

# MFA NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHAUX FOREST  
ASSOCIATION

MFA Board of Directors

**Officers**

**President:**

Gerry Ahnell

Gerry.ahnell@verizon.net

Vice-President: John Rovegno

Treasurer: Warren Hartman

Secretary: Nancy Summers

Newsletter Editor: Judy Prescott

Past President: Mark Colucci

**Directors**

Lyle Herr

Diane Shenk

**Editor: Judy Prescott**

**Fall 2019**

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



President's Column  
By Gerry Ahnell

This is my first Newsletter column as President of the MFA. I would like to start by thanking our outgoing President, Mark Colucci, and all of the other officers and directors who have worked tirelessly over the years to make the MFA the great organization it is today.

A little background about myself. My wife Valerie and I have been cabin owners in the Forest for over 14 years and are grateful for the wonderful neighbors we have here. I'm a recently retired consulting geologist and we both enjoy many of the outdoor opportunities afforded us by cabin ownership.

As I started to prepare this column, it was a muggy 90 degrees in the beginning of October! We are usually all looking forward to the cool breezes nor-

mally associated with the Fall. Since our Annual Meeting and Picnic at the end of June, we have been spared the 60 plus inches of rain we experienced last year. The lack of the heavy downpours that often washed out roads, driveways and toppled trees through the forest provided ample opportunities for hiking, biking, swimming and other activities this year throughout the forest. The good weather has stimulated the growth of numerous insects and vegetation, which can detract from the beauty of the forest and its recreational lakes. Gotta take the good with the bad, I guess.

Overall, for me the Fall is a special time. I always look forward to the Fall Furnace Fest sponsored by The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace Group, the Pumpkin Float, Hairy Hand and other things to experience in the region before the cold and snow drives most of us indoors.

On a final note, please enjoy the MFA Newsletter and the updated MFA website. Both items often provide valuable information on current events related to the Park and Forest, as well as guidance on topics related the campsite leases we all have. As always, the MFA staff welcomes hearing from any of our members with any concerns or comments they might have.

**Litter Patrol Report**  
By Diane and Bob Shenk

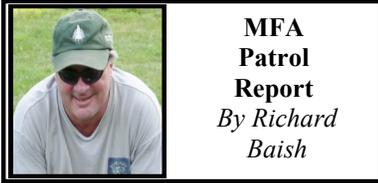
Over 25 years ago the MFA adopted the two-mile section of road from the Pine Grove Furnace State Park Office to the Laurel Lake dam through the Cumberland County "Adopt-A-Highway" program. We're happy to report that our volunteers have completed another year of helping to make our forest highway look trash free.

Our group heads out on four Saturday mornings between April and September with gloves, vests, and trash bags. We often find the expected ...and then there is the unusual – a wedding garter, a cell phone, a swimming pool!

We're happy to report that we had the least amount of trash during our September volunteer day. Let's hope that continues in 2020. Those dates will be available early next year.

Many thanks to the volunteers who helped pick up litter in 2019: Pat Bolden, Jim Deppen, Warren Hardman, Judy Herr, Lyle Herr, Mark Pettigrew, Linda Reidenbaugh, Tom Reidenbaugh, Mike Rish, Chris Roth, Jen Roth, Ken Stambaugh, Terri Stambaugh, John Strine.

Our apologies if we missed anyone.



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

Greetings everyone!

Another summer has flown by, and we are in the beginning of the Fall season. I just finished my September inspections, and am happy to report that...I don't have much to report! By now, I am certain that damages that incurred with the severe mid-summer storms have been addressed. If I see that damages have not been dealt with after a month or so, it is my policy to call again just to be assured my messages have been received. I realize sometimes it is tough to break away and travel to do an assessment on the situation; therefore, I try to leave as detailed description as I can.

Human vandalism was at a minimum over the summer, though the bears seemed to have taken over in that regard. While our hungry neighbors of the woods do create havoc to bird-feeders and tear our screens...at least they don't violate and steal our property...other than sweet smelling grills and garbage that is! That should be a reminder to clean our camp sites and grills, as well as secure or remove any food or trash that we may have accumulated when we visit our cabin homes.

While I try not to disturb any of you when doing my inspections, I do enjoy talking to you all when I see you out and enjoying your cottages. I usually just wave, but if you need or want to talk, please just signal me over if

you have any questions or concerns with my duties. Most of you probably recognize my sierra mist colored GMC pick-up that I drive to do most of my visits, but I want to inform you that I recently purchased an old 1998 lapis blue jeep wrangler to make my rounds. The short wheelbase is a real plus when I get myself into many of the tight quarters that I find myself all too often!

In closing, just want to wish you a wonderful fall and winter season. Please feel free to contact me any time. My email is richbaish@gmail.com. To call me, leave a message at 717-226-4959, and I will respond back as quickly as possible.

Happy trails and travels!  
Richard G. Baish

Nathan Yocum  
Leased Campsite Administrator

Michaux Forest has a few projects that are currently underway. You may have noticed some of them. First is a restoration project at Bunker Hill. Mowing is underway and the overall goal is to restore it to its' old condition (when it was a farm). The next steps after mowing are plantings of species beneficial for wildlife and wildflower mixes for pollinators.

We have received several inquiries about the procedures for addressing excess water on lease sites. This is the first time we have received this type of request and there is no protocol in

place. We have been working with both the Franklin County Conservation District and the Cumberland County Conservation District, and have been tapping into their knowledge to remediate water issues to deal with at the cabins. Our goal is to create procedures that will assist cabin owners when they are submitting plans for approval. The water tables under the ground have supposedly changed after another wet spring and the record-breaking wet spring we had in 2018.

There will be several salvage timber harvests upcoming in the surrounding Pine Grove area on state forestland. We had a fungal pathogen called oak anthracnose that killed a lot of our chestnut oak (AKA Rock oaks).

That's all I have from the state forest side of things. I am happy to be here and welcome questions at any at time.

Phone 717-352-2211  
nayocum@pa.gov

**WOLFE & COMPANY REALTORS**  
Ray "Buz" Wolfe CRS, Broker/Owner  
33 South Pitt Street, Carlisle (717) 243-1551  
Thomas Lindsey (717) 580-2820  
*"We Know Michaux!"*  
**2 cabin owners on staff!**  
View cabins for sale at:  
**www.wolfecr.com**

What's Cooking in Cooke  
By Andre Weltman, Twp.  
Planning Committee

As a reminder, Cooke Township ordinances, resolutions and other information are available on the Township's website [www.cooketownship.org](http://www.cooketownship.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).

**ROADS**

As we approach snow season,

please be thoughtful about where you park your vehicles. Snowplows need to be able to move freely near both sides of our roads and need considerable space to turn around. When snow is forecast, don't park along roads and please avoid blocking the far ends of roads or anywhere a utility vehicle may turn around. This is especially true along narrow Old Shippensburg Road, and the ends of Murphy Road and Old Railroad Bed Road.

Remember that cars, hikers and bikers all use our roads. Everyone needs to safely "Share the Road"! Per State law, give bicycles at least 4 feet of room as you drive by. Be careful when driving anywhere, but especially on Old Railroad Bed Road (behind Laurel Lake) near the busy Pole Steeple parking lot.

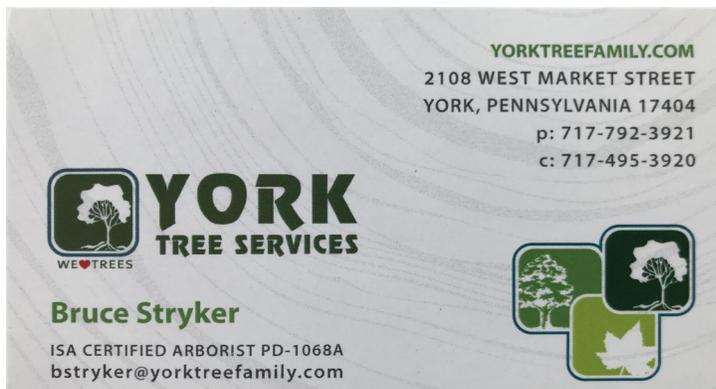
**CENSUS**

The census is coming! No joke: April 1, 2020 is National Census Day though you may receive notifications and survey materials long before then. We strive for an accurate count in Cooke Township, where even small errors represent a large percentage of our tiny population (in the 2010 census, we officially had only 179 residents).

Remember that cabins on leased State land are not supposed to be permanent, full-time residences and generally shouldn't be listed as such for the census. Nonetheless, census workers may visit your cabin trying for a complete national count – despite Cooke Township's involvement over the last couple years in pre-census planning led by the U.S. Census Bureau. Please be polite if a census worker unexpectedly wanders up to your cabin. They are generally not familiar with our unusual local situation and won't recognize that the majority of "houses" in Cooke Township are actually seasonal-use only.

**FEMA FLOODPLAIN MAPS**

Letters have already been mailed to a small number of cabin owners whose properties were added to the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area in newly revised maps.



Common Sense Maintenance  
for Your Cabin  
By Deb and Bill Rosevear

*These are some things we can do to protect our cabins from fire, rot, insects, and water damage. Take a walk around your cabin, inside and out. Note what needs to be fixed. Doing this seasonally will keep your cabin in good repair and prevent maintenance tasks from building up to an unmanageable and very expensive list of tasks.*

**Spring:** Contract with a company to spray for insects, or do this yourself if you prefer. Doing so can protect the wood in your cabin from carpenter ants and termites, which can both do quite a lot of damage. It can also keep your cabin from being overrun by many other insects, which happens quickly in the forest. If your porch is screened, check screening for holes and repair.

Check for damage from snow and ice the previous winter. Check your roof. Look for missing or loose shingles, and for moss growing on your roof. It's a good idea to spray your roof shingles with a 10% bleach/90% water solution to keep the moss at bay. Most of our cabins are in shade and roofs stay damp which is conducive to moss growth. The company that installed the roof on our cabin strongly suggested we spray it yearly with a bleach/water solution. Clean out gutters in the spring so water runs away from your cabin and also to keep your

gutters dry. (One less place for mosquitoes to breed) Pick up limbs and twigs downed in winter storms. These can be used for starting campfires. If putting water back into your cabin in the spring, remember to install clean filters.

Take a look at where your cabin touches the ground. Many cabins are built on wooden "sleepers" that sit directly on the ground in some places. Look for rot. You may have to jack up the cabin and insert new pressure treated wood or install cement footers for the cabin to rest upon. Check your chimney for cracks and leaks.

Wood and cement steps can become dangerous when covered with algae and moss. Use a hand sprayer to apply a bleach/water solution or an algae killer on slippery areas. This will probably have to be done a few times over the course of the year, especially if it's a rainy summer and fall.

Don't leave garbage cans outside. We have bears everywhere now. Filled garbage cans are a great way to draw bears and the damage that comes with them. Bird seed attracts bears and rodents. Don't store seed in sheds or under cabins.

**Summer:** Don't stack wood between trees. Yes, it's an easy way to keep firewood stacked but over time it will rot and kill the trees that you've stacked the wood against. If you have grass or weeds around your cabin, keep the area mowed. This helps keep ticks away from areas that your family frequents. Check your holding tank. Have it pumped when necessary. Keep

cabin roads in good repair. Driving on muddy roads can lead to damage and deep ruts. Have stone delivered to cover your road. Check with forestry or parks because they have specific quarries that they want us to use to prevent the stone from bringing in invasive weeds.

**Fall:** In late fall rake or blow leaves away from your cabin. This provides a fire danger buffer. Cut off limbs that are overhanging your cabin so snow and ice don't bring them down on your roof over the winter. Clean gas grills and stow away for the season. Shut off propane tanks. If you have a hose outside, drain and stow away for winter. Look around for dead trees that threaten to fall on your cabin. Call forestry or parks to get written permission to have them cut down.

**Winter:** In addition to Rich Baish who checks our cabins, make your own frequent trips to look for winter storm damage at your cabin. Catching damage quickly can make the difference between a repair that costs a few hundred or one that runs into the thousands of dollars.



**Friends of  
Pine Grove Furnace  
State Park**

*By Mary Soderberg,  
Vice-Chair*

**Koppenhaver Trail Con-  
nector Bridge Planned for  
2020**

In 2016, when the Friends built the trail bridge to connect the two sections of Mountain Creek Trail, our long-term plan had always been to connect the Koppenhaver Trail with the Mountain Creek Trail to create an easy off-road option for hiking between the Laurel Lake area and Fuller Lake. Earlier this year, the Friends and Park staff met with a team from Gannett Fleming Engineering to develop a plan to install a second trail bridge across Mountain Creek in the summer of 2020.

The goal is to have a bridge near the western trailhead of the Mountain Creek Trail connecting to the midsection of the Koppenhaver loop. The proposed bridge will provide access to the Old Railroad Bed Road near where the Appalachian Trail ascends to Pole Steeple.

This new bridge will expand the hiking opportunities in Pine Grove Furnace State Park by allowing easy connections and loop hikes incorporating the nearby section of the Appalachian Trail, Pole Steeple, Old Railroad Bed Road as well as Mountain Creek Trail and Koppenhaver Trail.

The bridge will be a prefabricated 60-foot steel bridge with a pine deck. Unlike our earlier bridge which was constructed and installed by volunteers, the bridge will be delivered on a truck to the site.

Earlier this fall, the Friends were awarded a grant from the Cumberland County Land Partnerships 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 will be matched with Friends' funds and site preparation by the Park staff.

The exact timing of the installation will be dependent on approval and timing of the state permit, but our goal is to have the bridge installed before the end of next summer. For more

information about the Friends, visit our website at: [www.PineGroveFriends.org](http://www.PineGroveFriends.org) or follow us on Facebook.

**PECK'S SEPTIC  
SERVICE, LLC**

DEP Approved

"We Do Septic Inspection"

Holding Tanks Cleaned

Privies Cleaned

System Inspections

Reasonable Rates

Immediate Service

**717-486-5548**

**Spencer & Spencer  
Realtors**

Experienced in working  
with Park and State officials

Carlisle: 717-258-4666  
Shippensburg: 717-532-4160

References & no obligation  
market value analysis.

*Sharon L. Spencer, Owner*

**2020 with the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park**

First Day Hike, January 1, 2020: Start the new year with a hike in Pine Grove Furnace State Park. This will be the fourth year that the Friends have led a hike on New Year's Day. The hike will begin at the Fuller Lake Bath House at 1:00PM. Hot beverages and cookies will be served.

Earth Day, April 25: Celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of Earth Day with a morning of volunteering and giving back to the Park from 9AM to noon on Saturday, April 25.

Woodsy Owl Camping Weekend, May 16 and 17: Bring your family for a weekend of camping and spend Saturday morning volunteering.

Iron Run and Charcoal Challenge, June 13 The annual Friends fundraiser trail races are scheduled for June 6, 2020. What for more details regarding online registration for the two races.

October 17 and 18: Fall Furnace Fest. A family weekend with food and craft vendors, entertainment and historical demonstrations. Saturday night will feature the annual pumpkin parade and the legend of the Hairy Hand.

Park News  
Mike Kutzmonich  
Park Ranger

Another season is upon us. Other than the double amount of normal rainfall, this past season was overall a good year with some great additions to the park. In the spring we were given some money to install ADA pathways in the Furnace Stack Day Use Area. The park is now ADA compliant from the Furnace Stack Pavilion to the comfort station to the Hiker/Biker Trail to Laurel Lake. This is a great feature to our patrons requiring ADA accommodations. Also, this year we had the addition of an electric car charging station that we put at the Bendersville Road parking lot. This location was chosen with its centralized location to the campground, Paymasters Cabin, Ironmasters Mansion, and the Furnace Stack. We have already seen usage to the charging station and received positive feedback. Also today I was thinking

of the many new plants we added to the park, mainly in our native garden at the park office. Thanks to the volunteers, many who are campsite lessees, who helped with the plantings as well as your continued stewardship and contributions to the park.

I'd like to take a little time to discuss one of the Department's initiatives for which I am passionate. That is maintaining our commitment to preserving the dark sky of the South Mountain Area. When I was a Park Manager Trainee in 2006 I had the blessing of being assigned under the Park Operations Manager of the Hills Creek Complex, Chip Harrison. One of the parks under Chip's management was Cherry Springs in Potter County. At the time Cherry Springs was under quite a transformation into one of the premiere locations in the Eastern U.S. for astronomy. Cherry Springs is said to be the best star viewing skies east of the Mississippi River. During

my time at Cherry Springs I learned a lot about the importance of preserving the night sky and what a treasure it is. It is one of those things that once it's gone it's gone for good. The South Mountain Area reminds me much of the Cherry Springs area.

Some quick facts about our current night sky:

1. Currently, 80% of North Americans cannot see the Milky Way.
2. If you lived in Paris France, you would have to travel over 500 miles to see a night sky without light pollution.
3. If you lived in Singapore, your eyes would never adjust to night vision since the skies are so bright.
4. During the 1994 Los Angeles Earthquake power outages, many people reported to 911 that there was a strange silver cloud in the sky. They were seeing the Milky Way for the first time.

Environmental Impacts:

1. Light pollution is estimated to kill millions of birds a year due to the effects on migratory habits.
2. Light pollution has impacts on tree and plant's natural cycles causing improper growth pushes and dormancy times thus stressing the plants.
3. Light pollution is a large contributor to climate change with so much energy going to nighttime lighting, much of which is unnecessary and wasted.
4. Light pollution has effects on humans, such as messing with circadian rhythms that can lead to serious health effects.

Perhaps the first thing I noticed moving from my last assignment in Delaware County to Pine Grove Furnace was the night sky and the



## Ron Koser's Electric

**For All Your Electric & Cabin Maintenance**

<u><b>Electric</b></u>	<u><b>Maintenance</b></u>
- Repairs	- Clean Gutters & Downspouts
- Upgrades	- Clean Roofs
- Lightening Damage	- Power Washing
- New Circuits	- Leaf Blowing

**327 Pine Grove Road, Gardners, PA 17324**  
**(717) 486-8947**  
**No Job Too Small**



easily visible swath of stars running down the middle of the sky called the Milky Way. It had been quite some time since I had seen it and I forgot what a sight and rare treat the night sky really is. We are incredibly fortunate to have a fantastic night sky here in the South Mountain Area, considerably different than the surrounding areas. My son and I snowshoed one particularly clear and cold evening last winter and we reveled on the fantastic show the night sky presented to us. I encourage all of you to take in the night sky here and marvel at how lucky we are to have it. It is our duty as stewards of the land to do what we can to preserve it.

What I am asking of you all is to think about the precious night sky. Preserving the night sky is a condition of the Leased Campsite Guidelines and I have brought to attention some light pollutions on campsite inspections. Some things that are easy to fix are to reduce or eliminate outside spotlights. Quite often these are used out of habit and left on for no reason. Eliminate spotlights illuminating signs, drives, paths, and other items that don't need to be lit up. Eliminate dusk-to-dawn lights. Place outside lights on motion sensors not switches. Here in the park we are replacing standard spot and flood lights with downward facing solar spotlights that are on a motion sensor. They simply come on for about 20 seconds or so when tripped and then go off. We are continuing to lessen our impact on the night sky.

For those of you who have made improvements to your

light pollution, I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. For the rest, I ask that you think about the sky as you visit the area and use your cabins. Ask yourselves if you really need all the spot lights on at your cabin. Ask yourselves where can you reduce your contribution to light pollution. Ask what I can do on my part to preserve the night sky here in the South Mountain. Not only will you save some money and reduce your carbon footprint, but you will notice and appreciate the fantastic night sky we are most fortunate to have. In addition you can be thankful that we are not in the majority of the world's population who can't see it and most likely never will.

Continued on page 7

### **Cook Township Continued from page 3**

The update can be examined at <https://www.ccpa.net/3921/Floodplain-Management-and-Maps> where a web link takes you to the center of Cumberland County. If you have questions feel free to contact us as noted below.

### **BLACK BEARS**

In a previous newsletter we mentioned the increased black bear population in Cooke Township (and the South Mountain region more generally). This is another reminder to be mindful of garbage cans, pet feeding areas, grills with dripped cooking grease, and

any other source of interesting smells that might attract bears. They have been active all across Cooke in 2019 including repeatedly causing major problems at dumpsters in the State Park.

You might think that once cold weather sets in, bears disappear until next Spring – but they may wake up and move around even in Winter with snow on the ground. Don't attract bears to your cabin! It's not good for us nor for the animals.

Please take a look at the Game Commission brochure "**Living with Pennsylvania Black Bears**" <https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/WildlifeSpecies/BlackBear/Pages/LivingwithBlackBears.aspx>.

### **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.



**50 GILBERT'S**  
PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROL

**PROTECT YOUR HOME**  
away from home

*Keep your cabin or cottage free of destructive Carpenter Ants, Power Post Beetles and other pests for a Pest Free Summer!*

**717-249-6667**

GilbertsPestControl.com  
fb.com/gilbertspestcontrol

# Feuchtenberger Construction



- Room Additions
- Hardwood Flooring
- Custom Woodworking
- Chinking Repairs
- Chimney Reconstruction
- Foundation Repairs
- Backhoe Work
- Decks
- Bathrooms
- Kitchens

**Total Cabin Care  
And Designs ...**

**717-226-4970**  
**Ask for "Ed"**



**GREEN MOUNTAIN  
GENERAL STORE & DELI**

4640 Carlisle Rd (Just off Rt 34)  
Gardners, PA 17324  
717-486-4558

<p><b>*NEW MENU ITEMS*</b> FRENCH FRIES MOZZARELLA STICKS ONION RINGS CHICKEN TENDERS SHRIMP - FISH PLATTERS &amp; WINGS TOO!!</p>	<p><b>*ATM*</b> <b>*FULL DELI*</b> <b>*PA LOTTERY*</b> <b>*FIREWOOD*</b> <b>*GROCERIES* LIVE BAIT*</b> <b>*HARDWARE NEEDS*</b> <b>*PROPANE EXCHANGE*</b></p>
--	--

Open Monday-Friday 7AM-8PM Saturday 8AM-8PM Sunday 9AM-6PM



**Three Pines Tavern**  
*Good Food • Good Friends • Good Times*

Daily Specials • Home Made Soups  
Desserts • Draft Pitcher Specials

**717 486-3656**  
Take Out Available  
336 North Baltimore Street  
Mount Holly Springs, PA 17065

Michaux Forest Association  
Judy Prescott  
209 Touchstone Drive  
Carlisle, PA 17015

