

Slocum Park

(continued from page 1)

Officially dedicated Memorial Day weekend, 1968, Frances Slocum State Park, seven miles from Dallas in Kingston Township, has seen many changes in its quarter century of life.

Construction of the dam, designed both for flood control of Abraham's Creek and creation of a lake for recreation had begun rather inauspiciously in mid-1963 with the razing of the historic Heft sawmill and an old stone arch bridge over the creek, according to clippings from two area newspapers on file at the park office.

That fall, two workers dismantling the old mill, built and operated by the descendants of Daniel Heft, who had come to the Back Mountain from Doylestown sometime before 1808, were crushed to death when one of the mill's walls collapsed on them.

Several months later, in July, 1964, equipment at the dam construction site was bombed in the middle of the night, destroying three large bulldozers, two payloaders, a crane and an air compressor owned by Irving T. Miller Construction Co., reportedly causing between \$100,000 and \$200,000 in damages.

Construction proceeded unevenly, concluding with the park's official opening and dedication Memorial Day weekend, 1968.

Visitors were offered a variety of day activities: several miles of self-guided nature trails ideal for bird watching and nature photography, a swimming pool, plenty of

open space for picnicking and a large lake teeming with panfish, perch, muskies, catfish, pickerel, walleyes and bass.

The park saw drastic changes after the June 22, 1972 Agnes flood forced many Wyoming Valley residents from their homes, rendered uninhabitable after the Susquehanna River overflowed its banks and flooded most of the valley.

In a massive effort to house the evacuees, the federal government set up an emergency mobile home park for some 500 flood victims at Frances Slocum, one of many such trailer villages in the area which housed thousands of flood victims.

Trailers were set up anywhere that they would fit - and some places that they wouldn't.

For the 18 months that the flood victims lived at Frances Slocum, they made it their home, with a sort of town council, security force and even a fire department, a vintage Depression-era firetruck christened "Old Betsy" by the Trucksville Fire Department.

More changes came in 1990, when the opening of the campground transformed Frances Slocum Park from a day-use area to an overnight facility.

Environmental education specialist Jerry Kozlansky joined the park staff in 1990, stepping into the position left by Angela Wassel, who had transferred to another assignment.



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

IT TICKLES - Students of the Cookie Corner Nursery School touch a fox's tail held by environmental education specialist Jerry Kozlansky during a recent visit to Frances Slocum State Park. The students are, from left: Melissa Sharkey, Sean Thomas, Brian Mrucock, Kozlansky, Justin Rachilla, Ashley Rome and Mia DeNunzio.

In addition to working with the regular day programs, Kozlansky created new weekend afternoon and evening programs for the campers and open to the general public.

A recycling program for aluminum cans which he started in 1990 has grown to include plastic and glass containers.

Kozlansky knows nearly every foot of the park's nearly two square miles, encompassing a variety of wildlife habitats - wetland, lake, forest and meadowland - great excuses for an environmental field trip or a pleasant afternoon hike.

"In the past four years, I've seen use of the park and its nature programs grow tremendously," he said. "The word is getting around that we have quality nature programs here which I tailor to each individual group's age and interests - a free service from the Commonwealth."

Kozlansky offers programs for all ages: bird walks, photography hikes, nature scavenger hunts, safe boating classes, assistance with Scout badges, teacher in-services, Scout leader training classes and opportunities for Eagle Scout candidates and Girl Scout

Silver or Gold Award candidates.

He has the advantage of being able to bring in environmental education specialists or others experts from anywhere in the state. Or he'll bring the park's nature programs right into a school's classroom.

"So many people tell me that they never knew that the park was here, with so many different activities," Kozlansky said. "Back Mountain residents don't have to travel far to see the wonders of nature. They're here, for free, right in their own back yard."

Boats

(continued from page 1)

for any necessary fuel and minor repairs.

To approve a flood control project on Beaver Creek at the Outlet to dredge the stream bed and clear brush, trash and several beaver dams from the stream bed, at a cost of \$3,950. The contractor, EcoScience, of Moscow, PA, will begin work as soon as possible.

Council members said that the project is necessary to prevent parts of Outlet Road and the basements of nearby homes from being flooded by the creek during times of high water.

To accept an agreement with concert promoter Thom Greco to pay \$30 per hour for police services during the concerts at the Bud Light Amphitheater at the former Hanson's amusement park. Last year Greco paid \$20 per hour for police.

To participate in a Department of Community Affairs survey to determine which Back Mountain communities need and are willing to enter into a consolidation of area police departments into one regional force, at no cost to the borough.

To purchase a second VAS-CAR speed timing unit for the police department for \$2,000, using money from the Safety Blitz grant.

Secretary Carole Samson noted that Ralph Bonacci, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation assistant engineer, notified the borough in a letter that the borough is permitted to erect seasonal or event banners over the road as long as the poles aren't on a state right-of-way.

Bonacci also wrote that the borough may not prohibit heavy truck traffic on Route 415 and Lakeside Drive because there has been only one truck accident there within the past five years. Limiting truck access in this area "would arbitrarily discriminate against the trucking industry," he wrote.

25th anniversary activities at Frances Slocum Park

To celebrate a century of state parks in Pennsylvania and its own 25th anniversary, Frances Slocum State Park will feature a weekend of history-related events for the Memorial Day holiday. All programs are open to the public, free of charge.

Friday, May 28: 8 p.m. Park naturalist Jerry Kozlansky will give a presentation on the history of Frances Slocum State Park at the campground's amphitheater.

Saturday, May 29: 3 p.m. "Native Americans of Frances Slocum" will focus on the history, lifestyle, hunting techniques and legends of the Native Americans who once lived in the area. Participants will meet at the Visitors' Center and should be prepared for a hike.

Saturday, May 29: 7 p.m. "Centennial scavenger hunt" will send kids of all ages scrambling through the park's woods in search of centennial symbols commemorating the Pennsylvania state park system's first century. Participants will meet at the campground's amphitheater.

Sunday, May 30: 7 p.m. Professional storyteller Mary Baker will lead "Centennial Sing-along," a program of stories and songs at the campground's amphitheater.

Monday, May 31: 3 p.m. "A century of settler life" will feature a two-mile hike through the park's trails, focusing on the lifestyles of the early settlers a century ago. Participants, ages 8 and up, will meet in the Visitors' Center and should be prepared for a two-mile hike in the woods.

All programs are free and open to the public. For further information, call the park office at 696-3525

by Grace R. Dove

Slocum Park to mark silver anniversary

Pennsylvania has one of the nation's largest state park systems, begun a century ago at Valley Forge. Since then, it has grown to 114 outdoor recreation areas encompassing more than 277,000 acres.

In celebration of a century of growth, the state park system will begin a year-long agenda of festivities and special events, beginning Memorial Day weekend.

According to a pamphlet published by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, the state park system's umbrella organization, early state parks emphasized preservation and protection of scenic, rare, historic or natural areas in the state.

Later the focus shifted to outdoor recreation and environmental education.

During the Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which gave men jobs

building roads, bridges, and in Pennsylvania, state park facilities.

Between 1955 and 1970, the number of state parks nearly doubled, from 45 to 87, sending the park system well on its way to realizing the dream of Department of Forests and Waters Secretary Maurice K. Goddard: to have a state park within 25 miles of every Pennsylvania citizen.

The Department of Environmental Resources has provided these figures on the state's 114 parks, which offer:

- 7,000 family campsites and 281 cabins.
- 56 major recreational lakes, 10 marinas and 61 swimming beaches.
- 17 swimming pools.
- More than 1,000 miles of hiking trails.

The state park system estimates that 37 million people will visit state parks in 1993.

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School Taxes

Lake-Lehman School District - 1988 to 1993

School Year	Total Budget	Dollar Increase	% Increase	Millage	Millage Increase	Dollars Per Mill
1988-89	\$9,782,827	\$711,536	7.8	128	5	\$25,465
1989-90	\$10,882,474	1,099,647	11.2	133	5	26,898
1990-91	\$11,342,180	459,707	4.2	151	18	27,664
1991-92	\$13,043,724	1,701,544	15.0	176	25	28,881
1992-93	\$14,228,780	1,213,856	8.5	185	9	29,960
1993-94	\$15,008,276	779,496	5.4	189	4	33,289

Figures for 1993-94 are proposed. Millage figures are for Luzerne County only, and do not reflect Wyoming County.

Green Road

(continued from page 1)

laid more than 300 tons of fill on Green Road already.

In other business, the supervisors:

Approved an application by Arthur and Patricia Kerpovich of 74 Manor Drive, Shavertown, to rezone a portion of their property from agricultural to residential in order to build a single-family home.

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8 pc. Country Oak Dining Room with China, Pedestal Table, 2 Arm Chairs & 4 Side Chairs	3995.00	1995.00
8 pc. Contemporary Natural Oak Finish Dining Room with Chiava Table, 2 Arm Chairs & 4 Side Chairs	4995.00	2495.00

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- Bassett • Vaughan • Warmbold • Nathan Mt. Airy • Crescent

	VALUE	NOW
5 pc. Contemporary Oak Bedroom with Triple Dresser, Tri-view Mirror, Door Chest, Mirrored headboard & 1 Night Stand	2995.00	1299.00
5 pc. Mini Rattan Bedroom with Triple Dresser, Mirror Chest-on-Chest, Headboard & 1 Night Stand	2995.00	1399.00
5 pc. Solid Oak Bedroom with Triple Dresser, Mirror Chest-on-chest, Headboard, Footboard & 1 Night Stand	3595.00	1995.00
4 pc. Oak Bedroom with Triple Dresser, Mirror, Chest with Flip Top, Storage tray & Headboard	2498.00	1295.00

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