

Mooselips



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Region 7 Workshop

Delivering Your Message – Front Line Graphics

Date: Friday, May 30, 2008

Where: Fort Collins, Colorado

Join us in Fort Collins, Colorado for a Region 7 One-Day Workshop. Paul Caputo from NAI will present a one-day workshop on the graphics most used by front line interpreters. He'll show you how to get the most out of three panel brochures, newsletters and one-page flyers. We're limiting Paul's workshop to 25 people. The session will be held at the NAI National Offices.

Details will be available on April 1, 2008 on the Region 7 website – and we'll mail a postcard reminder.

So save the date! And e-mail me if you're interested:

LJeanStrand@comcast.net

See you in Fort Collins, May 30!

Meet "Where in the Region Winner" Brian Kerrigan

Brian correctly identified last quarter's picture as the National Bison Range in Montana.

"I am a full-time park ranger at Cheyenne Mountain State Park in Colorado Springs, CO. Cheyenne Mountain State Park is a beautiful piece of Colorado Front Range property, located on 1680 acres, south of Colorado Springs. The park property was acquired in 2000 and was partially opened to the public in October of 2006. The park has been in various stages of development since opening in 2006. Cheyenne Mountain State Park's 20 miles of hiking and biking trails wind through some of the best preserved short grass prairie and montane forest ecosystems on the Colorado Front Range. I have been stationed at Cheyenne Mountain State Park for 2 ½ years, and it has been an incredible experience getting in at the ground level of a developing park. Park Rangers with Colorado State Parks wear many hats and that couldn't be truer at Cheyenne Mountain, where, in addition to my law enforcement duties, I supervise the incredible group of 60+ active volunteers, as well as the interpretive program. With the help of dedicated volunteers and seasonal employees, Cheyenne Mountain State Park is providing quality public interpretive programs nearly every weekend. In addition to regularly-scheduled public programs, the park is taking an active role in organizing many special events throughout the year including: geocaching festivals, holiday events, and wildlife events. Thanks to the support of great volunteers and staff, Cheyenne Mountain State Park will be a great addition to the Colorado Springs Community for years to come!"

Special thanks to Pat Jamieson, Outdoor Recreation Planner, National Bison Range Moiese, MT for her submission!

We are now officially out of submissions! Please send yours in to p.reimer@comcast.net.

-ML

From the Editor:

A minor occurrence a few months ago reminded me that after working in the same venue for some time, it is easy to slip into some form of complacency without realizing it. As we know, many of the visitors we see have a *very large disconnect* to the world we are trying to help them experience, and we are *not always* going to reach every one of them in ways that have been successful for us in the past. That statement may seem like a no-brainer to most of you front liners but I have still been brought up short by little incidents such as this:

I am leading a group of bouncing third-graders from a school in a rather upscale neighborhood down a dirt path to one of our 19th century-style sod houses, watching as they daintily try to avoid the mud puddles and the cacti at the sides of the path, listening to them as they quietly exclaim to each other about the "scary" chickens and the bugs. We are going "chinking"; the task of repairing the sod walls of the house that have degraded due to weather and periodic invasions of insects and small animals. We head to the well to draw water for our task. The children, now armed with buckets, warily eye the big holding tank next to the pump, its surface glistening with yellow-green algae and slimy bubbles. "It stinks!", one girl exclaims, and the others chime in, "It looks slimy..." "Gross." "Do the cows drink that?" I am quietly amused and secretly proud. I am taking these children off the beaten track, exposing them to natural processes and activities I am certain they are completely oblivious to in their cul-de-sacs with manicured lawns and portable basketball hoops. And I've gotten so darn good at this. One by one, they dip their buckets into the tank, making faces as they come back up with strings of dripping algae. "Why do we have to do this?", one boy asks. "We are doing chores like kids would have done long ago." I say, waiting for the knowing gleam to spring from his eyes. He grimaces and slogs toward the sod house with his bucket, where I have directed the kids to go. There, we begin mixing water, dirt and straw in a large tub. Some kids get mud on their shoes and I watch their varying reactions with an inner glee. Sure, they'll get muddy but these kids are going to GET IT. Today, they are going to connect with the natural world in a way they may never have before and they'll have me to thank for it. I'm feeling good. A self-congratulatory glow is beginning to suffuse through me but I still have to get through the program. "All right kids." I say, "We've got this mixed just right, let's all grab handfuls and smear it on the walls." Some of the kids gasp in mock surprise, others begin to dig right in, but one girl stands out. She's eyeing the muddy mixture with a glassy stare. "I don't like it." "C'mon," I say. "Get your hands in there." She alternately eyes the mud and me, and then slowly puts her hands in the tub. She comes up with a big, dripping handful. Wow. I've done it again, effortlessly connecting another "Last Child" with my version of "The Woods." She leans toward me. I lean towards her, expectantly waiting for her to verbalize her new-found connection to nature now-realized by the sodden mixture in her hands...

She throws up. In the tub, next to the tub, on her shoes. The teacher is scandalized, the parent-helpers are aghast, and as we end the trip and get back on the wagon, I quietly ponder the nature of my pompous certainty and complacency, and hope to do better in the future. _ML

New Mexico State Parks 75th anniversary!

To celebrate this historic year, we will be showcasing an event at one of the various N.M. parks in each 2008 issue. Be sure to call the number below and visit or go to: <http://www.newmexico.org/index.php> to see the entire schedule!

May

5/8- 5/11 Mescal Roast, The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park, Carlsbad: Apache tribal members open the ceremonies by blessing the roasting pit, followed by interpretive presentations, a native art sale, the Mescal Roast feast dinner and performance of a traditional Apache "war dance" and "Mountain Spirit Dance." 505 - 887-5516

**"The Discovery Continues"****Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center Celebrates Its 10th Anniversary**

On May 4, 2008, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center, in Great Falls, MT will host an event celebrating its 10th anniversary. The celebration is open to all members of the public free of charge and will run from noon to 5:00 PM. With a theme of "The Discovery Continues", this event will celebrate the center's first 10 years of great success as well as the opportunity to carry this legacy into the future. The event will have something for all ages with inside and outside activities including games for the family, live animals, a Lewis and Clark encampment, free hotdogs, drinks, and birthday cake. For additional information, contact the Interpretive Center at (406) 727-8733. ~ Christopher Dantic, Montana Representative ML

Meet a Regioner!

Name: Skot Latona

Years in Interpretation: 14

Where: South Platte Park, Littleton Colorado

Greatest Moment in Interpretation: "During a cold, muddy insect program in a freezing rain, having a young girl grab my hand and say "They should have cancelled this field trip...but I'm glad they didn't because this is the funnest one ever!" "

Words of advice to other interpreters:

"If your name is phonetically similar to something funny (Skot vs. Scat) don't point it out to certain age groups" ML

Thanks to Karen Brown for sending us the information!-ML

Built on Sand

By Carla R. Beasley, Chief of Interpretation for
Dinosaur National Monument, CO, UT

In 1909, paleontologist Earl Douglass discovered one of the richest late-Jurassic paleontological sites in the world and began excavating dinosaur fossils for the Carnegie Museum. In 1915, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed an 80-acre area that included portions of both Colorado and Utah Dinosaur National Monument to protect "one of the most astounding and instructive sights imaginable." Several decades later, before construction of the new visitor center was complete, the project's construction foreman noticed cracks radiating in the parking area. During the first year of operation, park staff detected a disquieting vibration in the upper gallery. Just four years later, an investigation revealed major damage to parts of the foundation and unless water was prevented from reaching beneath the building, the visitor center would continue to move.

Despite the park's numerous efforts to improve drainage, all of these patches were little more than band aids on bullet wounds, because the fundamental geological issues afflicting the visitor center remained untouched. In the nearly 50 years since opening, walls moved, floors buckled, windows broke, and roof and ceiling attachments sheared off due to the enormous pressure exerted on the building. In one particular instance, a 2X4 wall stud snapped, hurling a wall-mounted chalkboard ten to fifteen feet into the room.

In early July 2006, park superintendent Mary Risser reviewed the latest building monitoring report and made the tough decision to close the visitor center. The report documented significant structural concerns that presented considerable threats to visitor and staff safety. Staff moved interpretive services and some exhibits to a pavilion a half-mile away to create a temporary visitor center. Visitors can also see some fossils naturally eroding from the cliff face along a short trail near the temporary visitor center.

In April 2008, the park hopes to have a Record of Decision regarding the final Environmental Impact Statement. Once the Record of Decision is signed, design planning and construction drawings will begin for a new visitor center. Because the Quarry Visitor Center contains the park's primary resource of 1,500 dinosaur fossils *in situ*, protection and access to the quarry site is of primary concern. Initial concept planning calls for rehabilitating the existing exhibit hall and constructing a new visitor center with staff offices about a half mile away on more stable soil.

Although a few years shy of its 50th anniversary, the Quarry Visitor Center was designated a National Historic Landmark in August of 2001. While it represents significant contributions to American architecture, resource management, and public education, the building has been a millstone around the neck of the National Park Service since its completion. It is without doubt a magnificent structure, but it is erected almost literally, upon a foundation of sand.

ML

DO YOU LIVE IN UTAH or NEW MEXICO?

Join the Region 7 Officers
as the Utah or New Mexico State
Representative

e-mail Karin Hostetter at: interpret_this@hotmail.com

"Cruise Lines"

Dee DeJong, CIT, CIG, CIH

As front line interpreters we hear a lot of great things from our guests and my summer in Alaska was no different. I worked as an Exploration Leader with Cruise West and we would have a maximum of 78 passengers twice a week; and as a result, over 6 months I met a lot of people. We have a saying among the crew that "When visitors go on vacation so do their brains" and sometimes it's true.

In all fairness we have all said some really dumb things at times but most of us notice it right after we say it. The following comments however, were not the case.

1. After relating to the guests that Marbled Murrelets mate for life, a gentleman approached me and asked, "with the same bird?" His wife didn't think this was funny.
2. As we were sitting in the lounge talking I was asked, "How far above Sea Level are we?" I looked out the window and replied nicely, "about 8 feet."
3. Standing on the bow looking at a map of SE Alaska a guest asked, "Is this salt water?" I retrieved some water and let her taste it; the look on her face answered that one.
4. When getting ready to disembark for a visit to Ketchikan (known for its shopping), I was asked, "What kind of money do they use here?" I replied the same as the lower 48 states.
5. When asked, "Does the crew sleep on the ship?" I replied with a wink and said "Don't you hear the helicopter that comes in after our shifts are over?" She laughed.
6. Another question I get a lot is, "What time is the midnight buffet?" I reply that we don't have a midnight buffet but if we did it would be at 12:00 am.
7. "Which elevator takes me to the front of the ship?" We don't have an elevator either.
8. "Do you generate your own electricity?" I did not have a reply for this but pictured a 500 mile log extension cord trailing behind the ship.
9. After announcing that we were going to pass Admiralty Island, a gentlemen asked, "Is this island totally surrounded by water?" and I replied, "yes."
10. I explained during one of our evening programs that the plankton in the sea, which is the major source of food in this area, when disturbed can light up like green fireworks. When this happens you can actually see this when you get up in the middle of the night to go. A guest then asked, "Is the water in the toilet salt water or fresh?" I told her to talk to the woman who I had given the water to taste.
11. "What language do they speak in Alaska?" I replied, "Most everything will be in English...no worries."
12. "What do you do with the ice carvings after they melt?" Again, no answer.



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REGION 7 – MARK YOUR CALENDARS and VOLUNTEER

Region 7 Newsletter Articles Due

June 1, 2008

Send copy to p.reimer@comcast.net

Teaching Outside the Box

CAEE Conference

April 25 – 27, 2008

Winter Park, Colorado

www.caee.org

Front Line Graphics!

REGION 7 Workshop

May 30, 2008

Fort Collins, Colorado

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NAI - REGION 7

Utah State Representative

New Mexico State Representative

Region 7 Newsletter Deadlines

March 1

June 1

September 1

December 1