

# Friends of Spring Mill State Park Newsletter – Winter 2022



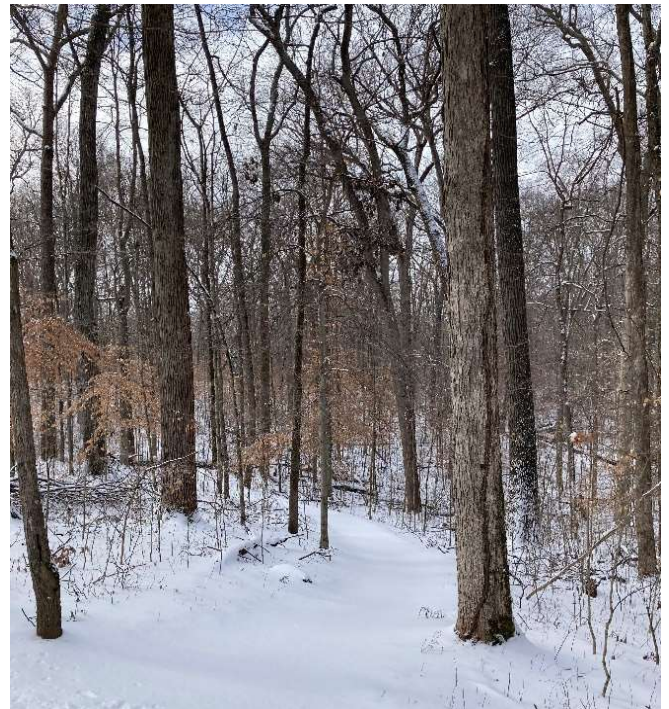
## **WINTER 2022**

It's been a cold start to 2022, but there is a lot of activity at Spring Mill State Park. The winter crew is getting many projects done throughout the park. One we will all notice this year is that the grist mill in the village will be shut down due to a broken shaft on the wheel. The museum in the building will still be open. The sawmill will be operating at times, however. Some other projects include replacing a comfort station in the campground, laying cable near the village, and installing new windows in part of the Grissom Memorial. Along with many other projects!

Winter is a great time to visit the park. Some days are very quiet, and the only sounds heard are the occasional calls of birds or the hammering of a woodpecker. There are very few people on the trails, as noted in the picture of Trail 3 with no footprints in the newly fallen

snow! The forest looks beautiful as the sun sparkles on the ice and snow.

But as beautiful as this past snow and ice event looked, it's nice to think spring is not too far away!



**No footsteps on Trail 3 after the recent ice/snow!**

## Pioneer Village Print Shop

Paul Sanders has been busy in the Pioneer Village Print Shop thanks to several grants and his vast knowledge of the printing processes of the 1800's.

Thousands of people have visited the shop and seen Paul at work, focusing "on the period process of letterpress printing and elements of printing that served to inform the communities and citizens through the printed word during a time before other forms of media were not widespread."



1881 Paragon Cutter

The print shop is located in the Mill Office behind the upper residence.

The Friends of Spring Mill State Park provided some startup funds and grants from the Lawrence County Community Foundation and The Orange County REMC's Operation Roundup have greatly boosted funding for the items needed to establish the print shop.

Paul shares that many visitors have told stories of printing industry experiences, from times working in print shops, or taking classes in school, or in other aspects of their life. Paul also states there is a "story of a retired printing instructor of 37 years who is being given the chance of a lifetime to resurrect skills and memories of the things he taught some 40 years ago."

Quotations are from Paul Sanders' End of Grant Report.

## Turtle Tank Update

The new turtle tank has been ordered and we and the turtle are anxiously awaiting its arrival! Hoping to have pictures of an installed tank for the next newsletter!

## Fall Craft Show

A beautiful late fall weekend helped draw a big crowd to the Craft Show held in the Village in November.

The Friends of Spring Mill State Park paired up with the Lawrence County Tourism Office and Spring Mill State Park staff to host the crowd-pleasing event.

Twenty-four vendors were very happy with the outcome of sales of various items from floral arrangements to syrup to jewelry to knitted items to wood crafts and many other crafts too numerous to mention! There was even a waiting list of vendors wanting to participate!

Attendees paid a \$3 entrance fee to get in the village. The ticket was good for the entire weekend. The vendors also paid a participation fee.



One of the 24 vendors at the 2021 Fall Craft Show

Funds from the craft show went to the Friends of Spring Mill State Park. The Friends help support many projects throughout the park, from benches to pollinator gardens, to playgrounds to kayaks and many other items.

Another fall show is being planned for November 4-6, 2022. A list of vendors is already being formed. For further questions or if any vendors are interested in participating in the November 2022 event, contact the Lawrence County Tourism Office at 800 798-0769.

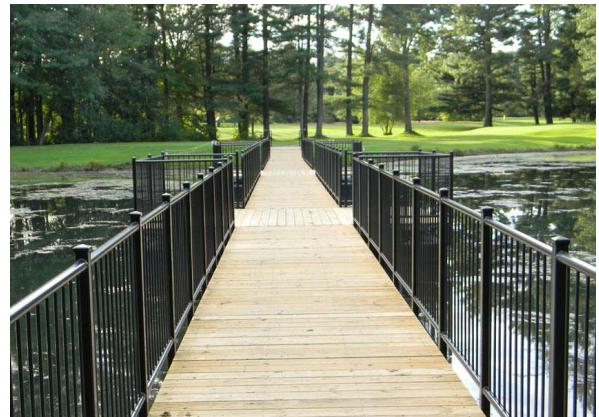
## Floating Bridge

A number of years ago (won't say how many since I can remember this!), the public was able to walk along a pier that ran from the shore area in back of the nature center to the cement platform in the lake. Many people fished from the pier, and just enjoyed the different perspective you get of the lake from being out in the middle of it! But due to age and flooding, the pier was removed, and the platform has become an island where an occasional goose makes its nest.

The picture below is from an old postcard. Pictured is the current Nature Center (then it was a bath house) and the swimming/beach area. The diving platform in the water is what is still in the water.



But in the near future, with help from the Friends of Spring Mill State Park, a \$5000 donation from the Mitchell VFW Post 9107, and additional fund-raising efforts, a floating bridge will connect the platform with the shore once again! Plans are in the works for installing a floating bridge to allow guests of the park access to the cement platform once again. The lake will not be open for swimming or diving, but guests will be able to walk out on the floating bridge and enjoy the view or catch a fish!



The picture above is of a floating bridge from another location that will be similar to what will be installed in the park.

## **HOLIDAY REPORTS**

It was a beautiful weekend in early December. The temps were warm for that time of year. And people were excited to get out and enjoy the start of the holiday season! The word was out: two events were happening in the park, and cars were backed up to the highway waiting to get in! And the Friends of Spring Mill were involved in both events!

### **Holiday Lights in the Campground**

Our Campground Friends did a FANTASTIC job organizing the first of what we hope will be many very successful Holiday Lights events.



Campers brought their Christmas decorations and spent hours decorating their campsites. Manger scenes, reindeer, Santa, and candy canes filled the campsites.

Christmas colors and lights were aglow.

For a fee of \$5 /carload, visitors were treated to a drive through all the different scenes. Some campers even handed out candy canes! Car radios could be tuned in to music provided by the group.



It was a fantastic event with over 800 cars driving through! Donations were also provided by some visitors, and some people did a pay it forward for the cars behind them!

The Christmas spirit was alive and well in the campground!

The Campground Friends are hoping for another successful event in 2022!



## Christmas in the Village

Every year the Pioneer Village hosts a Christmas in the Village. All of the cabins were busy with the “residents” preparing for the upcoming holiday. Some were preparing meals, others were creating gift items, and others were busy with everyday things they would be doing at that time of year in the village.

This year the Friends were invited to bring our souvenir items to sell in one of the cabins. The Friends also provided wassail, candy canes and cookies for the visitors. Father Christmas was in the cabin next door along with the cookies, so many visitors stopped by the Friends cabin.

Several Friends members made beautiful Christmas ornaments and items to sell at the event.

The crowds were huge and many of the Friends items sold out during the event. There were quite a few donations to the Friends group that day also.



## ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendar now for the Friend's Annual Meeting at 6PM on March 15. We don't know yet if we'll be able to have the meeting in-person or virtual. We are hopeful that it will be safe to have it in-person at Spring Mill so we can see many of you, but then on the other hand, when we had it Virtual, we had great attendance, and people who didn't live locally were able to join us. So, keep the time and date free and we'll get out more information soon!

## Garlic Mustard Pull

We're helping the Park once again with the Garlic Mustard Pull on Saturday, April 9. Garlic Mustard, an invasive under-story plant, continues to be a problem at Spring Mill. It's easy to pull and if bagged and removed we think we can keep the invasive under control, but it takes an on-going effort. Last year we had 42 people come out and help pull and bag mustard and then the Friends provided lunch to the volunteers. That's the plan again this year. Come join us to pull mustard, or to fix lunch for the volunteers.



**Volunteers with bags of garlic mustard**

## Tree Planting

Thanks to Amber Hill, Friend's Secretary, who successfully applied for another grant from Smithville Charitable Foundation. We received \$2,500 to order larger trees to plant in the Village and around the shelter houses to replace trees lost in recent years. Primarily sycamore and butternut trees will be ordered and planted this spring.

We can't say enough for our gratitude for the generosity of Smithville Charitable Foundation!

## Park support items recently purchased by Friends of Spring Mill

- **Purchased 1000 pairs of solar eclipse viewing glasses for the naturalist for the 2024 solar eclipse which will be a total eclipse in our area**
- **Three information kiosks to replace broken ones**

## Playground Sign

The new playground at the Donaldson Cave Picnic Area received its new plaque on the bench front.



The plaque is thanking the groups and businesses that made the new playground possible.



The plaque honoring playground donors is located on the bench in the

foreground of the picture. A bench on the other side of the playground was donated by the Lawrence County Foundation to honor Ray Robison, a long time Foundation member and a volunteer at Spring Mill State Park.

## New LOGO

The Friends of Spring Mill State Park Trail Challenge has already begun. The new logo is pictures later in the newsletter. Shirts and/or stickers are available to those who complete the 10-mile challenge of walking all the trails at the park. See the article on the next page about hiking/walking opportunities in the park.



## **Kick off Spring with Walking Week**

Spring Mill State Park, the Friends of Spring Mill State Park, and the Bedford Hiking Club are celebrating Walking Week April 1-7, 2022 with a lineup of hikes to kick off spring.

Teena Ligman, President of Friends of Spring Mill State Park, said there will be a different hike each of the seven days of various length and over different types of terrain, and at different times of the day; to have something for everyone. "We want people to get outside and start walking and then keep walking right through the rest of the year. Ideally we'd like to see people make walking outdoors a part of their lives."

### **. The schedule for the week is:**

- Friday, April 1- 10 am - Meet at the Spring Mill pool parking lot to hike the scenic 2-mile Mountain Bike Trail.
- Friday, April 1, 3 pm – Meet in the parking lot behind the Paynetown State Recreation Area off SR 446 south of Bloomington. The group will have the option to hike the 6.2-mile (10K) or a 3.1 (5K) hike on the Pate Hollow Trail. This is considered a
- volkswalk but anyone is welcome to join us.
- Saturday, April 2, 10 am – Members from the Bedford Hiking Club will lead two groups on the Spring Mill Volkswalk. There will be 10K (6.2 mile) and 5K (3.1 mile) hikes offered. Meet in the lobby of the Spring Mill Inn for the volkswalk hikes. The volkswalk includes Trail 3, Trail 5, and parts of Trail 4 and 2.
- Saturday, April 2, 3pm - Meet at the Nature Center to hike Trail 2, Trail 1 and part of Trail 4 along the lake. (Approximately 1 1/4 mile).
- Sunday, April 3, 1 pm – Meet at the Lakeview Activity Center to hike Trail 5. (1 mile)
- Monday, April 4, 3 pm – Meet at the Grissom Memorial parking area to hike Trail 6. (1/4 mile)
- Monday, April 4, 5:30 – Meet the Bedford Hiking Club at Friendship Park on Main Street in Mitchell (across from the Railroad Café) to hike the Blue Jacket Trail with the Bedford Hiking Club. (2.6 mile) The Bedford Hiking Club does weekly walks. This is an opportunity to meet the group, and maybe start a new weekly routine of walking with them in interesting places.

- **Tuesday, April 5, 10 am – Meet at the Tulip Poplar Shelter house to hike Trail 7 and the Stagecoach Trail.** (2 1/4 mile)
- Wednesday, April 6 at 9 am – Meet near the restrooms at the Donaldson Shelter Parking Lot to hike **Trail 4.** (2 mile)
- Thursday, April 7 at 1 pm – Meet at the Twin Caves Parking Lot for a hike on **Trail 3** (2.5 miles)

Ligman encourages people to come out the first week of April not only to enjoy Spring, but it's an opportunity to walk every trail in the park, meet some new friends, see spring wildflowers and enjoy the outdoors. She noted even if you aren't able to come every day, you'll have gotten a good start on completing the Challenge, and be more motivated to come back and finish.

This spring is a good time to get started on the Spring Mill Trail Challenge. You can make great progress during the National Walking Week, but you can start any time, and just keep walking! During National Walking Week, hikes will be led on every trail in the park.

Once a hiker has completed each of the 9 trails in the park, they are eligible to purchase a Trail Challenge T-shirt (see the Friends Facebook or webpage for more information), as

well as a free sticker. But there's no time limit on the challenge. You can take your time and when you've got them done, you're eligible for a T-shirt and sticker for the year you completed the challenge.

All proceeds from the purchase of a Trail Challenge T-shirt go to support the Park. The park encourages visitors to do the challenge every year as the park is always changing and each time you walk a trail you will likely see something you didn't notice before.

For questions on the Trail Challenge, contact Teena Ligman with the Friends of Spring Mill State Park at 812-278-0139.



## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

If you are wondering how you can be a volunteer at Spring Mill State Park or for the Friends of Spring Mill State Park, there is an event just for you!

On Saturday, April 16, there will be a volunteer recruitment event in the Village. Laura Henley has offered to staff a table to talk to people about joining the Friends and helping us with our projects. However, the event is also a good opportunity for anyone who is interested in working full or part time in the Village to check out what is available.

There are several ways that you can volunteer with the Friends of Spring Mill State Park.

We are always looking for members to staff the souvenir stand. Contact Teena Ligman for a list of dates that the stand will be open. Usually, it is just a two-hour time period, although several members stay longer because they enjoy it. Great people watching and you get to meet some very interesting visitors!

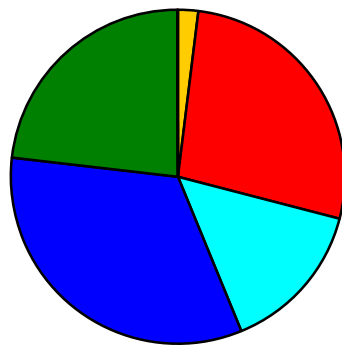
Crafters are needed to create items to sell in the stand. Many of the items we sell are made by our members. Sewn items, wood items,

plants, leatherwork, handmade jewelry, and even park photos turned into postcards are sold. And new items are always welcome! Contact Teena for more information to be sure your item is ok with the park.

Help is needed on the highway cleanup! This is done four times a year. Once again, contact Teena for a date and time.

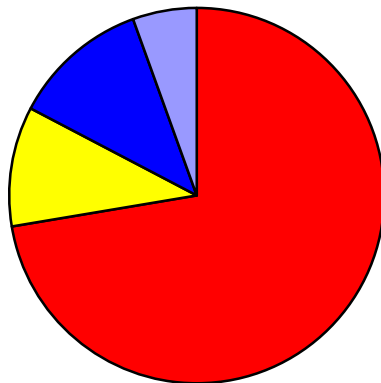
For more information contact  
Friends of Spring Mill State  
Park  
c/o President Teena Ligman  
812-278-0139  
tdligman@att.net

**Friends of Spring Mill State Park  
Income 2021  
\$41,643**



- Membership Dues - \$815
- Donations - \$11,287
- Sales - \$6,137
- Special Events - \$13,755
- Grants - \$9,628
- Bank Interest - \$21

**Friends of Spring Mill State Park  
Expenses 2021 - \$14,146**



- Park support - \$10,235
- Fundraising - \$1,460
- Special Events - \$1,670
- Administration - \$780