

Penn's Stewards

News from the Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation • Summer 2009



Loyalsock Creek at Worlds End—perfect for a staycation.

Ready for a Staycation?

Story and photos by Brook Lenker

Challenging trails. Breathtaking vistas. The silence of the deep woods. These are some of the reasons visitors flock to Pennsylvania's state parks and forests. Here's another: these amazing places are conveniently close to home—typically closer than half an hour's drive. With gas prices climbing and concern mounting about the climate warming impacts of long distance travel, taking-in state parks and forests and their neighboring amenities means saving money and trading softly without being frugal on adventure.

*For every passion—
in any season—
superb destinations
await.*

Staycation prospects abound in the Keystone State. For every passion—in any season—superb destinations await. Here are five, two-day forays perfect for the warmer months. Gear up and get out. Great memories are guaranteed.

ENDLESS FUN: Proceed to Worlds End State Park where your worries will feel worlds away. Wallow in the crystalline waters of the Loyalsock Creek. Dry off and clamber up the High Rock Trail for a vulture's view of the glistening canyon below. Cook up your own vittles or take a supper side trip to Victorian Eagles Mere and catch a sunset on the lake. Return in time for a naturalist program at the park's amphitheater before hitting the campground or, perhaps, a rustic cabin. Next day, head to Rickett's Glen State Park for a heart-pounding hike past more than 20 waterfalls, including one that drops nearly 100 feet!

INTO THE WILDS: Take a bike ride on the renowned Pine Creek Rail Trail snaking through the heart of Tioga and Tiadaghton State Forests and Pennsylvania's own Grand Canyon. Try a ten mile sampler from Blackwell to Slate Run. Cycling not your thing? Cast a line into the cool waters of Pine Creek for a trophy trout. Enjoy a heavenly dinner at earthly prices on the Hotel Manor's spacious deck or dining room. As night falls, the stars rise at Cherry Springs State Park, home to the darkest skies east of the Mississippi. Retire in Mongolian comfort to one of the yurts at Little Pine State Park. Indulge in a morning paddle on the park's bucolic lake and then it's off to the Golden Eagle Trail to really let your spirits soar! *continued on page 3*

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Kayak on beach at Presque Isle.

Brook Lenker/DGMR

Brook Lenker/DGMR



Keystone State Park.

President's Message

Marci Mowery



As I write this, the question on everyone's mind is, "Will our parks and forests remain open?" This newsletter will hit the press before that question is answered, but I can assure you that we will make our voices heard, loud and clear, over the course of the next few weeks.

Speaking of voices, thank you for adding yours to the chorus. Calls and letters to elected officials from park and forest enthusiasts have helped to raise awareness about the value parks and forests have in our lives.

And talk about value—a recent survey of Pennsylvania residents found that many of us head to the outdoors to maintain our mental and physical health. We are also attending programs and learning new skills. In 2008, state parks alone provided over 10,000 programs reaching over 347,000 people. We head outdoors to run/jog/trail run, bicycle, fish, watch wildlife, skateboard, camp, and day hike. Sounds great—let's go play!

When we play, we add another layer of value to our state parks and forests—economic support to the surrounding communities. Conservative estimates show that visitors to parks spend between \$16 a day on a day trip to over \$75 a day on an overnight trip. Multiply that times 35 million visitors annually...I'm not sure my calculator can handle that many zeroes! Yes, parks and forests are excellent for the economic health of the state.

We are fortunate in Pennsylvania to have dedicated volunteers and staff who make our

visits to state parks and forests meaningful. In May, the Foundation celebrated this good work at our third annual banquet. Some of you joined us in this yearly celebration. We welcomed DCNR Acting Secretary John Quigley to his first PPF event as he stepped up to replace Secretary Michael DiBerardinis who accepted a newly created position in Philadelphia.

To improve what we do for you and our parks and forests, you may notice some changes in PPF. We have a new look, a new website, and an expanded purpose. To be an even stronger voice for our state parks and forests, we have become a membership organization. In addition to joining one of our many friends groups, you can join the Foundation and help to make our voices heard even better when we speak out in support of recreation, conservation, and our parks and forests.

A change that isn't permanent is that Ellen, our editor, is missing from this issue. Don't despair—Ellen will be back soon, bringing her creative energies back to our team.

In closing, consider joining our email list so that we can keep you informed of upcoming events in parks and forests, keep you informed of challenges, and share with you important news. Also, consider becoming a member of the Foundation. You can join on our website or by completing the membership form included in this newsletter.

*Yours in the Outdoors,
Marci*

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www.paparksandforests.org

Ready for a Staycation?

continued from front cover

EXUBERANTLY ERIE: Presque Isle State Park's miles of beaches are idyllic for families and the marshes on the lee side of the peninsula are a kayaker's or birder's dream. An extensive bikeway is perfect for a ride, a rollerblade, or a run. The Tom Ridge Environmental Center—at the entrance to the park—is a green-technology showcase and provides a moving prologue to the coast's natural wonders. A rejuvenated downtown Erie and its outskirts offer a buffet of dining and lodging options. On day two, spend the morning fishing for Steelhead on Elk Creek—it's the "reel" deal for serious anglers. Adjacent Erie Bluffs State Park affords quiet rambles for lake and wildlife watchers. And for those over 21, take in the fruit of the land at one of the many award-winning wineries.

LOVING THE LAURELS: Let the Lower Youghiogheny River elevate your pulse on a wet and wild rafting expedition out of Ohiopyle State Park. If wild isn't your cup of tea, opt for the calmer waters of the Middle Yough. As the sun lowers in the west, make the trek to Mt. Davis, the highest point in Pennsylvania at 3,213 feet. On day two, keep in mind that the Great Allegheny Passage is the king of all rail trails and well worth a day-long or half-day ride! It connects Pittsburgh to the C&O trail at Cumberland, MD and, ultimately, Washington, DC. Hit the former tracks from one of the area's "trail towns," including secluded Deal, where a quick five-mile round trip takes you to the

Eastern Continental Divide and through a 3,300-foot long tunnel to an overlook certain to take your breath away. The area overflows with inns and B&B's welcoming worn and weary wayfarers. Log-built camping cottages at Ohiopyle, Linn Run or Laurel Hill State Parks, are a wallet-friendly lodging alternative.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN SAMPLER: The South Mountains are a hiker's wonderland. Lace-up and traverse the rocky Appalachian Trail from Caledonia State Park to Pine Grove Furnace State Park – the mid-point of the esteemed National Scenic Trail. The hike promises two long, but rewarding, days. Prefer your hikes in smaller bites? Visit Kings Gap Environmental Education and Training Center and pick a trail that suits your ambitions and abilities. Restaurants in nearby Mount Holly Springs or Boiling Springs can satisfy any trekker's appetite. Eat early to allow time for some sublime fly fishing on the Yellow Breches or its tributary, Mountain Creek. Let the Barred Owls, frequenting the stoic white pines of the Pine Grove Furnace campground, provide tentside entertainment. The surrounding Michaux State Forest is a paradise for mountain biking enthusiasts. Get dirty on the single track or relax on the beach at Fuller or Laurel Lakes.

REMEMBER: Reservations are recommended for campsites, yurts, camping cottages, and cabins. Many private outfitters offer equipment, guiding, and information that can enhance your outdoor experience. The trips described above only scratch the landscape of the abundant possibilities available in each region. To turn your getaway dreams into reality, explore www.dcnr.state.pa.us and www.visitpa.com.

Have a favorite adventure story?

Consider sharing it with PPF to add to our website. Visit www.paparksandforests.org to read about others' adventures.

Plant a Tree



(Virtually and For Real)

Volunteers at Prince Gallitzin State Park plant trees purchased through the 2008 Odwalla Tree Program

Take some berries, mix 'em with some orange or grape juice, add some soy protein and a whole lot of fun and what do you have?

Odwalla—a California juice company built on three key principles:

- (1) Make great juice;
- (2) Do good things for the community;
- (3) Build a business with heart.

Under key principle #2 falls their commitment to planting 100,000 trees in state parks in 11 states. Pennsylvania's one of the lucky recipients of this generous offer.

What do you have to do? Visit www.parkvisitor.com/odwalla/ and click the link to "Plant a Tree." It just does not get any easier than that.

The program runs through December 31, 2009 or until all the trees are planted. At the time of this writing, Michigan was planting more trees than the other states and, while we're happy for them, we can't let this continue!

Grab the link and tell your friends!

Hint: If you'd signed up for our e-Blasts (see page 2), you'd already know about this!



Beach at Fuller Lake.

Brook Lenker/DENR

We welcome four new members who have joined the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation board of directors.

Hailing from central Pennsylvania, we have Rick Carlson, who brings with him 37 years of experience with the Departments of Environmental Resources and Conservation and Natural Resources.



Christopher Johnston, of Delta Development, with experience in tourism, transportation, and community development.



Representative Mike Hanna will add his knowledge of policy, rural affairs, game and fisheries.



And from Cameron County we have Rawley Cogan, of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, an expert on land management and Pennsylvania's elk herd.

Dedication and Innovation Themes of Third Annual Banquet

Over 100 members and supporters of Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation gathered at the Country Club of Harrisburg on Tuesday, May 5th to celebrate the accomplishments of this year's eight award winners. And grand accomplishments they were:

The top honor, the **Keystone Legacy Award** (sponsored again this year by Woolrich, Inc.), was presented to Joe Healey, head of the Keystone Trails Association Trail Care Crew. Established in 1984, the Trail Care Crew is an all-volunteer group who have pledged to be the expert SWAT team for hiking trails throughout Pennsylvania. The Crew puts in an average of 4,000 hours of work during the year. In addition to his Trail Care work, Joe also volunteers to maintain the Mid-State Trail, oversees a section of the trail, and leads hikes for his local hiking club.

Government Award (sponsored by Mr. Joseph Ibberson): Greg Schrum, retired, Bureau of State Parks for his role in developing and implementing a state-wide park management planning process and encouraging the use of current technologies and best management practices in park management. Greg also pioneered the Conservation Area concept in state parks, which has provided us with the Ibberson, Boyd Big Tree, and Vardan Conservation Areas.

President's Award (sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Louis J. Appell, Jr.): Judy Schwank, President & CEO, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania for her strong regional advocacy for DCNR conservation and recreation programs and state-wide leadership to promote sustainable development and smart growth.

Park of the Year Award (sponsored by Dominion): Sinnemahoning State Park for the outstanding infrastructure improvements and expanded programming instituted at the park.

Forest of the Year Award (sponsored by Gannett Fleming, Inc.): William Penn Forest District for the successful development and promotion of the Tree Vitalize program in Bucks, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware counties, as well as their efforts in conservation and recreation on their SE PA landholdings.

Friends Group Volunteerism Award (sponsored by Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania): Friends of Ohiopyle State Park for their outstanding work on numerous park improvement and service projects.

Friends Group Education Award (sponsored by PA Energy Alliance): Friends of Colonel Denning State Park for the educational programming provided by the Friends during the 2008 camp season in the absence of a seasonal educator.

Friends Group Improvement Award (sponsored by PPL Corporation): Friends of Shikellamy State Park for their work to enhance public awareness and stewardship of the park through the implementation of a variety of public programs.

In addition to the gratitude of all park and forest visitors, each award winner received a beautiful hand-made wooden bowl created by Lancaster craftsman Bob Gochnauer. We'll be looking for nominations for next year's award winners later this fall. Watch the website at www.paparksandforests.org for the announcement and nomination form.

Congratulations!



Keystone Legacy Award.



Friends Improvements.



Friends Volunteerism.



Forest of the Year.



Presidents Award.



Government Award.



Friends Education.



Park of the Year.

Coins for Conservation

By Pam Metzger

They're perched on nearly every bedroom dresser in America—a jar where we stash our loose change. At the end of the day, we empty our pockets into the jar vowing to use the accumulated wealth for a special treat. And there they sit, waiting for just the right idea.

Now, the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation has teamed with Commerce Bank, now Metro Bank, to provide the perfect outlet for that little treasure chest. Between now and the end of October, visit any Commerce Bank/Metro Bank branch and support our "Coins for Conservation" campaign. Those pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters will be put to use to support the work of the Foundation as we develop friends groups—organized groups of volunteers—in parks and forests across the state. Funds will also be used for plantings, recreational equipment, trailhead development and educational programming in your parks and forests.



To participate in Coins for Conservation, visit our website to download a Coins for Conservation Card or simply visit your local Metro Bank. Look for the Penny Arcade machines—dump in the coins, take your receipt to the teller and tell him or her that you want to donate the money to Coins for Conservation/PA Parks and Forest Foundation. They'll make the deposit right into the Foundation's account and give you a donation receipt. It's as simple as that!

At this time of tightening budgets, Coins for Conservation offers a painless way for all of us to show support for our parks and forests. After all, the money's already in the jar. You could spend it on just another mocha latte, or you could help sponsor a summer evening's program in one of our beautiful state park campgrounds!

Disc Golf? What is THAT?

By Marci Mowery

Disc golf is played much like traditional golf, but rather than a ball and clubs, a player uses a flying disc, or Frisbee®. A relatively young sport—it wasn't formalized until the 1970s—it is growing in popularity. The object of the game is to complete each hole using the fewest number of "strokes," or in the case of disc golf, the fewest number of throws, as possible.

The play starts at a tee, from which the disc is thrown towards a "hole," more commonly known as a Pole Hole®, an elevated metal basket. As a player progresses down the fairway, he or she must make each consecutive shot from the spot where the previous throw has landed. Trees, shrubs, and terrain provide challenging obstacles for the golfer, and can be a source of both amusement and frustration. The play ends when the "putt" lands in the basket and the hole is completed.

Disc golf shares the same joys and frustrations of traditional golf, whether it's sinking a long putt or hitting a tree halfway down the fairway. As mentioned above, it is growing in popularity, perhaps because it can be played by folks of any age, is easy to learn, and requires minimal monetary investment.

Often disc golf courses are free of charge and a quality disk can be purchased for about \$15, another great reason to take the family out to play today! Disc golf is a great family sport.

We took our teens and their friends to Gifford Pinchot State Park. The teens put away their cell phones and enjoyed a full round of 18 holes. None of us were very skilled, but laughter filled the air, and the walk was invigorating. Gifford Pinchot State Park actually has two courses, one more easily accessible by beginners and the other, on more steep terrain (consider the health benefits of playing on a hill!)

Currently nine state parks have disc golf courses. They include:

1. **Clear Creek State Park** has a course adjacent to the camping area.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/clearcreek.aspx
2. **Codorus State Park** has a 36-hole course along Marina Road. The course is open year-round. Score cards are at the first hole. Codorus also has a mini-golf course.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/codorus.aspx
3. **French Creek State Park** has two courses winding through the forest. The park provides maps and scorecards at the office.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/frenchcreek.aspx
4. **Gifford Pinchot State Park** has two 18-hole courses.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/giffordpinchot.aspx
5. **Hickory Run State Park** has one course in the day use area.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/hickoryrun.aspx
6. **Moraine State Park** has an 18-hole course in the Lakeview Beach Day Use Area.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/moraine.aspx
7. **Nockamixon State Park** has one course.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/nockamixon.aspx
8. **Tyler State Park** has one course. The 27-hole course begins by the Upper Plantation Picnic Area. Score cards and maps are available at the park office and at the Upper Plantation Picnic Area parking lot.
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/parks/tyler.aspx
9. **Prince Gallitzin State Park** has one 9-hole course in the Muskrat Beach Area.



A first try at disc golf at Gifford Pinchot State Park.



Marci Mowery

The Professional Disc Golf Association is the governing body for the sport and sanctions competitive events for men and women of every skill level. The PDGA publishes and sells an annual course directory, and manages and maintains a free online directory of disc golf courses at www.pdga.com/course-directory.

The health benefits of disc golf are many—it provides upper and lower body conditioning, aerobic exercise, and promotes a combination of physical and mental abilities. And in our case, there was much laughter.

Adapted from an article found on: <http://www.pdga.com/>

DCNR



Disc Golf at Moraine State Park.



Jeff Manatt

Sbaun "Coach" Manatt teeing off at Boulder Woods.

Raising Money by Raising Our Visibility

Sailing bravely into our 10th year seemed an appropriate time to step back and see where we stand. Do people know who we are? Are we effectively communicating our mission and our Chapters' message to the public at large? Bottom line—are we raising money for our parks and forests to the best of our ability?

The answer to these questions was a resounding "maybe!" Of course, unless there's universal membership in an organization there's always room for improvement, so the ultimate question boils down to what steps to take to do better. For PPF, it's a new look and some new technology. A visit to the website www.paparksandforests.org will reveal the most obvious changes. It has a bolder, cleaner, wholly refreshed look and feel with more information on how to join a friends group, volunteer at a state park or forest or speak out in support of our public lands.

While we were flirting with technology, we also put a toe in the water of Social Networking. **Yes, PPF is on Facebook! Will you be our friend?** Here's the complicated link—or just type "Pennsylvania Parks and Forests" on Facebook's search line and become a fan.

www.facebook.com/inbox/?drop&ref=mb#/pages/Pennsylvania-Parks-and-Forests-Foundation/90479300307?ref=nf

Bookmark both sites, check back often and, mostly importantly, spread the word.



Marcellus Shale: Opportunities and Challenges for Pennsylvania

By Dave Messersmith, PSU Extension

More than a mile beneath northern Appalachia, covering parts of four states including nearly 2/3 of Pennsylvania, lies a mostly untapped reservoir of natural gas that could bring change to the region.

The Marcellus shale, a layer of organic-rich black shale that lies 5,000 to 9,000 feet underground, runs from the southern tier of New York through Pennsylvania, into the eastern half of Ohio, and through West Virginia.

Energy companies have purchased mineral leases on millions of acres of land across the Marcellus footprint for the purpose of recovering the natural gas trapped in the shale formation. Currently in Pennsylvania, the most intense development of the Marcellus shale is occurring in the Endless Mountains region in northeastern PA and in the southwestern corner of the Commonwealth.

How much natural gas is in the Marcellus Shale?

Recent estimates of the volume of natural gas contained in the entire Marcellus Shale formation are around 1,500 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of natural gas. It is not yet known how much gas will be commercially recoverable from the Marcellus, but current expectations are around 262 TCF. To put this in perspective, the US consumes an average of 22 TCF of natural gas per year so the Marcellus could potentially provide a 10 year supply of natural gas to the nation using these current estimates.

Why all the interest in the Marcellus Shale now?

Geologists have known for decades about the gas in the Marcellus Shale, but the depth and tightness of the shale

made gas exploration and extraction very difficult and expensive. Recent advancements in gas well development technology, specifically horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, have significantly increased commercial interest in the Marcellus.

Another factor pushing interest in Marcellus shale is the proximity of the formation to high natural gas demand markets, and subsequently lower pipeline transportation costs, in the Northeastern US.

What are horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing?

Horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing have become the industry standard for extracting natural gas from shale formations. The majority of wells in the Marcellus Shale will be drilled horizontally and be hydraulically fractured. Horizontal drilling was developed in the 1980's in the Barnett shale region in north central Texas. A horizontal well is drilled down vertically to approximately 500 feet above the target gas-bearing rock formation. Special tools are then used to curve the well bore so that the hole swings horizontally within the gas-bearing rock for up to several thousand feet.

Horizontal drilling allows companies to extract more gas in a cost-effective manner. In many cases, multiple wells may be drilled side by side on the same well pad, radiating out in different directions.

Hydraulic fracturing, or 'fracing' consists of pumping a fluid and a propping material such as sand down the well bore under high pressure to create fractures in the shale. The propping material (usually referred to as a "proppant") holds the fractures open, allowing gas to flow out of the shale into the well bore. Hydraulic fracturing of the Marcellus Shale requires large



Millennium pipeline construction in Sullivan county NY. The Millennium pipeline runs along New York's Southern Tier and underwent a major expansion in 2008.

volumes of water to fracture the rocks and produce the desired amount of gas. Each well may use more than one million gallons of water; although the volume is less of a concern than the location and timing of the withdrawal, potentially from small streams and/or during low flow periods. Both the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) and the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) have been proactive in regulating water withdrawal amounts and locations.

The hydraulic fracturing fluid contains compounds added to the water to make the hydraulic fracturing process more effective. These may include a friction reducer, a biocide to prevent the growth of bacteria that would damage the well piping or clog the fractures, a gel to carry the proppant into the fractures, and various other agents to make sure the proppant stays in the fractures and to prevent corrosion of the pipes in the well. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection requires drillers to disclose these compounds and recently posted a summary of hydraulic fracture solutions used by the industry on their Marcellus Shale web site.

Opportunities for Pennsylvania:

Using current estimates for the amount of recoverable natural gas in the Marcellus formation within Pennsylvania and current natural gas prices (about \$4.00 per thousand cubic feet), the economic value of the resource is about \$1.2 trillion dollars.

The potential royalty value of a single Marcellus well, using published lifetime

well production estimates of 2.5 billion cubic feet, would be \$1.25 million assuming current natural gas prices and assuming the mineral owner gets the state minimum 1/8 share royalty payment.

Experiences in Texas and Wyoming, where similar “booms” of natural gas activity occurred in recent years, show that the Marcellus Shale and the natural gas industry can have a significant economic impact beyond value of the resource produced and royalties paid. The industry creates jobs as well as uses local service companies, contractors, equipment, and goods from the local economy.

Challenges for Pennsylvania:

Questions are being raised about potential environmental and community impacts from Marcellus development. Most concerns are related to water use and disposal and the composition of the fluids used for fracturing the shale.

Fluid removed from a well is required by law to be handled, transported and disposed of properly; although currently there is a lack of facilities that can properly treat and dispose of this waste – especially in the eastern half of the Marcellus play in Pennsylvania where the natural gas industry is new and much of the support infrastructure does not yet exist.

Other environmental issues such as loss of habitat and habitat fragmentation due to well pad, road, and pipeline construction need to be addressed as Marcellus development increases across the Commonwealth.

Another challenge that needs to be recognized and anticipated is that this natural gas resource will not last forever. Estimates are that the Marcellus Shale play will last 20 to 40 years. Afterwards, wells will be shut down, sites reclaimed, and communities and local governments will need re-adjust to sustain themselves in a post-Marcellus economy.

DEP Web page...

http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/minres/oilgas/new_forms/marcellus/marcellus.htm

Penn Future... http://www.pennfuture.org/campaigns_detail.aspx?CampaignID=46

Geology.com... <http://geology.com/articles/marcellus-shale.shtml>

PA Trout Unlimited... http://www.patrount.org/PDFS/Marcellus_Final_21309.pdf

Penn State Extension... <http://naturalgas.extension.psu.edu/Default.htm>

Friends of Oil Creek State Park

By Pam Metzger

Oil Creek State Park was long the beneficiary of a particularly dedicated band of trail volunteers called the “Over the Hill Gang.” In 1981, this group began constructing a trail through the park’s varied terrain, meeting every Wednesday to work on a given section of trail. Eventually, the trail grew to 36 miles in length and, in memory of their original leader Ray Gerard, was christened the Gerard Hiking Trail. It’s safe to say that, thanks to the Gang, the Gerard Trail is one of the best maintained long-distance hiking trails in Pennsylvania.

Still, like any state park or forest, there’s always more work to do and thanks to the Friends of Oil Creek there are enthusiastic hands to perform it.

Biathlons and Marathons and What-All It’s safe to say the Friends of Oil Creek love an Event—especially a heart-pounding athletic event. For the third year, August 2009 will be the time for a US Biathlon Association-sanctioned summer biathlon (a running and shooting event). If that’s not enough, consider The Drake Well Marathon and The Oil Creek 100 because, not being content with a simple 26-mile traditional marathon, the Oil Creek 100 is, yes, a 100-mile run. The Friends will be there, supporting these events, helping the shooters, walkers and runners conquer these obstacles.

Pets Are Friends, Too Last September, the Friends joined with the local humane society for a day of doggie-centric activities for the whole family. There were talent and athletic contests, entertainment and food, as well as good information on responsible pet ownership on display at Paws & Play day. Expect a repeat on September 26th!

Winter and Spring Are Great at OCSP, Too The fun doesn’t stop when the weather’s cool either. You can usually count on snow in the Oil Region in the winter so the Friends enjoy having a Full Moon Ski scheduled in January through March, often with a literary bent. Skiers are encouraged to bring a poem or short story to share around the woodstove with après-ski snacks. And a good cold winter means good sweet maple syrup, too. Friends members assist the park’s environmental educators in tapping the trees, boiling the sap and bottling the liquid gold. It’s possible they sample their wares when all is said and done.

Partnerships and Cooperation a Hallmark of the Friends Success The Friends of Oil Creek State Park do a wonderful job creating links to other local organizations. If you’re organizing a fundraiser or an awareness-raiser, a charitable function or a community support program, they’re there. They work with (as noted above) the local humane society and community development and promotion committees, and other outdoor and service organizations like Trout Unlimited, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, the United Way and the Venango Senior Environment Corps. The Friends work to monitor stream quality and locate and plug orphan oil wells, and helped spearhead a “hat and mitten drive” last winter.

Ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of a new trail.



Kirby Neubert

You Can Help 1. Volunteer your time and expertise at a Friends event.
2. Join the Chapter. Annual membership is just \$10 for an individual or \$25 for a family.
3. Support the Friends. Any contribution is welcome! Make checks payable to PPFF/FOCSP and mail to: Friends of Oil Creek State Park, 305 State Park Road, Oil City, PA 16301. Visit their website at www.orgsites.com/pa/focsp/index.html for more information.

Oil Creek State Park Oil! 150 years ago, at the direction of Connecticut banker James Townsend, Col. Edwin Drake drilled 69 feet down into the Venango County soil and found the substance that, for good and ill, has since fueled much of the world. Oil Creek State Park was developed to tell the story of the changing landscape of the Oil Creek Valley.

An industrial history buff’s dream, Oil Creek State Park features reproductions of two drilling operations at Hunt Farm and Benninghoff Farm, a visitors’ center at the Petroleum Center Train Station, and the Oil Creek & Titusville Railroad, a 26-mile excursion train from Titusville through the park. Nearby, the Drake Well Museum provides additional opportunities to research the oil industry, the boomtowns of the valley and what happened when the oil operations slowed.

Lest anyone think industrial heritage is all Oil Creek State Park has to offer, fear not! Your outdoor recreational needs are thoroughly met in this 6,250-acre oasis. There are 52 miles of hiking trails (including the 36-mile Gerard Hiking Trail, complete with overnight shelters, waterfalls and beautiful vistas), fishing for bass and trout, a scenic float trip on Oil Creek and plenty of perfect picnicking spots.

In addition, the paved 9.7-mile Oil Creek State Park Rail-Trail meanders through the park from Titusville to Petroleum Center. Intrepid riders can negotiate the eight miles between Petroleum Center and downtown Oil City to connect to the 32-mile Samuel Justus/Allegheny River Trail combination.

School groups should check the DCNR Calendar of Events for educational programs offered at Wildcat Hollow Outdoor Classroom.

The entire region is promoting the 150th anniversary of the drilling of Col. Drake’s first well with a year-long celebration. Check out www.oil150.com for a list of events and other fascinating information.



CCC Reflections

By John Eastlake

In 2006, the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation honored the former Civilian Conservation Corps with the Keystone Legacy award. There were five former CCC "boys" in attendance, including Leonard Parucha.

Leonard, like many of the CCCers, was a first generation American. His parents came from Poland. Leonard graduated from high school during the Great Depression and couldn't find a job. He spent time in West Virginia and then joined the CCC. His first camp was the S-77 Shingle Branch Camp about 4 miles from North Bend, PA, near Renovo. (Shingle Branch is a tributary of Young Womens Creek). He was in the second enlistment group which meant that the camp started in May of 1933 and he went there in October, 1933.

The Shingle Branch Camp's mission was forest protection. The camp developed a number of fire trails, fire lanes and roads to provide access in case of forest fires. He worked on a variety of projects from trail development to cutting down trees to stone napping roads to dynamiting. He preferred dynamiting because it was "living on the edge" and it was the easiest of all their jobs.

Leonard was one of a few "boys" who participated in the Stock Survey, which involved going into the Sproul State Forest, surveying lines through the forest, and mapping the different tree species. The end result was a map with different tree types, e.g. BBM (Beech, Birch, Maple), much like a topographic map. The Foresters from DCNR still do this.

The 2 Mile Camp at Westport developed the lower end of Kettle Creek State Park and the Hyner Camp developed Hyner State Park and Hyner View.

On a tour of the Fork Hill Road with Leonard, he said that this was their Monument. He showed me a picture, pointing to a particular rocky area that had to be star drilled and dynamited. There was a small

leaning chestnut oak in his picture, a tree which still stands today.

Leonard likes to tell the story that he and a buddy would get off the truck packed with CCC boys on their way back to camp at the end of their work day. By running downhill, they would beat the truck back and be able to "catch the hot water in the showers."

The Shingle Branch Camp closed on Oct. 31, 1935 and the Army Co. (311) moved to Maryland. Their mission there was mosquito control. Leonard said that they never had to worry about mosquitoes at Shingle Branch. Their initial clothing was from World War I and had been stored in mothballs for a dozen years.

He finished his stint with the CCC in Maryland with 30 months of service. He went on to serve in the US Navy during WW II. Leonard, like many CCC boys, came from the various cities and states, married local girls and stayed to become an integral part of their communities.

Leonard graduated from Lock Haven University at the age of 73 and attended schools in Poland. He had been editor of both of the CCC camp newsletters. He still writes a lot of articles for the local newspapers. He has written two books; *Last of the Susquehannocks* and *Retire-miniscing*. Leonard is well read, plays a great harmonica and is a terrific tour guide when you take him to the former Shingle Branch CCC Camp. Tom Brokaw was correct; "these fellows are indeed part of the Greatest Generation."



Tom Brokaw was correct; "these fellows are indeed part of the Greatest Generation."



New Membership Program

to Expand PPF's Reach

Elsewhere in this issue, we outlined recent discussions about the core question of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation's visibility and effectiveness. Those discussions resulted in a new website and marketing strategy as well as implementation of a new membership program.

The reasons for taking this step were many including that membership in PPF makes it easy for someone who does not live within logical striking distance of an established chapter the chance to give support to their favorite state forest or park or to the system in general. It's human nature to want to belong to something and PPF membership is a great "something."

There's a membership form in this newsletter and, of course, you can join online at the new website. Members receive information on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and action items.

Second, more and more, there is a need to have a strong, consolidated voice for parks and forests. As you may be aware, over the course of the past several weeks we have worked diligently to ensure that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources—particularly parks

and forests—received full operational funding in the state budget. We need citizens to join us in making our voices heard, and one means of doing this is through a statewide membership program. In essence, we are

building a constituency for parks and forests, and the myriad of recreational, educational, and health benefits that they provide.

Third, because PPF is tasked with being the administrative arm of the Chapters, it made a good bit of sense to provide the option

for chapters to put the management of a Chapter's membership program into the hands of PPF, centralizing these efforts and eliminating the need for each Friends Group to recruit and retain someone to keep track of records.

Lastly, let's be honest, a membership program helps raise unrestricted revenue

for the work of being a voice for state parks and state forests. As a non-profit, the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation is dependent upon the generosity of our members and supporters to ensure adequate funding to do the work that we do. Please consider joining today.

Just so you don't think we've forgotten you, businesses and other nonprofits are most welcome to join PPF. We've various sponsorship opportunities and simply love working with other groups to promote parks and forests. Contact us and let's see where we can partner!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

•••

**First Annual
PA Parks
and Forests
Foundation
and Department
of Conservation
and Natural
Resources
Food Drive
on Labor Day
Weekend, 2009.**

Visit

www.PaParksAndForests.org
to learn more.

•••

**Second Annual
Great
Pennsylvania
Outdoor
Challenge,**
taking place

September 11, 2009 -
October 11, 2009.

More information
coming to

www.PaParksandForests.org
or request information
by emailing
mmowery-ppff@pa.net.

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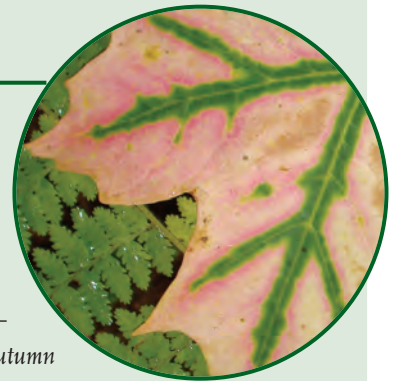
State Park Collector Pin Series Continues

Support YOUR State Parks and Forests – purchase a state park tag!

This year, two collector pins were released and are for sale at most state parks and forests and through the PPF website - paparksandforests.org:

#7 in the limited edition series –
Keystone State Park, Westmoreland County –
featuring the original watercolor artwork
Keystone Autumn by Jennifer Boget.

#8 in the limited edition series –
Oil Creek State Park, Venango County –
featuring the original artwork *Shades of Autumn*
by artist Jack Paluh.



*Contributions to the tag program
(\$5 suggested donation) go to support
programs and improvements in state parks and
forests making Pennsylvania a better place
to live, work and recreate! Collect them all!*

**Join
PPFF
Today!**

- Friend**.....\$20 (student/senior),
.....\$25 regular, \$35 family
- Enthusiast**.....\$50-99
- Supporter**.....\$100-\$249
- Protector**.....\$250-\$499
- Caretaker**.....\$500-\$999
- Guardian**.....\$1000-\$2499
- Legacy**.....\$2500+

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Employee matching gift? Enclose paper work.

Make checks payable to PPF and mail along with this form to:
PPFF, 105 North Front St, Suite 305, Harrisburg, PA 17101



**or join
online at**
www.PaParksAndForest.org