

# Friends of Spring Mill State Park Newsletter

## Spring 2022

### Spring is Here...

And we are rapidly changing to summer, then back to spring, with a bit of monsoon and hail mixed in! As the old saying goes, if you don't like the weather today, no worries. It will be different shortly!

But any day is a great day at Spring Mill State Park. Lots of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors on the trails, lake, bike/hike trail, picnic areas and campground. Also places to enjoy the indoors on a rainy day include the Grissom Memorial and the Nature Activity Center as well as at the Inn (for a few more months!).

And the Friends of Spring Mill State Park have been busy adding to the many great things at Spring Mill.

See what we've been up to and what's coming up in the next few pages.

Anyone interested in joining The Friends of Spring Mill State Park, volunteering at any of our events, or just helping us financially by sending a donation, please see the information in this newsletter.



Ferns waking up for another season along the park road.

## **New Trees**

The Smithville Charitable Foundation has once again selected Friends of Spring Mill State Park as a grant recipient.

The grant was to purchase 14 trees to replace those that were removed for various reasons.

Two Butternut trees were planted near the Butternut Shelter House (the shelter near the Friends souvenir stand near the Village parking area) as well as a few Sycamore trees.

Several more trees were planted along the creek in the Village. The trees that were purchased are larger trees so they can establish themselves more quickly and provide some shade for visitors in those areas in a few years.

Stop by the Butternut Shelter area and the Village to see the new trees!



Three of the seven trees planted by the butternut shelter.



One of the trees in the Village.



## **Turtle Tank**

The long-awaited grand opening of the new turtle tank is scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend!!!

After months of raising funds, enough was finally acquired to make the purchase of this wonderful new tank. A special tank maker in Florida designed the tank to accommodate our growing turtle. It includes a large swimming area and a ramp for the turtle to climb out of the water. A secure lid will keep him from escaping his new home, and keep visitors' fingers from going in! The park staff designed and made a stand for the tank that is strong enough to support the weight of the water. Special new filters had to be incorporated to fit the new tank. A decal was purchased to place under the tank to give the illusion of a rocky bottom.

The photo is a picture of part of the new tank as it was being filled on May 22. (You can see

the turtle in his old tank in the background.) The water had to settle for a few days, and the pump will run for a few days to make sure all systems are a go. Then the staff will carefully move the turtle into his new home, along with his fish buddy that is in his old tank.

A big thank you to all the many park visitors and groups and other individuals who contributed to the turtle's new home! It's very nice!



## **VOLUNTEER!!!!**

If you would like to be a volunteer with the Friends of Spring Mill State Park, one of our members, Laura Henley, has created an online sign-up system for our members who wish to volunteer.

Laura has listed on the site the various opportunities and times that volunteers are needed. If you are interested, all you need to do is sign up for a time slot. There are time slots available from now through December.

Then all you need to do is show up at the location at the time you selected!

Here is the link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0f4da8ab2caaf8c25-souvenir>

If you don't have access to the Internet, never fear! You can still volunteer your time. All you need to do is call Laura Henley at 210-313-5793.

Or you can email her at

[72henley@gmail.com](mailto:72henley@gmail.com)

She will be creating a list to send out updates to members who wish to volunteer.

Currently all the time slots are for the souvenir stand, but that will be changing. Activities such as Adopt a Highway and helping at events that pop up throughout the year will be included. This way all people interested in helping out will be notified.

If you have any questions, give Laura a call at 210-313-5793.

### **Another Volunteer Activity**

We are always in need of items to sell in the souvenir stand! Craft items, sewn items, wood items, photos turned into cards, etc. We could always use new things to sell. Contact President Teena Ligman about your ideas, since all items need park approval.

## **Spirits**

Back in the day when the Village was thriving, and trade was active, one of the top selling items was alcohol. The distillery building in the village was the location used to create the spirits. It is hoped to begin distilling beverages once again. With that in mind, The Friends of Spring Mill are helping with the development of a functioning still in the Distillery Building of the Pioneer Village. With the help of Alan Bishop, the distillery is becoming active again.



We have recently purchased a still cap and a 100 gallon still. These will be used to make the spirits like they were made in

the days when the village was active.



Alan was able to find some traces of old yeast in some of the barrels in the Village Distillery. He discovered that they still produce a good tasting liquor.

Friends of Spring Mill State Park have received over \$10,000 in donations from French Lick Wine and Spirits, Hard Truth Distillery, and Old Homestead Distilling towards the purchase of items to begin distilling the spirits. We are appreciative of their donations towards this project!

Here is a “before” picture of the distillery. It will be interesting to see how it will change!



## Weed Wrangle

Spring Mill State Park hosted a Weed Wrangle on April 30th to help reduce the number of garlic mustard plants on the park property. A contest was held to see who could pick the most in a given amount of time. There were 218.2 pounds pulled by 27 volunteers. The Friends participated by serving lunch to the garlic mustard wranglers!

## Kiosk

Friends of Spring Mill purchased 3 new information kiosks for the park. The board pictures below is located at the Twin Caves boat check-in.



For more information about any of these projects or other activities of The Friends of Spring Mill State Park, or if you would like to make a donation, or become a member contact

Teena Ligman

[tdligman@att.net](mailto:tdligman@att.net)

812-278-0139

Or check us out on our website or on Facebook!



For those of you who would like to taste some spirits, this fund raising event will provide you an opportunity! The funds will go toward new interpretive signs for the distillery.

**Pioneer Village Tasting Experience**  
**June 11th**  
**5:00 to 8:30 pm**



**DNR**  
Indiana Department  
of Natural Resources

**INDIANA STATE PARKS**  
TELEVISION

Whiskey was an important part of Spring Mill Pioneer Village Economy. Recognizing this important component, we want to improve the displays in the distillery. This tasting event will be a kickoff fundraiser to update the displays with the goal of purchasing a working still.

We have invited Craft Distillers to set up and offer you an opportunity to taste their products. Along with the tasting there will be music, interpretive programs and appetizers for the participants. The cost if you are staying in the park (campground or Inn) is \$30 and if you are coming in the day of the event it is \$40. You must have a designated driver if you are coming the day of the event. You must pre-register by June 8th either by calling 812-849-3534 or coming to the Park office between the hours of 8:30 to 3:30. The Event will take place rain or shine. **Because this event is a fundraiser there are no Refunds**

## LATE BREAKING NEWS

**THE TURTLE HAS BEEN MOVED TO HIS NEW HOME!!!!**



