

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



With Labor Day weekend behind us the PFHA has just completed another summer season of presenting the Forest Heritage Discovery Center at Caledonia State Park. It has been our pleasure and opportunity to keep telling the story of forest conservation and wildfire protection in Pennsylvania. We will present exact visitor numbers at the annual meeting in

November, but if the happy faces I saw at the Smokey Bear Birthday party are an indication, we are having an impact on our visitors. I would like to thank all the volunteers who worked so hard to keep the Center open, especially those who worked over multiple weekends!

We are at a time when there are many threats to our forests around the whole country ranging from dangerous wildfires, invasive species of plants and animals, development pressures, forest fragmentation, and many more. Yet to all appearances our Pennsylvania forests are looking green and beautiful. The PFHA can play a crucial role by showing how past pioneers struggled to give us the forests we have today and inspiring our visitors to keep up the struggle. Our forests have come a long way and need vigilance and work to keep improving.

There are many challenges facing the PFHA in carrying out our mission. We need to cultivate more members and volunteers so that the Discovery Center can be open more days during the year. Many of our displays need to be refreshed and renewed. Also, we need to come up with new displays to tell our story. So I ask all of you to increase your participation in the PFHA. Plan on coming to the annual meeting. Buy and sell raffle tickets. Consider volunteering at the Discovery Center next summer. By doing this we can work towards eventually building our own museum as the sign on Route 30 promises!

*Peter Linehan*

## Association's Upcoming Annual Membership Meeting

Your Board of Directors meets several times a year to plan and coordinate PFHA activities, and the By-Laws mandate one "general membership" meeting each year. This has traditionally been held in early November, and it will be so again this year, on NOVEMBER 11, at the Norlo Park facility just east of Chambersburg.

The problem is that our membership doesn't attend. Attendance by other than current officers and board members is usually slim. We really want to change that, but need YOUR FEEDBACK.

What would entice you to attend this meeting? A different time of year? A different place? Some specific program or activity? PLEASE share your feelings on this important topic. Send your comments to President Peter Linehan at [pel2@psu.edu](mailto:pel2@psu.edu), or via mail to our P.O. Box 176, Fayetteville PA 17222.

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## Raffle Tickets

By now you should have received in the mail raffle tickets for a PGC print "The Getaway" and "Leaping Brook Trout". This is a major fund raiser for the PFHA. If you have not received your tickets please contact Lisa LaSalle. The winner will be drawn at the annual meeting in November.

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## Smokey's Birthday

In what is fast becoming an annual tradition we celebrated the Smokey Bear birthday party at the Forest Heritage Discovery Center on Sunday, August 6, 2017.

The children seemed to really enjoy their visit with Smokey and the birthday cake, sub sandwiches, and orange drink. They also got to learn a little about forest conservation and fire safety!

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## Ivan Bretzman Forest Fire Warden



Ivan Bretzman is well-known to firefighters and foresters in southcentral Pennsylvania. He began his wildfire suppression activities on Thanksgiving Day, 1949, when his father Charles came into the house and said, "Bear Mountain is on fire. Let's go put it out." Young Ivan followed his father out the door and into the career /avocation that he continues to this day. Following that fire

Charles became a Fire Warden. When Ivan became old enough he joined his father's fire crew.

Ivan and his wife Judy relocated to Mount Holly Springs and there he joined Citizens Fire Company. At the time Dana Porter was the chief and local fire warden and Ivan joined that crew.

In 1966 Ivan became Chief at Citizens – Cumberland County Company 36 where he had been Assistant Chief for 2 years before that. It was a position he held until 1992. In 1970 he was appointed Fire Warden, replacing Dana Porter. Ivan was appointed Fire Chief of Dickinson Township, which adjoins the Boro of Mt. Holly Springs, in 1985 and held that position until 2015 when he decided to step back to Assistant Chief and let his son Greg take over the responsibilities as chief.

When it comes to wildfires and firefighting Ivan has been through it all. He was on the Big Flat Fire on South Mountain in May of 1963. The fire which grew to 900 acres before it was contained jumped the Shippensburg Road like it wasn't even there. The next day as the beat up crews tried to rest, another fire on Piney Mountain was off and running. It had been a bad week.

Another series of fires in 2001 stretched crews thin. In one day they had 7 mountain fires, the most serious being the Leeper Farm Fire near Hammonds Rocks on South Mountain.

Ivan notes that most of the wildfires have been due to careless people burning debris at the wrong time, but he notes that South Mountain has had more than its share of arson fires.

He says that for the most part the fire wardens and crews get along with the Bureau of Forestry, but he states emphatically, "If things continue to go the way they are, one of these days

the state will have a big fire and nobody will show up." He thinks the Fire Wardens and crews don't mean much anymore and the wardens are just somebody to do the paperwork. "They used to have a recognition dinner and a summer picnic for the wardens and crews. "Now a brush truck can cost \$175,000 and that's without all the tools and equipment. We have to fundraise all that, and the state can't even buy us an ear of corn and a hotdog once a year. It's no wonder the number of crews are diminishing."

Despite the problems, Ivan sees some good things that have come along during his tenure as a warden. He notes that the training has improved immensely and the equipment is better. He notes that the federal surplus equipment was a boon to wildland firefighters. Aircraft, headlamps, and leaf blowers have all made wildland firefighting easier.

Ivan is a walking encyclopedia of fire knowledge, and what he can't keep in his head he stores with Bertha – his personal 1931 Seagrave engine – along with two other engines and a garage full of fire equipment and memorabilia.

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### *Smokey's Birthday (continued)*

It took the efforts of many people to make this event happen: Bob Rudy organized the event, arranged for the donations and get Smokey to the event.

Ranger Brandon Black accompanied Smokey and drove him around the park. Charlie Meyers brought a box of plastic Smokey hats to distribute. Joe Dague volunteered at short notice to run the Forest Heritage Center. Peter Linehan helped out for the first part of the afternoon.

Walmart in Chambersburg donated the beautiful cake and the six-foot sub. McDonald's Delamor Enterprises donated the orange drink.

More than 70 people attended this annual event.



## PA Forest Heritage Association

### Officers

**President** Dr. Peter E. Linehan

pel2@psu.edu

**1st VP** Paul Sebasovich

psebasovich@gmail.com

**2nd VP** Bob Rudy

bob@bobrudy.com

**Secretary** - Lisa LaSalle

lasallelisa@yahoo.com

**Treasurer** – John Bitzer

jbitz@ptd.net

**Immediate Past President** - Jack Graham

jatogr@embarqmail.com

### Permanent Chairs

**Mont Alto Historical Society** - Beverly Spicer

beal70sp@comcast.net -

**DCNR Secretary's Designee** - Roy Brubaker

robrubaker@pa.gov

**PA Forestry Association** - Rich Lewis - rlewis7575@aol.com

**DCNR Bureau of Forestry, FFP** -

Charlie Choplick - cchoplick@pa.gov -

### Directors

Richard Flowers - 2017 - [rflowers@flowerscpas.com](mailto:rflowers@flowerscpas.com)

Roy Siefert - 2017 - [rsiefert2@juno.com](mailto:rsiefert2@juno.com)

John Berst - 2017 - [berst\\_2@msn.com](mailto:berst_2@msn.com)

Jeff Stuffle - 2017 - [jandmstuffle@verizon.net](mailto:jandmstuffle@verizon.net)

Joe Devilbiss - 2019 - [joendot2@verizon.net](mailto:joendot2@verizon.net)

John Eastlake - 2019 - [jeastlake@comcast.net](mailto:jeastlake@comcast.net)

Bill Parr - 2019 - [wwparr@comcast.net](mailto:wwparr@comcast.net)

Bob Schweitzer - 2019 - [RESchw38@gmail.com](mailto:RESchw38@gmail.com)

### Newsletter Editor

Michael J. Klimkos

[Klimkos@embarqmail.com](mailto:Klimkos@embarqmail.com)

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## Wildfire Statistics to September 12, 2017

Total Fires - 433

Acres Burned - 1,417.54

Total Damage - \$531,952

Most Fires – District 17 – 89

Most Acreage – District 18 – 333 acres

Structures Damaged – 10

Structures Destroyed – 17

Injuries – 5



Through the 1970s it wasn't uncommon to use schoolboys as wildland firefighters. This photo is part of the PFHA collection and is believed to have been taken c1950. Any information about who – where – when is appreciated. The other question is: If they had "helicopter parents" were the parents towing Bambi Buckets?

## PaFORE

### PA Forest Heritage Outreach & Education

To date 586 items have been catalogued in the PFHA archives as part of the PaFORE project. This includes 142 photographs. This is just a very small portion of the PFHA archives, and more work still needs to be done. 26 of the 72 narratives for the story maps, being prepared in cooperation with DCNR have been drafted. Unfortunately this information is not yet readily available to the membership. The ability to distribute this information is largely dependent on procuring funds for the purchase of computer technology to allow for that to happen.

**Invitation to Attend**  
**PA Forest Heritage Association Annual Meeting**  
**Norlo Park, Chambersburg PA- Saturday, November 11, 2017**

***Theme: Keeping On the Right Course***

The 2017 Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association (PFHA) will provide something of interest to all of our membership. Come and join us in celebrating the present accomplishments of YOUR organization and help plan for the future.

**Program**

- 8:45 Arrival/Registration - Coffee and Snacks
- 9:30 Introduction - State of the PFHA - Review of Summer at the Discovery Center
- PFHA – What the Future Holds – P. Sebasovich
- Presentations: “The PaFORE Program – Michael Klimkos  
“Colorado Wildfire” - Austin Grove  
“George Wirt and the Birth of Pennsylvania Forestry – J Graham
- Brief Business Meeting / Election of Directors
- 12:30 Catered Lunch – Savoy Caterers of Waynesboro
- Entertainment – The PFHA Players & “Jelly Elliott and the Three Knotheads”
- Fire Lookout Association Update
- 2:00 Selection of Raffle Winners
- 2:15 Special Program
- 3:00 Adjournment – Optional Visit to Local Fire Tower

**Total Fee = \$25.00 includes lunch**

**Registration Deadline: November 1**

----- **Cut Here and Submit with Payment** -----

Please make check payable to **PFHA**. Mail registration form and fee to:

Jack Graham, 365 Peach Ridge Rd., Elliptsburg, PA 17024

Questions? 717-582-2235 or [jatogr@embarqmail.com](mailto:jatogr@embarqmail.com)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Registrations \_\_\_\_\_ X \$25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Yes, I will bring an item for the “Chinese Auction

\_\_\_ Sorry I can’t make it, but would like to contribute to meeting expenses.





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

*Return Service Requested*

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 «City», «St» «ZIP»

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association is to preserve and showcase the rich heritage of forestry and forest protection in Pennsylvania, and to inform and educate the public about present-day forestry, including forest fire protection, and its future in the Commonwealth.

### 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 as a member of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Check One:

<input type="checkbox"/> Student/ Youth	\$5
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Family (number in household _____)	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$35
Non-Profit Volunteer Organization (check below)	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Forest Fire Crew	
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Fire Company	
<input type="checkbox"/> Forest Fire Wardens Assoc.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Organization _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$300
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$ _____	

I do not wish to join but I would like to make a donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks payable to:

**Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association**

Mail to:  
**The Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Assoc.**  
 6151 Route 209  
 Stroudsburg, PA 18360-7039