



MFA NEWS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHAUX FOREST
ASSOCIATION

Spring 2020

www.michauxforestassociation.com

**Editor: Judy Prescott
Web Master: Mike Romano**



**President's Column
By Gerry Ahnell**

COVID-19: Heard enough? Had enough? Me too. At the time of this writing our Governor has just ordered residents of Cumberland and several other mid-state counties to shelter in place. Days earlier DCNR's top officials closed most State Park facilities including Pine Grove Furnace making access to our cabins and nearby trails difficult, if not impossible for the near future. I know we'll all get through this. In the meantime, be safe, be cautious and most of all, keep a positive outlook.

On a lighter note, I think it's safe to say winter is essentially over, even if we get one of those crazy, late season crocus-crusher snowstorms before the park re-opens for the season. While we had plenty of cold, wet and dreary days these past few months, we can't complain too much since I can recall plenty of mild weather and relatively warm days interspersed throughout the season. Now, however, we need to plan on getting back to our cabins, clean-up any

debris scattered across our leases and enjoy the woods.

This year promises to bring a lot of changes to Pine Grove Furnace and the Michaux Forest. Over the winter, maintenance personnel and others have continued their efforts to remove thick stands of invasive vegetation and other debris around the Park and designated trails. Earlier this year, Park management reported that they expected a full contingent of staff on board for the busy summer season. Some of the more significant projects they hope to finish, or at least get stated on, include installing a bridge over Mountain Creek to connect the Koppenhaver Trail to the old railroad bed between the two lakes. The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace requested and received a grant for this project and are anxious to get underway. Another more extensive project Park officials hope to examine is the dredging of Laurel Lake to remove the heavy growth of lily pads and sediment build-up. Let's hope these and other projects can be accomplished with the park personnel and volunteers from the area.

On the Forest side, District personnel and others will be continuing their efforts to restore the meadows along Bunker Hill Road which are within the original Camp Michaux. Ultimately, they will be planting self-seeding wildflowers and rooting out invasive plants. Michael Wright (Pa.DCNR), project manager for this effort, will be our guest speaker at the MFA Annual Picnic on June 27th (mark your calendars). The Forest office also plans to release a newsletter this month (April) which will highlight other projects planned for Michaux this year. Their newsletter will include a section related to regulations, specifically as they apply to leases / cabin ownership in the Forest. Topics such

as residency, cabin inspections, non-native plantings, paved driveways, etc. will be discussed. Forest Service personnel also plan to meet face to face with new owners upon receipt of the lease filing to discuss any outstanding issues and to be sure new owners are familiar with the various elements of the State Forest Lease Guidelines.

Please continue to refer to the MFA's webpage for more information. In the meantime, be safe!

**MFA Annual Picnic
June 27
5:30 pm**

At the Furnace Stack Pavilion

**Guest speaker
Michael Wright, DCNR**

The Board provides hamburgers, hot dogs, rolls, condiments, drinks, plates and plastic ware. Just bring your family and a delicious dish to share with everyone! Please bring a side dish, salad, fruit or desserts.

**PLEASE NOTE THIS IS
SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED
UPON THE STATUS OF STATE
RESTRICTIONS FOR THE
STATE PARKS! CHECK THE
WEB SITE FOR UPDATES!**



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

Happy Spring!

Spring may be here, but with warm winter we had, it took the sweet sounds of the peepers to make me realize it! Of course, we had some frigid weather, but the lack of snow was quite a disappointment for those of us cabin owners that enjoy the winter-time activities. The weather really only affected my inspections in January. Fluctuating temperatures caused freezing and melting; thus creating unpredictable conditions to driveways and staircases. However, I am happy to say I didn't have too many tumbles or falls this year.

As I write this report, I have just completed my March inspections. Fortunately, it has been quiet in the mountains regarding vandalism and break-ins. As always, several sites had pine limbs damaging rooftops and other limbs and trees creating blockages to entrances and/or damaging screen porches.

While most of the season was business as usual, mid-March

experienced an unusually high amount of visitors to our park and forest. The influx of higher than normal park patrons is not due to the warmer temperatures, but a direct result of people trying to escape the coronavirus. School students, that would normally be participating in classroom studies, have been kept home due to the outbreak of the virus. I look over at Pole Steeple trail each day and it appears to be the sight of a spring break party!

At this junction, it is uncertain how long these limited quarantine procedures will be in place. I am certain it will become worse before it is over. (Just today I heard rumors that they were going to close the Appalachian Trail to day hikers.) I will continue my inspections as usual during April, with two exceptions. First, I will practice social distancing when making my rounds. The 2nd has to do with the attention I pay to your privies. I always check the cabin's out buildings. But in addition, where I can, I will try to keep closer tabs on your toilet paper and hand sanitizer! I say this second exception only partially in jest, for I fear with the

increase in numbers of visitors to the mountains, our cabins could become targets for bored teens and/or disgruntled laid off employees facing these tough times. I hope I am wrong and just being a pessimist.

By the time this publication arrives to our members, I pray this virus has run its course and we are regaining normalcy in our lives.

Please feel free to contact me with any special concerns or questions I can help with. You can text or call me and leave a message at (717) 226-4959. May you all be safe and capable to visit your mountain retreats in the near future. Take care!

Happy trails and travels!
Richard G. Baish

Litter Patrol Report
By Diane and Bob Shenk

Hope all is well! According to a notice from Cumberland County all litter pick-up events are suspended until further notice. We are hoping that our June, August and September days listed below will occur.

Please stay tuned and contact the email address or MFA website for updates.

- June 27
- August 8
- September 26



Thank you!
Diane and Bob Shenk
dlshenk@comcast.net

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

The A.T. Story
The A.T Museum
by Larry Luxenberg

The only full-fledged hiking museum in the U.S. is located near the mid-point of the A.T. in Pine Grove Furnace State Park, Pennsylvania .

The Appalachian Trail Museum marked the start of the 2019 season with a big weekend in early May. On Sat May 4, 2019 the museum inducted its ninth class into the A.T. Hall of Fame — which now totals 40 members.

The following day, at its Hall of Fame Festival, the Museum unveiled five new exhibits, the largest number of new exhibits since its grand opening on June 5, 2010. At the festival, despite an all-day downpour, nearly 80 people listened to Hall of Fame inductees and people involved in the new exhibits. Among the attendees were the family of “Walkin’” Jim Stolz, who came from as far away as Alaska, and the three living founders of the American Hiking Society, who organized Hikanation: Jim Kern, Bill Kemsley, and Paul Pritchard.

Hall of Fame honorees this year were Jean Cashin, one of the most revered Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) employees; Paul Fink, who designed much of the original southern A.T.; Don King, the National Park Service head of land acquisition for the A.T. and other trails; and the late Bob Proudman of the ATC, noted for his work on the physical Trail. Mike Wingert, former Appalachian Long-Distance Hikers Association coordinator, received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The five new exhibits opened were: “The A.T. and the National Scenic Trails; Hikanation,” a cross country group hike in 1980 -81 by the new American Hiking Society, which utilized 500 miles of the A.T.; “Blazing the Trail in Maine,” featuring Myron Avery’s folding kayak; “A Night on the Trail,” a children’s exhibit of a Trail shelter; and “Walkin’ Jim Stolz,” the famous A.T. hiker and musician, featuring his hiking guitar “Stella,” which he credited with breaking a fall and saving his life. Also, the initial entry in a revolving hiker exhibit area, is the feather-light pack used by current Trail legend Heather “Anish” Anderson to set the unsupported A.T. hiking record.

The A.T. Museum is the only full-fledged hiking museum in the U.S. and includes a reference library with more than 2,000 A.T.-related books, magazines, and other documents set up by retired Florida State University reference librarian Linda Patton; a children’s museum; and a large collection of artifacts from the builders and maintainers of the Trail as well as pioneering hikers.

The museum hosts speakers and other programs and special events, and has also published two books, *Thru*, a novel by 1973 thru-hiker Richard Judy and the biography of Earl Shaffer, *A Grip on the Mane of Life*, by David Donaldson and Maurice J. Forrester. As a reflection of the A.T. itself, the museum was created, built, and is run largely by volunteers. There is a part-time manager (and A.T. thru-

hiker), Nate “Angry Bird” Shank, who coordinates volunteers and deals with myriad tasks necessary to run even a small museum properly. Local and long-term volunteers, as well as interns are welcome for every task that the museum performs.

The museum is located in Pine Grove Furnace State Park in Gardners, Pennsylvania, close to the geographic mid-point of the A.T. and adjacent to the Pine Grove General Store (location of the “Half Gallon” ice cream challenge) and Ironmasters Hostel.

Shortly after the museum opened, the A.T. was relocated a short distance, taking it off a park road and bringing it past the store and the museum itself. The Trail continues north on a 19th Century roadbed, uncovered before the museum opened by volunteers clearing overgrowth on its surrounding grounds.

The museum building is located in a historic grist mill that dates back to about 1765. Each year, more than 10,000 people visit the museum. About half of the visitors come from the fourcounty area of Pennsylvania surrounding it. The remaining visitors come from all 50 states and dozens of foreign countries.

It has attracted national and international print and television coverage and was featured in an episode of the Travel Channel’s “Mystery of the Museum,” focusing on a shoe of Grandma Gatewood, a pioneering thru-hiker.

Fire Extinguisher and a Lucky Day

By Martin Yespy

The purpose of this story is to remind all cabin owners to have several large fire extinguishers in and around your cabin. You never know what can happen.

For many years we have left our old truck at the cabin over the winter, mainly to deter vandals. Each time we go up to check the cabin we check the truck too. We have a long dead-end lane going back to our and our neighbor's cabin which are the only two cabins back there. We park the truck down the hill from both cabins.

And so on January 26th Lad-die and I went up to check the cabin and as usual, run the truck too. After running the truck for a while, I turned it off and noticed a faint haze in the cab. I thought it was from the defroster, but it quickly got worse and I realized it was smoke. Almost immediately flames shot out from under the hood. I opened the hood and tried to smother the

flames but to no avail. Instantly I realized the predicament I was in: alone in a very isolated location; no cell phone service; cabin phone and water were turned off for the winter, and nearby Mountain Creek was about a quarter mile away. Having no other options, I desperately ran back up the hill and got the fire extinguisher from inside the cabin and a few bottles of water from the shed. In the few minutes it took to get back to the truck the fire had spread to the cab and leaves were burning at the back of the truck, presumably from a melted brake or gas line. Immediately I thought the gas tank would explode next and I didn't know how this was going to end.

Miraculously the fire extinguisher and the bottles of water put out most of the fire. I then went for water to douse the remaining embers. When this ordeal was over it hit me that this could have been a huge disaster well beyond losing the truck because it would have taken at least a half hour for help to be summoned and arrive.

A day later I went out and bought three large fire extinguishers hoping there will never be a next time.



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

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

[2020 with the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park](#)

(We have had to cancel a number of events this spring. Please check Facebook or the DNCR website for updates regarding future events)

First Day Hike, January 1, 2020: For the fourth year, 163 hikers began the New Year with a hike in Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

Earth Day, April 25: Unfortunately, our Volunteer Day had to be cancelled this spring.

Iron Run and Charcoal Challenge, June 13: The 2020 trail race has been cancelled, but we are already planning for next year!

National Public Lands Day, September 26: Join us for a morning of volunteering and giving back to the park.

Fall Furnace Fest, October 17 and 18: 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.

**Friends of
Pine Grove Furnace
State Park**

*By Mary Soderberg,
Vice-Chair*

**Tenth Anniversary of the
Friends of Pine Grove
Furnace State Park**

It is hard to believe that the Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park is ten years old! For those of you who might not be familiar with us, we are one of 46 volunteer groups who support a state park or forest. Each of these Friends chapters are organized under the non-profit umbrella of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation which provides administrative support to them.

Our Mission: The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park exists to keep history alive and promote educational and recreational programs at the park and surrounding areas through special events and trail development while protecting the park's natural resources.

The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park have about a hundred dues paying members along with numerous other "friends" who volunteer in the park and assist with park events. Our volunteers keep our trails maintained, lead history tours, split firewood and help with park events including our trail races and Fall Furnace Fest. We raise funds through the sale of

firewood to the campers, our annual half marathon and 5K races, the sale of park related merchandise and our Fall Furnace Festival. All the money that we raise stays in the park to support recreation, conservation and education. Our eight-member board works closely with the park staff to determine how best to reinvest our funds back into the park.

Some of the items that we have provided funding for include: two playgrounds, repair of the Furnace Stack, a kayak launch, support for both educational and volunteer events, a golf cart for the volunteer campground hosts, hanging flower baskets for the office, a new lock and key system for park facilities, support for the hostel at the Ironmaster's Mansion, funding for a new walkway for the AT Museum, and a trail bridge in the center of the Mountain Creek Trail.

This year, our big project will be the installation of a second trail bridge to connect the Koppenhaver Trail with the western trailhead of Mountain Creek Trail. This 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 first bridge which was constructed and installed by volunteers, this bridge will be delivered on a truck to the site.

We have received two grants

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. Originally, we had planned to install the bridge this summer, but until businesses and the park fully reopen it is impossible to finalize a timeline. Stay tuned!

We have an active Facebook page, a quarterly newsletter and a website – all managed by volunteers. For more information or to join, visit our website at: www.PineGroveFriends.org or follow_us on Facebook at [Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park](https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Pine-Grove-Furnace-State-Park).

Stay up to date with the status of reopening, etc. at:
www.dcnr.state.pa.us
www.visitPAparks.com

**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

MFA Board of Directors

Officers

President:

Gerry Ahnell

Gerry.ahnell@verizon.net

Vice-President: John Rovegno

Treasurer: Warren Hardman

Secretary: Nancy Summers

Newsletter Editor: Judy Prescott

Past President: Mark Colucci

Directors

Lyle Herr

Diane Shenk

Deb Rosevear



Ron Koser's Electric



For All Your Electric & Cabin Maintenance

Electric

- Repairs
- Upgrades
- Lightening Damage
- New Circuits

Maintenance

- Clean Gutters & Downspouts
- Clean Roofs
- Power Washing
- Leaf Blowing

327 Pine Grove Road, Gardners, PA 17324

(717) 486-8947

No Job Too Small

Continued from page 3

The A.T. Story

Among projects underway are a native plants garden and a reconstruction on the museum grounds of a stone trail shelter built by first thru-hiker, Earl Shaffer, around 1960. The museum is hoping to get Trail maintaining clubs involved in this project. Also underway is an exhibit on historic Trail saws and other tools. The A.T. Hall of Fame honors people who have made an exceptional and positive contribution to the A.T. and the A.T. community. Nominations are welcome. More information about nominations and donating artifacts is available at: www.atmuseum.org

The Museum offers a yearly membership (\$20), and a "NO EXPIRATION MEMEBER-SHIP" (\$500), with a listing on the permanent plaque to be hung in the Museum in June 2022. They are various levels of support, and they give various levels of listing on this new plaque (for the various listing levels, click on. 2017-2021 CAMPAIGN FORM). All your

contributions until January 2022 are added together to give you the total for your listing level on this permanent Museum plaque! Membership benefit include a "10% DISCOUNT" ON ALL MUSEUM MERCHANDISE; and a generous discount on your annual A. T. Hall of Fame Banquet Tickets"! This "BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGN (2017 – 2021)" has just recently passed the \$218,000 mark to the Campaign GOAL \$350,000! ~ your help is needed to reach the goal by2022 . Your vital financial support is appreciated. If you wish, simply write a check made out to the A. T. Museum, write membership in the memo line, and mail to: A. T. MUSEUM 1120 Pine Grove Road Gardners, PA 17324. Once received and deposited by Jay Sexton, Museum Treasurer, a copy is sent to me, and I process it and send you an acknowledgement note, an IRS receipt, a membership card,

and inform you of your current listing level on the June 2022 plaque (the current campaign).

If you want to receive regular *A. T. Museum Updates*, subscribe at www.atmuseum.org.

Be sure to add atmuseumupdates@gmail.com to your contacts so that the server does no block delivery to you.

Reprinted from April 2020 A.T. Museum Updates



THE CABIN BOOKSHELF

When You Find My Body

Reviewed by
Martin Yespy

You will know how this true story ends after reading the first page of this book. That said, anyone who spends time in the forest, such as hikers, anglers, and hunters should read this tragic and cautionary tale about needing basic survival knowledge before venturing into the woods.

In 2013 Gerry Largay, a retired nurse who was an adventurous, well-liked, and experienced hiker, decided to hike the entire Appalachian Trail. She started in Harpers Ferry, W.V. and would walk to Maine, then complete the other half to Georgia. She was meticulous in her planning for this walk and even took a course in long distance hiking. Her husband met her at road crossings with supplies which reduced the weight she had to carry. Gerry was a slow hiker, but she made steady progress, and all was going well until somewhere after Polar Ridge Shelter in southwest Maine on

7/23/13 she stepped off the trail to go to the bathroom. Somehow, she got disoriented and in her effort to find the trail got further and further lost as she bushwhacked away from the trail. Gerry made a crucial mistake when she headed up the mountain in a futile attempt to find a cell signal to call for help. Despite one of the largest search-and-rescue operations in the history of Maine, Gerry could not be found. Over the next two years rescuers would still pursue scaled back searches, but to no avail. Her campsite and body were found in 2015 by surveyors who happened to be working in the remote area. The last entries in her journal were dated 8/10 and 8/18/2013 although it was likely she was confused about the dates because of her weakened condition.

The book discusses the psychological reactions to getting lost, and the physiological effects on the mind and body of slowly starving. Much of the story reviews the tremendous

search and rescue effort and the complex logistics involved in scouring such a huge wilderness in an especially dense forest. The failed rescue effort took a huge toll on all the rescuers. (“Place last seen” is the most important information S&R teams need.)

The book is meant to memorialize a good and determined person who died tragically doing what she loved. But beyond this is the other purpose of the book which is to implore hikers and others to be educated in “woods craft” or survival skills. The story makes clear that if Gerry had this knowledge the outcome may have been different.

Among the knowledge and skills the author mentions are: 1. Carry a good compass and know how to use it; 2. Don’t panic and stay in place; 3. Follow creeks and streams downstream if you must move; 4. Tell someone of your plans; 5. Know what forest plants etc. are edible, how to start a fire, and build a shelter; 6. Don’t rely on technology but if you have it know how to use it (ex. GPS Spot Locator).

Gerry left an eloquently written journal, which because of its personal nature was never made public. She fastened the following note to it and put it in a plastic bag: “When you find my body please call my husband, George and my daughter, Kerry. It will be the greatest kindness for them to know that I am dead and where you found me – no matter how many years from now. Please find it in your heart to mail the contents of this bag to one of them.”

A poignant video of removing Gerry from the mountain can be found on You Tube “Wardens Remove Remains of Missing Hiker”

YORKTREEFAMILY.COM
2108 WEST MARKET STREET
YORK, PENNSYLVANIA 17404
p: 717-792-3921
c: 717-495-3920

YORK
TREE SERVICES
WE ♥ TREES

Bruce Stryker
ISA CERTIFIED ARBORIST PD-1068A
bstryker@yorktreefamily.com

The business card features a logo with a tree and a heart, and a graphic of a cross with trees inside the quadrants.



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

NEW MENU ITEMS
FRENCH FRIES
MOZZARELLA STICKS
ONION RINGS
CHICKEN TENDERS
SHRIMP - FISH PLATTERS & WINGS TOO!!

ATM
FULL DELI
PA LOTTERY
FIREWOOD
GROCERIES* LIVE BAIT
HARDWARE NEEDS
PROPANE EXCHANGE

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



Slyder Services
Mt Holly Springs
Adam Slyder, Owner
717-609-5793 SlyderServices@gmail.com

Tree & Stump Removal
Tree Trimming
Fire Pits Pavers
Pressure Washing

10% Discount
Veterans & First Responders

One Call for all Outdoor Projects

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

