



FRIENDS OF

# Pine Grove Furnace News

STATE PARK Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation

SPRING 2020

www.pinegrovefriends.org • 1100 Pine Grove Road, Gardners, PA 17324 • pinegrovefriends@gmail.com

## Impact of COVID-19 on Friends Activities

Our Earth Day celebration, Van Wagner concert, Woodsy Owl volunteer camping weekend, firewood splitting, trail maintenance, and our annual trail races all had to be canceled this spring. As of May 22, the campground and limited facilities have begun to open back up. We do not know when public programs such as environmental education, guided hikes, and history tours will resume, but we are looking into creating some virtual tours that we can offer on our website and Facebook page as a possible alternative. National Public Lands Day and Fall Furnace Fest are still on the schedule, but these events may change once we have further guidance.

The Friends board met virtually in early May with our park manager, Mike Kutzmonich, to prioritize the Friends' purchases for the season. Although we were unable to plant trees on Earth Day, we have set aside the funds to plant trees on National Public Lands Day instead. Smaller purchases include paint for the office porch, hanging baskets for the office, and reseeding the bank



*Hanging baskets beautify the wraparound porch at the park office*

near Laurel Lake. Meanwhile, the expanded entrance/exit to the campground will become a reality this summer due to the combined efforts of park staff and the Friends. The park staff finished site preparation this spring, and the Friends will be paying for surfacing the new entranceway.



*Notice above that there are convenient water spigots along the new entrance to the Family Campground*

## Library Donated by a Volunteer

For several years, the Friends have maintained a small library in an old kitchen cabinet located in the corner of the woodshed of the Family Campground. It has become a very popular option for both adults and children on rainy days in the park.

One of our volunteer campground hosts, Joe Frassetta, decided that our library could use an upgrade and built a new library for the park. Joe is a retired forester for DCNR and has helped the Friends with a number of projects including working at our trail races and cutting firewood. This is truly a gift that will be enjoyed by many.

*Thank you, Joe!*



*Joe Frassetta delivered the new library to one of our board members during the "Red Phase" of COVID-19*



*This handmade library will be installed at Pine Grove Furnace later this season*

## LEADERSHIP

Andre Weltman, *Chair*  
Mary Soderberg, *Vice Chair*  
Josh Burleigh, *Treasurer*  
Diane Velozo, *Secretary*  
Crystal Hunt  
Rob Shaw  
Brett Weiser  
Donna Weiser

## OUR MISSION

*The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park (FOPGF) 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.*

Email us at:

[pinegrovefriends@gmail.com](mailto:pinegrovefriends@gmail.com)

Visit us online at:

[www.pinegrovefriends.org](http://www.pinegrovefriends.org)

Follow us on Facebook at:

[Friends-of-Pine-Grove-Furnace-State-Park](https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-Pine-Grove-Furnace-State-Park)

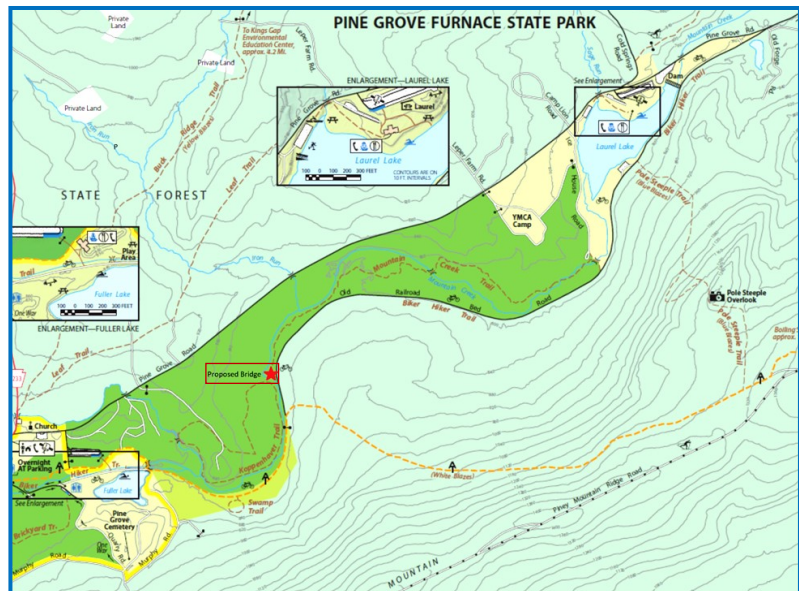
*Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park formed in August 2010 as a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Official registration may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

## **Koppenhaver/Mountain Creek Trails Connector Bridge Update**

Behind the scenes, engineers from Gannett Fleming, Inc., Contech Engineered Solutions LLC, and DCNR have been finalizing the plans for the trail bridge to connect the Koppenhaver Trail with Mountain Creek Trail. Once we receive approval for our permit request from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, we will move forward with manufacturing the 60-foot metal bridge. We are still hopeful that the bridge will be installed by early fall.

Funding totaling \$70,000 for the bridge has been provided through two grants from the Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation and the Cumberland County Land Partnerships Grant Program. Park staff will be preparing the site this summer, and Friends will be responsible for the remaining expenses. When complete, the bridge will connect the two primary trails between Laurel and Fuller Lakes to create a trail system in the park. The red ★ in the left center of the map below illustrates where the proposed bridge will be located.

The exact timing of the installation will be dependent on approval of the state permit, but our goal is to have the bridge installed before the end of this year.



To keep up with the State Park and the Friends, follow us on Facebook. The Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park Facebook page is a team effort of volunteers and park staff to provide you information about the park and the region.

## **—Activity Calendar 2020—**

### **SEPTEMBER**

**26** National Public Lands Day—9 a.m. to noon: celebrate National Public Lands Day with a morning of volunteering and giving back to the Park. We plan to plant replacement trees.

### **OCTOBER**

**17-18** 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.

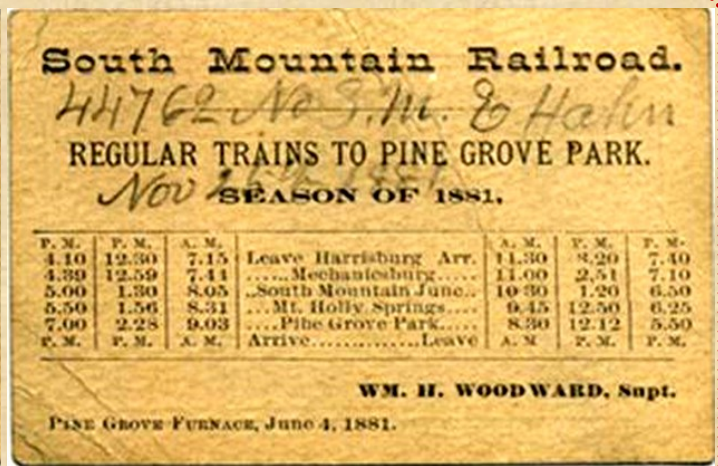
• For more information and updates, go to [www.pinegrovefriends.org/home/upcoming\\_events](http://www.pinegrovefriends.org/home/upcoming_events). •

# What Is That Concrete Next to the Trail?



When you enjoy the Koppenhaver Trail off the edge of Fuller Field or the Biker-Hiker Trail (which is also the Appalachian Trail) from the end of Fuller Lake towards Laurel Lake, you may notice old concrete structures. What are they doing in the middle of the woods? They are remnants of an amusement park and summer camp—an unexpected legacy of 19th century ironmaking at Pine Grove Furnace.

The South Mountain Mining & Iron Company needed to increase income from the South Mountain Railroad that connected Carlisle with Pine Grove Furnace. One way to do that was to increase ridership, but what would induce people to take a train into the mountains? An amusement park! In 1878 the iron company built an attraction on 30 acres of land next to Mountain Creek. Our modern Koppenhaver Trail loops right through the site. The park was free, but people paid to ride the train to get there. Jackson Fuller's "Pine Grove Park" soon attracted more than 20,000 visitors annually from as far away as Harrisburg. Attractions included "ten pins" (a pair of bowling alleys), "flying horses" (a water-powered merry-go-round), a bicycle race track, a rifle shooting range, a small area for playing baseball, a restaurant, picnic areas, fountains, and walking paths through the pine trees. Mountain Creek was dammed, creating a shallow, narrow lake for small boats. A 60-foot dance pavilion was built directly next to the creek—this is the flat concrete pad along Koppenhaver Trail recently uncovered by volunteers. Foot bridges connected the main park to the opposite side of the creek where train tracks ran along what is now the Biker-Hiker Trail (closer to Laurel Lake, this becomes Old Railroad Bed Road).



Front (left) and back of an 1881 train ticket to the old amusement park, Pine Grove Park

The amusement park closed around 1900. In 1913 and 1914 the spot became a summer camp for children from the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. "Camp Sells" used features from the former park, notably the dance pavilion which became their dining hall.

Next, in 1920 the Boy Scouts camped there, but the following year relocated closer to Laurel Lake at "Camp Rothrock" (today's YMCA "Camp Thompson").

The Girl Scouts then moved in. From 1921-1967 they occupied 58 acres and installed many buildings while again using the 60-foot pavilion as a dining hall. In 1934 federal money from Great Depression relief funds was used to build a 90-foot swimming pool on the far side of Mountain Creek. A wooden bridge connected the pool to the main camp next to the pavilion. The foundation of the old pool is visible a few steps off the Biker-Hiker trail. Notice traces of blue paint.

Campers as adults many decades later remember how *bitterly cold* the pool was (water came from Mountain Creek at first, and later from a hillside spring behind today's Swamp Trail). When the Girl Scouts departed after 46 years, the buildings were removed, and only a few traces remain between the trees.

