



Burning Issues

The Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association

<http://www.paforestheritage.org>

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1ST QUARTER 2018

President's Message

A few days ago I was asked to find an appropriate quote from Dr. Joseph Rothrock, the acknowledged father of forest conservation in Pennsylvania. While looking frantically through papers and articles that I used in previous work, I found a page of quotes gathered by Eleanor Maass in her excellent biography of Dr. Rothrock. One was especially moving:

“When you start on a trip, never turn back; eat your gun covers or the tops of your moccasins – but never turn back.” Quoted by Elizabeth Thomas in *A History of the Pennsylvania State Forest School*

This quote was probably inspired by Dr. Rothrock's many trips and expeditions during his lifetime. But it could also have come from the long, hard struggle he faced to encourage people to work to improve the state of forests in his day and lay the groundwork for the abundant forests that we enjoy today. Also, it should inspire us to continue to work to further the mission of this organization, to share the history of forest conservation in Pennsylvania and motivate the current and future generations to continue the struggle

As I write this note winter is hitting southern Pennsylvania with what we hope is a last snow storm of the season. Fortunately, the signs of spring are at hand. The birds are singing and flying around more. Flowers are starting to come up. And the trees, especially the red maples, are ready to bud. Soon we will start planning for the coming summer season at the Discovery Center.

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Terry Smith Special Investigator Bureau of Forestry



If Terry Smith shows up at your door it is sort of like arriving at work and finding *60 Minutes* waiting for you. Terry's job is Special Investigator for the Bureau of Forestry, and it is his job to investigate wildfires, collect evidence and recommend charges against arsonists for further prosecution.

Terry started his career with the Bureau of Forestry as a seasonal semi-skilled laborer in the Bald Eagle District. He was promoted to a full-time position as an equipment operator. Working for BOF he was on a fire crew, as well as being a volunteer firefighter. He had a keen interest in fire and when Fire Inspector Gordon Aikey retired, Terry was promoted to Forest Fire Inspector Supervisor.

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PA Forest Heritage Association

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2017 Summary

534 Wildfires Statewide

1,649 acres Burned

5 Injuries

24 Structures Lost

Most in the State - William Penn State Forest

118 Wildfires burned 78 acres

Debris Burning was the Highest Cause

279 fires that burned 299.7 acres

Arson Fires burned the most acreage

71 fires burned 716 acres

289 personnel travelled to 13 states to fight fires.

8 Type 2 IA Crews

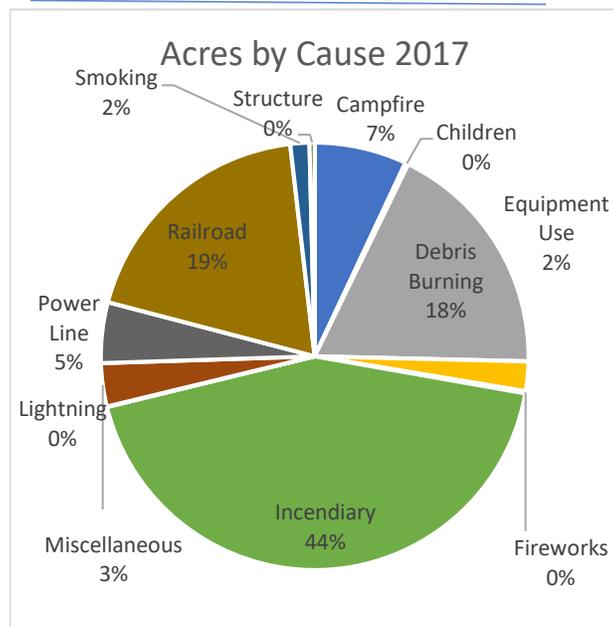
2 Type 6 engines to Montana of 3 crews each

57 single resources

3 Type 3 incident management teams

Worked with PEMA

1,511 Active Fire Wardens



(President's Message cont. from Page 1)

I hope you will be able to volunteer for one or more afternoons over the summer. We will be contacting you for volunteer signups soon.

We will be one of the local museums participating in the Franklin County Visitors Bureau *Spring Into History* program on Saturdays April 14 and 21 from noon to five. During this time the Discovery Center will be open for interested early season visitors. We will need volunteers to greet visitors. Also, we will set out the backpack pumps and the target to give young people and idea of what it's like to carry one and fight wildfires. If you are interested in volunteering contact me at pel2@psu.edu or Jack Graham at KMTJTG@YAHOO.COM.

This past February the PFHA sponsored and had a display at the Allegheny Society of American Foresters winter meeting in Gettysburg. Over 150 foresters from Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware and West Virginia and over forty forestry students from local universities, attended the meeting and got to hear our story. Thanks to Bill Parr for setting up the display.

I would also like to congratulate our newsletter editor, Mike Klimkos, on the publications of his new book, *The Fires of Penn's Woods*. It is the first comprehensive history of wildfires in Pennsylvania and highly recommended!

As always, please send me your comments and suggestions about ways we can improve the mission of the Pennsylvania Forest Heritage Association.

Peter Linehan

The Act of March 29, 1735 was "An act to prevent the damages which may happen by firing of woods." The Act of April 18, 1794 repealed the previous act and was described as "An Act to prevent the damages which may happen by firing of woods." The newer act recognized that wildfires were, "injurious to the soil, destructive to the timber, and the infant improvements within this state."

(Smith cont. from Page 1)

He worked in that position for fifteen years.

During his time as a FFIS, Terry worked with Special Investigator Bob McJilton. Terry not only investigated fires in his district but travelled with McJilton around the state, learning the craft of fire investigation. "Bob taught me a lot," says Terry. He furthered his education in fire science investigation by taking the National Wildfire Coordinating Group FI-110, FI-210, and FI-310 classes. In 2007 Terry was called to Georgia to assist in a nationwide team that was assembled to deal with a large incendiary problem in the state. When McJilton retired, Terry was promoted to the position.

Says Smith, "Normally I will investigate 50 to 60 fires in a typical year. It's a really great job. I get to meet a lot of good people. I get to travel all over the state." That's not a normal sentiment from a law enforcement officer but he further adds, "I tend to look for the good in people." He enjoys mentoring younger investigators, noting they can take classes but they need to get out and see what in happening in the field.

Terry is also part of the Bureau of Forestry's Type III Incident Command Team, as an incident commander. In 2017 he travelled to New Jersey and South Carolina to help with the logistics in response to the hurricanes in Puerto Rico.

The worst part of the job is determining that a volunteer firefighter was responsible for a fire. "It's like arresting one of your own."

Notice to Readers

Due to the editor's recent computer problems this issue has been delayed. I apologize for the late arrival. Note that the next issue will be the LAST issue that will be hard-copy mailed to those who have requested a mailed copy. The full edition will be available only on-line at the association's website. www.paforestheritage.org

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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,

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:

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

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

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