government or utility workers, non-profit groups, political activities, or Halloween-related trick-or-treaters. While it will be difficult to enforce, we hope this new ordi-

nance gives pause to scam artists or simply unwanted cold-call sales. If someone does ignore the new ordinance and the "soliciting permit required" signs now posted on Township roads, please safely collect as much information as possible (including license plates) and let us know. You can read this and other ordinances on our website [www.cooketwp.org](http://www.cooketwp.org) -- click the "document library" on the left.

### **EMAIL LIST**

On occasion, Cooke Township has information for residents and cabin owners that is more urgent than the twice-a-year MFA newsletter. Our existing list of emails is very incomplete and out-of-date. If you would like to receive these infrequent notifications, please send your name, cabin address and email address to [cooketwp@kuhncom.net](mailto:cooketwp@kuhncom.net). We of course will not share our email list with anyone nor send you "spam"!

### **COMMUNICATING WITH COOKE TOWNSHIP**

Our tiny rural Township is staffed by part-timers. We do not have regular office hours, and are open by appointment only. The best way to reach Cooke Township is by email at [cooketwp@kuhncom.net](mailto:cooketwp@kuhncom.net) or less efficiently, leave a voice message at 717-486-8114. When leaving emails or voicemails, always please tell us if you are a seasonal cabin owner (and specify State Park vs. State Forest), and provide your Cooke address as well as relevant contact info to return your message. This will help us respond correctly and will reduce extra back-and-forth communications.



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