



PATRIOT PARK

HONORING THOSE WHO FOUGHT
THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

November, 2022

News & Updates

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2023 Strategic Plan

The PPF Board has been working hard and making plans for the upcoming off-season as well as the 2023 opening. We have some interesting and exciting things planned for next year, and we will share more about this with you in more detail in our next newsletter.

However, the one thing that will remain constant is our need for volunteers. If you would like to "meet and greet" our visitors to the park or help out in some other capacity, please email [patriotparkfoundation.org](mailto:ppf@patriotparkfoundation.org). Be part of this worthwhile organization!

Flag Retirement 2022 and Volunteer Thank You!

After a really successful summer and a beautiful fall, it is once again time to retire the **Field of Heroes Flag Display** at the Park. On **Saturday, November 12, starting at 2 pm** volunteers will gather at the Park to take down the flags for the winter. **Central City VFW** will hold a short **Unserviceable Flags Ceremony** by the Color Guard to ensure that any flags that are in disrepair are disposed of in the proper manner.

Following the ceremony, volunteers will gather at [Central City VFW](#) for food and fellowship, as a way of saying "thank you" for all their hard work throughout the year. We hope to see you there!

!! Photo Contest Winner !!



PPF's first **annual photo contest** closed on October 26, and we were delighted with the response and entries we received. A great big **THANK YOU!** to everyone who took such beautiful pictures and also then went on to enter the competition. It certainly was a beautiful fall season and a perfect backdrop for composing stunning pictures!

Each photographer was allowed to enter two photographs, and a total of six photographers entered 12 pictures! While the majority of them were local photographers, two did come from further afield.

At the Board meeting on Tuesday, November 8, all the pictures were "blind-judged", ie, they were reviewed and voted on by the Board members, but no names were attached to the pictures prior to the decision being made.

We are delighted to announce that the winner of the contest is **Hans Good**, who entered the beautiful photograph of the **Field of Heroes** in fall which you can see above. Congratulations to Hans who will be receiving a \$100 gas card, and thank you again to everyone who entered the competition!

Work Day at the Park and Preparing for 2023



Before

On Tuesday, November 1, **Mark and Brandi Darr**, **Katlin Rodriguez** with her daughter **Eva**, and **Bill Szych** joined President **Randy Musser** for a very productive, regular Tuesday morning work party. These intrepid volunteers worked under threatening skies to widen the opening across from Shorty's Restaurant so that vehicles on the Lincoln Highway will have a better view of the **Field of Heroes** flag display.

Randy once again displayed his mastery of the chain saw that has made him the bane of trees and bushes everywhere, and made short work of the

trees, brush and bushes blocking the view. Fortunately, the weather had not been too dry, as this resulted in a rather large bonfire!

In addition to a significant clearing of trees and undergrowth, Katlin, Eva, and Bill successfully staked out and marked a planned **walking path** that will include displays about the GWOT and will also incorporate a **meditation area** overlooking the **Field of Heroes**. The group used the large bonfire to hold an impromptu and heartfelt **flag burning ceremony** as Taps was played in the background. Having young Eva there with her mother made the morning extra special.



After

November 10, 2022



November 11, 2022



- Patriot Park is located on Route 30, also known as the Lincoln Highway.
- The eastern end of the Lincoln Highway originates in Times Square in New York City while the western end finishes in Lincoln Park, San Francisco
- The Lincoln Highway passes through Gettysburg, PA
- Lives lost at Gettysburg on both sides totaled 7,058. This is exactly the same number of lives lost in the GWOT.

Did You Know?

- Shanksville, PA is home to American Legion Post 911. This Post was chartered on June 24, 1946
- The Park has many aspen trees which, in Celtic mythology, is known as the shield tree. It is thought to provide spiritual protection, with the sound of the leaves being interpreted as ancestral communication.
- The land that Patriot Park now sits on was formerly a coal mine. It was mined for coal during both WWI and WWII, and the land that gave all to the war effort now supports those who gave all.

A Quick Review of the Year

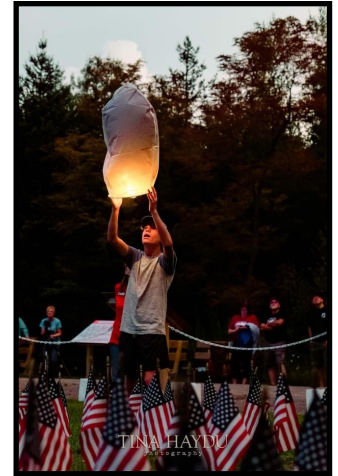
As the **first full year at Patriot Park** draws to a close, I would like to take a moment of reflection and, indeed, look back with amazement and gratitude. It has been a busy year and much has been achieved ... but there is still so much we can do.

The Park was energized, literally, this spring as underground power lines were run throughout the grounds, providing lighting for our signs and flags and power outlets throughout the Park.



The **Field of Heroes Flag Display** was rebuilt with the help of many volunteers, including high school students from Somerset and Shanksville-Stonycreek High Schools. Local high school students from Rockwood and Shanksville-Stonycreek High Schools designed **additional storyboards** on women in the military, Medal of Honor recipients, the use of working dogs in the military, and hometown heroes.

On May 29, Patriot Park hosted a **Memorial Ceremony** with Lt. General Walter Piatt as guest speaker, with the Bellwood Community Choir providing patriotic music. The Central City VFW Post 7457 Color Guard presented the Colors and played Taps.



On June 28, the Veterans and Athletes United **Fallen Heroes Traveling Memorial Flag** arrived for a three-week exhibition. It consisted of a 6' x 28' wall made up of 7000-plus dog tags, each bearing the name of a fallen hero, that created the image of an American flag.

August brought the completion of the **Names of the Fallen** display which consists of two all-weather books containing the names of the **7,058** service members represented by the flags. On August 26 the Park hosted a very moving service to remember the **thirteen fallen heroes** who died a year ago during the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. Sergeant Major Randall Pritts of the 28th Infantry Division National Guard provided remarks and thirteen sky lanterns were released to honor the thirteen fallen heroes.



On an **organizational level**, a volunteer group has been formed to greet and educate visitors to Patriot Park, the size of our Board of Directors has increased, and financially we have received hundreds of donations which will allow us to continue to improve the Park and plan for the future. None of this would have been possible without the time, talents, and financial support of hundreds of businesses and individuals. It is impossible to name them all, but to each and every one Patriot Park Foundation says, **THANK YOU!**

Based on our progress this year it is very exciting to think about the potential for next year as we grow and improve. Please continue to support the Park and its mission. Besides your financial support we need volunteers. The best way to get involved is to give me a call **(814-233-0351)** or email me at patriotparkfoundation@gmail.com. We can then discuss how best your skills may be utilized to advance the mission. I look forward to working with you all in 2023.

Randy Musser
President, PPF