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BURNING ISSUES

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PAFFHA Has New President



Dr. Peter Linehan is the new president of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association. He was elected at the November, 2015 membership meeting.

Message From the President

At the annual meeting in November I was very honored to be elected as President of the Pennsylvania Forest Fire Museum Association. Since I first got to know the members of PAFFMA way back in 2007 I have always been impressed by the dedication and commitment of the volunteers and members of this organization.

I have been teaching in the forest technology at Penn State Mont Alto since the fall of 2000. Learning about Pennsylvania's rich heritage in forest conservation has been a great eye-opener. I knew about the national effort to bring forestry to the United States, but I didn't know how much work it took in each State. To me Gifford Pinchot was a national leader. I didn't know that he was shaped by his upbringing and experiences in Pennsylvania. Working every day at the place where Joseph Rothrock, George Wirt, Mira Lloyd Dock, and Ralph Brock also worked to figure out how best to safeguard our forests has been very inspirational. Every now and then, while working

with students on a lab, I would look around and remember a similar scene in one of the photos of those early days. To commemorate wildfire

fighting has always been the main emphasis of this organization. However, to really tell that story we need to also tell the broader story of forest conservation in our state. That's why the name change to the *Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association* is so important. It reminds us to tell the larger story so that the need for and importance of fire-fighting is better understood, while at the same time we don't dilute our emphasis on wildfires. After all, children still love Smokey Bear most of all!

Currently, the Forest Heritage and Discovery Center at Caledonia State Park is our primary way of reaching the public. While our long term goal is to build our own museum on Route 30, operating the Center gives us the experience of keeping a museum running. I believe it is crucial for us to expand from the current weekend operations during the summer to more days of operation. Also, we should be open to more groups who are interested in visiting at other times. This will require more volunteers, but it is well worth the effort.

When I have volunteered at the Center I am always surprised at the number of visitors who have absolutely no idea what it takes to protect and grow the forest. Many people assume the forests have always been this way. I especially enjoy helping young people see that they have a valuable role in safeguarding our forests. And it's really fun to

watch them squirt each other with the fire pump on a hot summer day!

More and more of our lives take place in the digital world. Whether we agree with this or not, it's a reality that will not change. We will be increasing our efforts to communicate with a larger audience through our website, Facebook, and the electronic version of this newsletter. Maybe we can convince a few more people to join us in the outdoors!

I would like to thank the previous presidents including our immediate past president, Jack Graham, the late Steve Cummings, and Paul Sebasovich. I would also like to thank the board members and officers. Their dream and persistence have kept the organization going for so many years. Together we can work to tell the story of forest conservation in Pennsylvania and make the bricks and mortar museum a reality.

New Name Adopted By the Organization

The Pennsylvania Forest Fire Museum Association at the general membership meeting on November 14, 2015 voted to change the name of the organization to the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association.

For those unfamiliar with the nuances of non-profit organizations changing a name is just more than voting to make it so. There are filings to be made with the Pennsylvania Department of State and the IRS. There are lease agreements, insurance and other paperwork mazes to work through, along with bank accounts, and the like.

It is more than just ordering new stationery. The logo must be changed and all the signs, displays and other publicity must be changed as well. It will be a long slow process but as the Board of Directors moves forward the change will take place.

The change was proposed and accepted as making the organization more encompassing and more inclusive of Pennsylvania's rich forest heritage.

New Chief of Division of Forest Fire Protection



Mike Kern

Hello, this is Mike Kern, and I have been provided with the great honor to serve the Forest Fire Wardens as the new Chief of the Division of Forest Fire Protection. Although I am not new to the division, I am new to my current position, and I would like to take a moment to introduce myself.

I have been working with the Bureau of Forestry for almost 15 years. For the past 7 years I have served within the Wildfire Operations and Planning Section as both the Section Chief and a Program Specialist. Prior to my time in Forest Fire Protection, I was a Forester in the Tuscarora Forest District in south-central Pennsylvania. My wife and I have two daughters and currently reside in Perry County.

One of my main goals over the next several months is to define and articulate a clear vision and intent to both the Bureau of Forestry staff

and our volunteer fire wardens. Simply stated, our mission is to manage wildland fire in order to protect life, property, and natural resources. This basic mission has not changed very much over the past 100 years, but the environment that we are operating in has changed drastically.

Technological advances, social, and demographic changes are forcing us to analyze all that we do for efficiency and effectiveness. Although we have many challenges before us, I still feel that this is an exciting time to be involved in the wildland fire program in Pennsylvania. I truly believe that our organization is on the verge of doing some very important and exciting things.

Years Gone By

May 20, 1875. - A fire broke out at the Moshannon Lumber Company's mills west of Osceola Mills, Clearfield County and 15,000,000 feet of lumber burned. The firestorm completely destroyed the town.

May 23, 1885 - Extensive forest fires burned at Harvey's Lake, Luzerne County a well-known summer resort, twelve miles from Wilkes-Barre.

June 5, 1895 - Coon Run, three miles from Russell City, on the Elk-Forest County line, was wiped out by a forest fire. The place consisted of twenty-seven buildings, a pump station, school house and saw mill.

March 31, 1905 - Constables were made fire wardens by an act approved March 31, 1905, and were empowered to call out all their neighbors to fight forest fires. They were required to act under this law on pain of prosecution for failure, and were to be paid 15 cents an hour for their work.

April 21, 1915 – James Bowman and Harry Sowers were badly burned while fighting forest flies in the vicinity of Laurel, Cumberland County. George B. Rickabaugh, of Mt. Holly Springs, suffered a broken leg when the automobile in which he was riding overturned while responding to the fire. The fires about Laurel destroyed the United Ice and Coal Company's ice house

and buildings at the dam, in which were stored 17,000 tons of ice.

April 8, 1925 - One thousand acres of brush and timber land in the Wopsononock district and a smaller area near the state game preserve on Lock Mountain between Reese and Flowing Spring all in Blair County, were swept by forest fires.

April 29, 1935 – A fire near Long Pond, Monroe County was finally extinguished. District Forester E. C. Pyle estimated it had burned over 10,000 acres.

May 22, 1945 – The U.S. Government announced that Japan had been sporadically attacking the mainland of the United States by using hydrogen filled balloon bombs that carried incendiary bombs. Their target was the forests of the western U.S. The project was largely unsuccessful.



The Valley Forge Fire Tower (circa 1932)
The tower was dismantled about 1939 due to
safety considerations.

Photo courtesy of Albert G. Eberle

PA Forest Heritage Association

Officers

President Dr. Peter E. Linehan

1st Vice President – Bob Rudy

2nd Vice President - Paul Sebasovich

Immediate Past President - Jack Graham

Secretary - Lisa LaSalle

Treasurer – John Bitzer

Directors

Dr. Peter E. Linehan – 2015

Beverly Spicer – 2015

Jack Graham – 2015

Bill Parr – 2016

John Eastlake – 2016

Bob Schweitzer – 2016

Joe Devilbiss – 2016

Jeff Stuffle – 2016

Richard H. Flowers, II – 2017

Roy A. Siefert – 2017

John Berst – 2017

Bob Rudy – 2017

Newsletter Editor

Michael J. Klimkos

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What is it?

While sorting through the association's archives we came across a box of these items. We believe they were attached to license plate holders of fire wardens. Any information on what this artifact's purpose was is appreciated.

Forest Fire Statistics

Fire Statistics for 2015 as of December 9, 2015

Total Fires	807
Total Acreage Burned	4,105.19
Estimated Damage	\$417,044.40
Injuries	10
Fatalities	2
Average Size	5.09 ac/fire

Source – DCNR, Bureau of Forestry, Division of Forest Fire Protection



P.O. Box 176
Fayetteville, PA 17222-0176

Return Service Requested

Mission Statement

The mission of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association is to preserve and showcase the heritage of forest fire protection as it relates to forestry. The museum celebrates Pennsylvania's pioneers in forest stewardship – past, present and future

Vision Statement

The Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association is a place of discovery. Significant artifacts and interactive exhibits trace the past and point to the future of forestry in Pennsylvania. The museum is dedicated to the stewardship of all forest resources and honors the men and women who sustain today's forest. Here everyone can enjoy a variety of experiences that further an understanding of forestry and forest fires. In addition to indoor and outdoor exhibits, the facility includes a library, training center, classrooms, volunteer accommodations, museum store and administrative offices. Future plans include outreach programs, transportable exhibits, an auditorium and food service.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enroll the following in the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association

Name _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Check One:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student/Youth | \$ 5.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family (number in household) | \$ 25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$ 35.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit Volunteer organization (check below). \$ 35.00 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Fire Crew | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Fire. Co. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Fire Wardens Assn. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Org. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$ 100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life | \$ 300.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$ _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to join, but I would like to make a donation \$ _____ | |

Make checks payable to:
The Pennsylvania Forest Fire Museum Association

Mail to:
The Pennsylvania Forest Fire Museum Association
6151 Route 209
Stroudsburg, PA 18360-7039