



ON THE LOOKOUT

From the
National Chairman
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Vienna, Virginia
Autumn 2009

MOVING AHEAD AND GETTING THINGS DONE!

In our last issue I described how FFLA is now represented in all 50 states. Several of our chapters (such as Colorado/Utah and the San Diego/Riverside Local Chapter) have held membership meetings already in 2009. Others are planned. Check www.ffla.org for dates and locations. Almost all chapters are continuing the ongoing search and inventory of standing as well as removed lookouts. This is usually documented on a statewide basis. We are seeing new relationships developing with the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO), which are seeking our input when agencies submit plans to remove historic structures.

Lookout restorations, many of which are multi-year projects, are continuing. With the exception of New York, the majority of these are in the West, but there is growing activity elsewhere in the East. On page 4 you will find the latest grants approved from FFLA Restoration Fund, and the Emergency Maintenance Fund. While relatively small in dollar amount, they are often the seed money to attract larger matching funds.

EASTERN SUMMER MEETING IN NORTH CAROLINA

About 40 FFLA folks from seven states came to Asheville, NC for our first eastern summer gathering in two years. The program was hosted by NC Director (and newly appointed FFLA Eastern Deputy Chairman) Peter Barr. For me, it was a return to one of my former assignments with the U.S. Forest Service, including a visit to a live-in lookout that I occasionally staffed in the evenings so the operator could go home for a conjugal visit. (Yes, we really took care of our observers in the Southern Region.) I also was pleased to present a slide program that included some of the active lookouts of 50 years ago, many of which have been removed.

Peter also arranged for my friend of many years, Tom Speaks, Forest Supervisor of the Cherokee National Forest in Tennessee, to come over to say a few appreciated words on the historic significance of lookouts, and to introduce the wonderful restoration project of Pinnacle Lookout at Unicoi, Tennessee. That ambitious undertaking is lead by the Friends of the Cherokee National Forest as well as the City of Unicoi, which has included the tower as one of the town symbols and attractions. Folks from the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests in North Carolina described their efforts, with the encouragement of the NC FFLA Chapter, to obtain stimulus funding to restore historic CCC-era lookouts.

Another highlight for me was the presentation of the coveted Doug Newman Award for exceptional leadership and accomplishment in bringing lookouts to the attention of the public for their historic as well as detection value, and recognizing their value as hiking destinations in the Great Smoky Mountains as the Southern Appalachians. Also announced was Michael Spanjer's appointment as Chair of our newest Local Chapter: Southern Kentucky. See related stories in this issue.

WESTERN SUMMER MEETING NEAR SEATTLE

If you haven't been to the Pacific Northwest for a while - many people believe fall is the best time to visit - this year's Western Regional Meeting is your chance. We will be in Snohomish, located in the foothills of the dramatic Cascade Mountains, an area rich in fire lookout lore. Western Washington Chapter Director Forrest Clark has for more than a decade been a leader in significant restorations and reconstructions. For the first two days, there will be speakers in the morning and visits to lookouts in the afternoon. On Sunday we will be on the east side of the Cascades with all day visits to lookouts, plus an optional fourth day of visiting lookouts on Monday.

\$734,000 STIMULUS GRANT APPROVED FOR HISTORIC LOOKOUTS IN NORTH CAROLINA

On July 21 the U.S. Forest Service announced \$734,000 Stimulus Program Funding for the restoration of CCC Lookouts and Shelters on the National Forests in North Carolina. A tip of the FFLA Hat to Peter Barr, the Forest Service staff, and other partners who worked together to secure this very important grant while will also provide needed employment in rural western Carolina counties.

As I noted in the title, FFLA is "Moving Ahead and Getting Things Done." You folks are doing wonders, and I proud to be among you.

Keith A. Argow

Chairman of the Board

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