



PEN PARK EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

ADMINISTRATOR'S CORNER

By David Morrow

I was fortunate to grow up when and where I did because it was a time and place when kids could get out and explore the outdoors, free of all the supervision that seems to accompany being a kid these days. I spent almost every day of my childhood hiking, fishing, rowing boats, catching frogs and building forts. My parents and grandparents owned and operated a small resort in Northern Utah that contained about every outdoor activity a kid could possibly want. Fortunately for me, they were often too busy to keep track of me, which meant I was free to really experience the outdoors. For the most part, it allowed lots of good clean fun, but there were the occasional run-ins with skunks, yellow jackets, porcupines and my grandfather's pipe and tobacco. But even the bad experiences contributed to a life-long love of the outdoors.



Kids these days don't seem to have the same opportunities. Free play has been replaced by organized sports, music lessons, television and computer games. Our state and local parks have so many rules that they have eliminated many of the opportunities to just play and have fun. There are few opportunities for kids to be kids. I think we are removing some of life's best learning experiences and replacing them with too much structure and too many rules.



Because of everyone's concern for the safety of their families, especially their children, state parks could play a role in reconnecting kids with the outdoors. But to be successful, we need to suspend a few rules and provide more opportunities for unstructured play. We also need to try and get families into our parks by providing opportunities to learn outdoor skills. There are a number of national programs being developed to do just that; several states, working in partnership with outdoor retailers are providing equipment, outdoor skills training and discounted entrance fees to make it more attractive for families to experience camping and hiking.

Despite the tough economic times we are experiencing, I think we have an obligation to do more to encourage families to get out and enjoy our parks. We need to become more proactive about getting kids outdoors, which means we need to develop partnerships with outdoor retailers, local community groups and national organizations who are interested in the same goal. We need to develop programs that teach folks how to camp, cook and hike and be more comfortable in the outdoors. We also need to carefully review our rules and policies to ensure that we haven't unknowingly eliminated opportunities for kids to enjoy their visit to our parks.

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

By Allen Newberry



In October, **Pete Gill** retired from the division. **Pete** has been an example of all things good in many ways throughout this career. He shared with me a saying used by his platoon while serving in

the Army in Vietnam, "Deeds not words." Hopefully, we can all learn from this. We will miss **Pete** and hope all goes well with him in his next adventure.

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE (CON'T)

Change is in the air and the future will require an increased level of awareness, adaptation, and creative response by all. One measure of how creative you are is how you respond to changes in your circumstances and environment. How flexible are you? Consider how water adapts to its environment: evaporation, condensation, snowflakes, melting, flowing, goes around rocks, fills containers, etc. With the current conditions of the state, we will need to be much like water and be able to adapt to provide the recreation experiences for our visitors. This may require thinking outside the box and working together to accomplish our mission; this can be done if we stay creative and do not retreat.



St. Augustine said "People travel to wonder at the height of the mountains, at the huge waves of the seas, at the long course of the rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars, and yet they pass by themselves without wondering." We must remember that it is within ourselves that we have our best assets.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (P&D)

By J. Steve Weaver

The big news for P&D is the recent approval of a \$2 million Southern NV Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) grant from the Las Vegas

Valley Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land sales to construct a new RV campground with full utility hookups at Echo Canyon. This project will be undertaken by P&D staff, yet to be assigned. However, **Jenny Scanland** will be taking care of the environmental documentation, which will comprise the first step in project implementation.

Installation of three new staff residences is complete at Valley of Fire. The new residences are a welcome relief for staff, some of whom have been living in 1970's vintage trailers. Architect **Marc Lepire**, engineers **Joe Cyphers** and **Ned Wallace**, and project manager **Tom Tabacco** have all lent their expertise towards these long-awaited residences. Although it has not been without problems, construction is proceeding on the new Visitor Center expansion and remodeling project. The new administration annex and public restrooms will be side-by-side, immediately behind the existing visitor center

building. Construction is still scheduled to be completed this fall. **Marc Lepire** is the project manager with assistance from **Tom Tabacco**. Total project budget is \$1.75 million, to include new carpeting, a remodeled Nevada State Parks Cooperative Association (NSPCA) sales area and hopefully, completion of the last two interior exhibits. The latter three items will be put out to bid under separate contracts.

The new \$135,640 North Shore Marina boat ramp extension project (\$101,730 federal Boating Access grant) for Lahontan is out to bid. We hope to have this project completed sometime this winter. The ramp extensions will allow boat launching under all but the lowest water level conditions. The ramp extensions will also accommodate the new sled dock that was purchased last year. **Ned Wallace** is the project manager, with construction to be managed by **Bob Beck**.

Federal Boating Access grant applications have recently been submitted for South Fork, Lake Tahoe, Rye Patch, Wild Horse and Walker Lake. The South Fork project involves the installation of the southwest shoreline picnic ramadas and a new boat ramp. **Ned Wallace** and **Tom Tabacco** will be collaborating on this \$408,000 project, with a \$235,000 federal share. A \$42,000 request has been submitted and tentatively approved for a new snow blower and tractor at Lake Tahoe, to keep the Sand Harbor and Cave Rock boat ramps open in winter. Park staff will be in charge of ordering the equipment.



The Rye Patch Boating Access grant request consists of \$199,447 for shade ramadas, ADA retrofit and fish cleaning station sewer system upgrade at the Boat Ramp (upper) Campground. **Bob Beck** will be the project manager. Wild Horse will be getting a new fish cleaning station, thanks to a pending \$15,643 Boating Access grant. Fallon Region maintenance staff will be in charge of installation.

And finally, we have a pending \$500,000 grant application for Walker Lake, to include a new boat ramp, dock, parking, Sweet Smelling Toilet (SST) restroom and picnic ramadas. NV Department of Wildlife (NDOW) will be providing the required 25% match and will also be funding 100% of the operation costs for Walker Lake through a separate boating access grant upon completion of the new improvements. **Ned Wallace** will be the construction manager.



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (Con't)

Boating access grants have been approved for new decking on the boat docks at both Cave Lake (\$12,375) and Spring Valley (\$33,882). Cave Lake's dock will be getting a new Apitong Teak wood deck, which should be much more suitable for the extreme winter conditions at Cave Lake. On the other hand, Spring Valley will be getting a low maintenance aluminum dock deck. Regional/park maintenance staff are in charge of installation.

Ned Wallace is also working on Fort Churchill's Buckland Station Day Use Area Development, which is primarily focused on a fire suppression system for the newly restored Buckland Station. There will also be several picnic sites and a modest amount of landscaping. Because the bids in May were well over budget, **Ned** has done some design modifications and now has this project out to bid again.

Joe Cyphers, Supervising Engineer IV, has been working on the Valley of Fire and Spring Mountain Ranch Water system upgrade projects, along with new wells at the Kershaw-Ryan and Tahoe Backcountry campgrounds. Work is pretty much completed at Spring Mountain Ranch with improvements to the water distribution system, although electrical controls still need to be installed. Meanwhile, new wells have been drilled at both Kershaw and Valley of Fire. While the water at Kershaw is apparently useable with treatment, we still need to do some more test pumping and water quality testing at Valley of Fire to determine if the water from the new well is usable. Initial indications are that there may be some major problems. Regarding the installation of one hand pump well for the Tahoe Backcountry campgrounds at the Marlette Peak campground, a hydro-geologist has already inspected the site and given us his positive recommendation.



Work is currently underway on \$539,000 worth of campground improvements at Kershaw-Ryan. Construction should be complete before the end of the calendar year. Then we will finally open the 16 unit RV/trailer camp loop with a new potable water well to serve the campground and other park facilities. It will also feature flush restrooms, hot showers, shade ramadas at each campsite and a new RV dump station. **Eric Nelson** is the project manager.

Eric is also working with **Tom Tabacco** and **me** on campground improvements at South Fork. This project involves reconfiguration of some sites to accommodate

multi-families or small groups, additional shade ramadas and some landscaping, budget permitting. **Tom, Ned** and **I** will also be working in the near future on site design and installation of shade ramadas at the Spring Valley day use and group use areas, along with the ranch campground. These projects will hopefully be underway next spring. South Fork has a budget of \$205,000, including a \$75,000 federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant, while \$179,700 is budgeted for Spring Valley, including an \$89,850 LWCF grant.

Design of a new custom built residence and separate garage for Berlin has been initiated, with construction to take place next spring or summer. In keeping with the historical context of the Berlin town site, the residence has been downsized to two bedrooms and one bath in keeping with the scale of other structures in the vicinity. A separate two car garage with workshop will be constructed nearby. **Marc Lepire** is designing both new buildings to emulate the architectural style and materials used for the adjacent historic buildings.

With assistance from **Joe Cyphers** and **Bob Beck**, **Marc** is also redesigning the proposed Washoe Lake maintenance storage shed to provide expanded storage and office space, and an extra bay for vehicle maintenance. Construction is scheduled for completion by next June 30. **Tom Tabacco** will provide construction management for both the Berlin and Washoe structures.

The process has been initiated for replacing the structurally threatened dam at Cave Lake. NDOW will be funding the bulk of the cost, with a \$440,000 Questions 1 (Q1) contribution by us. NDOW is currently drafting a consultant Request for Proposal (RFP).

Park maintenance staff and **I** have been working with the State Public Works Board's (SPWB) ADA Coordinator to implement accessibility retrofits at Sand Harbor and Lahontan. Sand Harbor will be getting a half dozen accessible picnic sites, and replacement of some of the deteriorated asphalt picnic area walkways, new accessible drinking fountains, etc. This project is essentially complete. A number of restroom accessibility improvements have already been completed at Lahontan, primarily revolving around accessible parking and walkways at many of the vault restrooms scattered around Lahontan. Total budget is approximately \$700,000 for both Lahontan and Tahoe, utilizing SPWB Capital Improvement Project (CIP) bond monies.



PLANNING

By Jenny Scanland

Well, we are busy, busy, busy.

Recreational Trail Program (RTP) - The RecTrails Program awarded over 1.3 million dollars this year to more than two dozen sub-grantees! Another round is due December 1 for another 1.3 million. Those grants are now getting their notices to proceed.

I have some hair left from covering the program while it was vacant and have just enough to look presentable as the new RTP manager steps in to save the day.



I am very happy to announce that the new RTP Manager is our own Randy Moore! I have worked with Randy since I started just 2.5 years ago and am looking forward to working as a team with him on our trails here in Nevada!

Land and Water Conservation (lovingly known as LWCF) - Many folks are not aware of this program as it flows through the state office here in Carson directly to development. No new grants, maybe no money in 2009 either! We will find out next spring.

Master Planning Update



1. Valley of Fire is a "GO!" Our application for assistance from National Park Service's River and Trails Program was approved. We meet with them on the last week of November to draw out the strategy for public meetings at the park beginning in early spring of 2009.
2. Cave Lake – Brochures and public comment handouts are ready. We will be walking the crowds and have a few displays at the Fire and Ice show in January. **Lisa Schettler** with NDOW will be coming with us to Cave Lake, because the dam is being rebuilt next year and she will help us with any questions.
3. Beaver Dam's project, which is up and running again, is under contract with a consultant who is also working with the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) on the removal of the old dam and restoration of the creek.
4. Echo Canyon's master plan was an unexpected jump in priority due to funding that Lincoln County was awarded by SNPLMA for a new campground and

trailhead! That will be starting up in the spring as well. (Sorry Washoe, but we will get with you next year!)



RECREATION TRAILS PROGRAM

By Randy Moore

Howdy all! I have been asked to do a short reintroduction of myself for the many new folks we have that may not know me (poor people). So here goes.



Hi, I am Randy and I like to sing. (Not that this is significant, but be forewarned in either case.) I am a 6th generation native Nevadan and grew up hunting, fishing, hiking, packing, motoring and collecting and expounding on trivia and tall tales about the awesome state of Nevada.

In my 23 year tenure with parks, my career would appear to be the attempt to see how many different job positions I can experience before I retire. Yes, I'm tired, so now I can think about being retired. But only think (dream?). I have done the park aid to regional manager thing and all stops in between. I have worked on the division's natural resources, contracts and concessions, LWCF, and master plans. I have been across the state, in four regions and six parks! And now, I'm the state's Recreation Trails Program Manager.

So now I am just trying to stay on top of the wave and not drown in the tsunami of new bureaucratic policy and regulation. The 2009 grant cycle is looking to be a busy year for grants with an additional \$250,000.00 increase. Wow!!



So until next time...CATCH A WAVE AND YOUR SITTIN' ON TOP OF THE WORLD...



Next time I'll do a rendition of "Happy Trails To You."

NEW YEARS RESOLUTION

*Do not repeat the mistakes of the past...
Make new ones.*

BACKCOUNTRY TOURING AND PICTURES



Tahoe's backcountry has been very busy with wood cutting and sales, construction improvements and upgraded trails. Certainly it is a great reason/excuse to tour the area and see where all the money goes. So, **Peter Maholland** was gracious enough to take **Kirsten, Kim, Anke** and **Christi** on a tour. The changing colors made the cool temperatures worth it.



CARSON REGION

LAKE TAHOE NV STATE PARK (LTNSP)

By Jay Howard

What happened to the slower days of fall that calmly move into dawdling days of winter where we can work solely on those "pet" park and office projects and not be distracted with those routine things we "have" to do? Those periods just don't seem to exist anymore. Not only are we in busy times but times of extreme change. With pending budget cuts, it seems that "business as usual" is a phrase that can no longer be used to describe park operations. We are going to be challenged more than ever to creatively operate our parks. In one way or another, we will all be changing the way we do business.

For LTNSP, there is one example of this, unrelated to budget, that is set to change the way we operate at this park forever. In fact, a pretty significant freedom has been lost at Lake Tahoe - but I suppose, in the end, for good reason. The freedom I refer to is the right to launch a boat whenever we choose. Effective November 1, 2008, boat ramps at Tahoe must be closed in the absence of aquatic invasive species boat inspectors. We are currently installing gates at the top of the Sand Harbor



and Cave Rock boat launches that will only be open when inspectors are present. If invasive critters like Zebra or Quagga muscles are allowed to enter the lake, we could see pretty big impacts like damage to boats and docks, increased maintenance/cost for water system intakes and water treatment, changes to ecosystems, beaches littered with shells, etc. These are all very necessary things to protect the lake, but it is sad to see boating impacted in this way. It is also yet to be seen how difficult this is going to be for boat ramp management. Anyway, thanks go to the Fallon region for their assistance in building these boat ramp gates.

Finally, speaking of change, I want to acknowledge the pending demise of the Carson Region office and the great staff I hope will be moving on to bigger and better things. **Eldon Chouinard, Gail Dansby, and Mike Harasha** will all be missed tremendously. **Kevin Griffitts** will be moving to a new location and continue to serve as the area's top gun with vehicles and equipment. I remember coming to this region in 1995 and finding a surprisingly open and relaxed work atmosphere and the same can be said for the present. I've really enjoyed working with the staff of this region over the years and their support will be greatly missed.

I should also mention that **Dawn Swan**, LTNSP's administrative assistant, will be ending her service on November 14. **Dawn** has been with us for many years and has truly been the glue that holds it all together. **Dawn** too will be greatly missed. Good luck to everyone moving on.



Dawn Swan holding her farewell gift; a painting of Sand Harbor.

So things here at the park keep trudging along. With a great staff and well placed grant money for park improvements, LTNSP has never been in better shape. In addition to various projects, we are in the midst of an unprecedented amount of forest health and wildfire threat reduction work. It's amazing to see the amount of thinning projects going on thanks to Peter Maholland, Environmental Improvement Program (EIP), and coordinated efforts with Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF). This is great news for the park in view of last year's historic wildfire in the Tahoe basin.

LAKE TAHOE NV STATE PARK (Con't)

It seems, in spite of it all, that this is still a great time to be with parks. I hope we all feel this way. So, despite the ugliness of what some change can bring, we should always remember that we, and no one else, have the greatest jobs on earth. We, here at Nevada State Parks are the ones honored with the responsibility of stewardship over some pretty great resources.

WASHOE LAKE/DAYTON STATE PARKS

By Terri Ozawa

Fall season 2008 is drawing to a close even though the current weather seems to have missed the memo on that.

On Friday October 10, we had the start of a two day visit by old man winter. Cold moist air came on raggedy wind and Saturday morning there was almost two inches of snow. Black ice also made a brief unwelcome visit. Today, October 17, it is nearly 80 degrees and we are watering the grass again. Welcome to Northern Nevada!

Seasonals are flying off in four directions and all but one will be gone by October 31. **Paula** and **Jim Ault** will stay on as our park VIPs as **Donna** soldiers on as the lone ranger. Hi Ho Silva!

We all had a great season and hope to saddle up again in the spring. We're hoping for a good snow pack to fill the lake, so the money trees can grow (help the budget shortfalls). A good winter to all from Washoe and Dayton.

FALLON REGION

BERLIN-ICHTHYOSAUR STATE PARK (BISP)

By Mike Dinauer

Well, another busy and productive summer has passed. This year saw the return of **Robin Riggs** for his ninth season, and Park Supervisor **Mike Dinauer** eclipsed the 10 year mark at the park, making him the longest tenured employee at BISP.

Park Ranger, **Jeff Morris** is right behind him as he has recently completed his eighth year at the park. Although we were unable to fill our second seasonal position again, we were able to provide a quality outdoor experience for park visitors. As our tour season winds down and the snow begins to fly, we look forward to other tasks such as natural resource projects, cataloging artifacts, and general maintenance and, of course, a safe and happy holiday season. Best wishes to all!



SOUTH FORK STATE RECREATION AREA

By Jim Wilkinson



Hello to all. We have a new dad in our midst. **Bob** and **Robin Mergell** are the proud parents of Robert L. Mergell III. The little guy was born on September 4. Welcome to the world! If he takes after **Robin's** side of the family, he will be alright. **Bob**

will provide pictures later. Knowing how big a Cowboys fan **Bob** is, I wouldn't be surprised to see him swaddled from head to toe in Cowboys infant wear. The best to you!

South Fork will also be honored by the return of **Mark Bivens**. **Mark** has made an executive decision to return and grace our presence. We appreciate you **Mark**.

Oma Walliman, who has done an outstanding job for us, is moving back to the Fallon area. In **Oma's** tenure, we have received numerous compliments on the cleanliness of our facilities, and never one complaint. Our door is always open for you to return. Your work truck and keys will be waiting for you.

Matt Shaw has also completed his season and is onto bigger and better things. Your efforts were appreciated.

I want to personally thank **Paul Schmidt** and **Jim Hawkins** for their efforts in trying to assist South Fork in its ongoing weed war. **Jim** made a big dent in our 100 acre weed patch in the South Meadow area. Sincere Thanks!



The regional maintenance staff also did a great job in installing a metal roof on our four-bay garage. Thanks! **Eric Johnson** also needs to be commended for assisting South Fork in getting a much needed tow trailer. The stress level in trying to load the park's All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) onto a pickup bed has been eliminated. To actually have a real trailer with a ground level loading ramp is unreal. Thanks **Eric**!

"The Nevada economy looks bleak. We need to stick together. We will ride this budget storm out." I say this when I am in my manic mood. When I get in my depressive mood, things turn a lot darker. I am just kidding. Nevada State Parks has survived the most trying of circumstances. This includes the early 1980's. We will get over this. We hope you all have a good fall and winter.



PANACA REGION

CATHEDRAL GORGE/BEAVER DAM STATE PARKS

By Cody Tingey

Fall has descended upon eastern Nevada and Cathedral Gorge State Park. The dog days of summer are becoming a fleeting memory. In their place are crisp, below freezing mornings with the smell of juniper smoke in the air. The Artic migratory waterfowl and their mechanized snowbird counterparts are beginning to head south for the winter. Both are welcome sights; especially the snowbirds, they nearly fill our campground nightly on their southerly sojourn



Cathedral Gorge hosted two exciting events in the last few months: The 4th Annual Dutch Oven Cook-off on August 23 and National Public Lands Day on September 26. Each event drew over 100 participants to the park and continued Nevada State Park's role in community outreach and interaction.

Special thanks to **Jim Cole** for helping build structures both for the 4th Annual Dutch Oven Cook-off and for National Public Lands Day. Thanks **Jim!**

Special thanks also goes out to **Nevin May**, who in her seventh season at the park, ensures our facilities are spic and span, and our oddest of visitors are satisfied and kept away from matches. Thanks **Nevin!** Thanks also to **Marcia Wadsworth** for her diligent work at the Regional Visitor Center, and to **Derek Lloyd** and **Jonathan Brunjes** for the terrific season they put in for the park.

As we go gently into that dark night called winter, our thoughts can be concentrated on the superb work our staff delivered this summer and the fine work that is sure to come!



CAVE LAKE STATE PARK & WARD CHARCOAL OVENS STATE HISTORIC PARK

By Steve Gray

It is that time of year when the visitors go home, the hunters come out, and the projects start piling up. We have been able to start restoration work on Cave Creek to help with the German Brown spawn starting in just a few weeks. We have removed all the man-made dams, bridges, debris, and trash out of the stream. This will help get the lunkers up the 1.4 mile stretch to the spawning beds. The last three years, we have been able to have a very productive spawn.

The fees and visitation are down this year as many parks have experienced. Hunting season visitation has been average. **Terry Ivins** and **I** have really been trying to increase visitation during hunting seasons. It is not uncommon to see us skinning and quartering animals for the novices. I know it sounds dirty, but this helpful hand goes a long way for people enjoying their hunt.

Dessa Stroud has finished another season with Nevada State Parks. I hope she will come back next year. **Marla Bjorklund** is going to work through the winter months helping to build ice sculptures and handle the crowds for the White Pine Fire and Ice Show and the Copper Classic Ice Fishing Derby.

Once again these two events will be within nine days of one another. This makes for over 6,000 visitors within nine days to the park. If you think you would like to come help ask your supervisor, and we will take all that we can get.



The Nevada Commission on Tourism grants will be available soon. I would like to encourage everyone to apply for these wonderful grants. In the last three years, they have contributed over \$12,000 dollars to Cave Lake's winter time festivities. If you haven't seen

the press release, Fire and Ice has been named in the American Bus Association's Top 100 events in North America. This is our second year receiving this title. It is the first time Nevada has an event on the list twice in a row. If we receive it three years in a row, Nevada Division of State Parks would secure a spot on the Top 100 International list for the lifetime of the event. This year we need to change things up a bit to try and secure that spot (no pressure there...lol). We have three tour companies looking to bring buses into the area for the event. I encourage everyone to go to the American Bus Association's web site to get an understanding of what Cave Lake is trying to accomplish (we're on page 4).

Our master plan is in the beginning phases. **Jennifer Scanland** has been working hard to understand all the political corridors in order to go around making it easier and beneficial to the public. Hopefully, we will see some big changes in the future. **Terry** and **I** are really looking forward to try and accomplish everything with all available assets. Let's all try and think positive through these trying times and make the most of our parks, and their wonderful visitors.

KERSHAW RYAN STATE PARK & ELGIN SCHOOLHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

By Bruce Winslow



Fall is here at Kershaw-Ryan and as the leaves do just that, it is still busy. Not with visitors, but with construction.

Work on our new campground, around an already existing restroom, began September 10. There has been a lot of dirt moving for the culinary and irrigation water lines, septic system, and 16 camp sites.

The underground sprinkler system for the day use area has had a slow start, but was more exciting. It was like a treasure hunt every time the backhoe blade dug in. Water lines and valves, electric pull boxes and rocks are being discovered. I am hoping that maybe the remnants of the old rock ranger cabin might be found as we dig here and there. **Pete Gill**, who recently retired, told me about living in that cabin and some of his experiences as the seasonal park manager in May through October 1973. Good luck in retirement **Pete**.

Kershaw-Ryan acquired about 1,500 acres of land from BLM in August 2007. A study was commissioned by the Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce for assessing mountain bike trails in Lincoln County and the acquired lands were deemed the most desirable.



RTP grant funds were received to construct 13 miles of new trail. I just got some of the boundary marked and it was obvious that the lines on a map, not topography, were used to determine boundaries. It was REALLY fun putting a marker post in the middle of a cliff!! The trails should be some great riding for all levels: beginner, intermediate, and expert.

SPRING VALLEY STATE PARK

By Andrew Porter

As with most everywhere and in many ways, change has become the new constant; State Parks has been no exception.

Spring Valley will also have to learn to endure some of its own change as we cope with the retirement of the man, the myth, the legend: **Joseph P. Gill**. After a career spanning 35 years, **Pete** signed off on October 13, 2008.



Beginning Memorial Day weekend 1973, **Pete** first reported for duty to Kershaw Ryan State Park as a seasonal ranger. Later that year he transferred to Valley of Fire, and after six months, **Pete** found himself working Red Rock Canyon out of Spring Mountain Ranch. At Spring Valley, **Pete** was introduced to a co-worker he fell in love with and soon married, we know her as **Debi Gill**. In 1975, the new Gill family relocated to Lahontan Reservoir, where **Pete** had the opportunity to deal with the infamous visitors there. Later in 1976 the young Gill clan found their new home at Spring Valley, and the years they spent there they count as some of their best. Again ready for new challenges, **Pete** took over Cathedral Gorge in 1984, and later moved north to the frigid Wild Horse area. There he experienced many adventures involving stuck vehicles, snowmobiles and broken snowplows. Spring Valley still had a strong allure to the Gills though, and in 1998 **Pete** and his family once again came home to the valley. **Pete** finished out his career here, making many life long friends with co-workers, visitors and acquaintances. **Pete** and **Debi** now live in nearby Pioche. **Pete** can still be found in the hills, stalking deer and elk in the early morning.

Although brief, I hope this chronology is for the most part accurate. **Pete** really needs a professional historian to recount his extensive career. He has seen and done it all! If you have any questions or just want to hear a good story, ask **Pete Gill** himself. If there is a bench or chair handy, pull up a seat and enjoy, because he will be happy to oblige.



Pete was an honest friend to all, like a father to others and we will very much miss working with him!

LAS VEGAS REGION

VALLEY OF FIRE STATE PARK

By Amber Heman

Fall is here and with the cooler weather visitors are coming to Valley of Fire. Since the first weekend in October, all of our campsites have filled up on Fridays and Saturdays, thank god for the new RV sites. With the increase of visitors, we have started our Fall Interpretation Schedule. Between September and October, we are doing 13 programs and have already had 315 people attend. We also had two visits from local Las Vegas schools, which involved 500 students.

VALLEY OF FIRE STATE PARK (Con't)

At the end of October, we are having our 6th Annual Halloween Jubilee, which we expect about 150 people to attend. Also in October, we once again were part of the Brass Challenge which went smoothly with 347 people.



The construction of the new Visitor Center Annex has begun and currently the walls are up. This is exciting news since we finally have full staff. It gets a little crowded in the office with only four desks and six rangers. We are all excited to have a little more space to work.

With full staff, we have been able to get some training completed. All of our L.E. rangers are now caring these funny yellow tasers and have also been certified on Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR). In L.E. news, Ranger **Shepard** and **DeFoe** made their first arrest in September.

With the new addition of our NSPCA Sales Rep III **Nicki Kendrick**, we have added over 60 new items like scorpion suckers, long sleeve shirts, cactus candy and cactus jelly. All the new items are flying off the shelves.



Nicki Kendrick in our Visitor Center.

Valley of Fire's - Here's Your Sign

By Jim Hammons

Over the past decades, "The Sign" has become a topic of public interest a couple of times. A song about signs was popular in the '70's, and in the '90's, a comedian offered several scenarios where people were deserving of a particular sign.

Most would agree that the primary purpose of a sign is to provide information, education, and direction. My own experience has shown me that a sign can kindle the power of self suggestion or one's ability to see beyond the obvious. We are capable of scrutinizing and analyzing a simple, straight forward word or phrase to convince oneself what isn't, is. Others might refer to this ability as "the lame excuse." For example:

KEEP OUT apparently means that only cars can't enter. This is a common excuse, even by the person who took

their vehicle past it anyway. This definition must be limited to adults only since I asked my seven year old daughter what keep out means, and she replied, "you don't go in." A straight and simple comment with no exceptions added. I have also yet to see someone wander past the sign when one of our vehicles is parked in the area within sight of the gate.



ENTERING A FEE AREA doesn't seem to apply to those "just driving through" on some magic corridor that is somehow separated from "the area." It also doesn't apply to those who paid an entry fee over 70 miles away to gain entry into some other park.

CAMPGROUND CLOSED (when associated with a locked gate) is defined as restricting vehicle entrance only. You can still walk around the gate, set up your tent and camp even though the restrooms are



locked and the trash cans are turned upside down. These two gentlemen couldn't have been wrong since they were on a weekend break from a California college.

NO CLIMBING ON THE ROCKS seems very explicit unless there is a hiking symbol on the same sign post that has multiple signs. Then the vague reference that you can hike in the area overrides the specific statement.

TENTS MUST BE PUT ON TENT PADS also includes a flat boulder that is eight feet above ground level.



RESERVATIONS REQUIRED, INQUIRE AT OFFICE: To a college educated person, this does not mean that you cannot go into the area even if already occupied by someone else. This young lady stressed her "college educated" status several times.

NO DRIVING OFF ROAD only means you can't drive over plants. Rocks, washes, and boulders are OK.

DOGS MUST BE ON A LEASH is one of the few signs the public will take literally, and do not follow the inferred suggestion that the leash be secured to a person or stationary object. In one instance, the leash was attached to the dog's collar, and the other end was in the dog's mouth so it could walk itself.



Valley of Fire's - Here's Your Sign (con't)

NO FOOD OR WATER CONTAINERS ARE ALLOWED IN VISITOR CENTER doesn't seem to apply when an empty container is brought in and filled at the water fountain. A person will often state they have to bring the water bottle in because it is hot outside. I have yet to find any scientific findings that show it is dangerous to the water bottle to be left in the car, or how hot outdoor temperatures adversely affect the person walking around inside an air conditioned building.

Then there is the statement **"There is no sign saying you can't which means you can."** Perhaps, it depends on the subject. This statement tends to negate claims that people in general know how to behave and take care of resources without government (or someone else's) interference.



It has been suggested the comedian may have had the right idea, and we would be doing a public service to print up several of our own signs to pass out to help identify these enlightened and overanalyzing groups of people. There are definitely times when you should not want to admit to having a college education. However, no matter how well deserving this group may be of recognition, concerns of public relations may far out weigh the public benefit of this information.

STATE PARKS' VISITOR SURVEY REPORT CARD

By Joy Elwood

I have gathered some data based on the final input of visitor surveys for 2007 and compared some of this data with results from 2006. Here are the results. Out of 16,100 surveys sent out to the parks in 2007, we received 720 surveys, which is a .75% decrease over the year 2006 (*growing trend*).



The following is the overall rating for all state parks:

<u>Increase or Decrease over 2006</u>		
Excellent	67.4%	2.6% Decrease
Good	25.1%	.4% Increase
Average	5.8%	2.7% Increase
Poor	1%	.2% Decrease
Unacceptable	.7%	.3% Decrease

THE REGIONAL SCORES

The following is the ranking of the regions based on the highest amount of Excellence:

- Panaca Region
- Carson Region
- Las Vegas Region
- Fallon Region

The following is the ranking of the regions based on the lowest amount of below average ratings:

- Las Vegas Region
- Carson Region
- Panaca Region
- Fallon Region



THE PARK'S SCORES

These results are based on a minimum return of 30 surveys for the year. 30 samples are generally recognized as the minimum number required in order to provide statistical valid survey results.

The following is the ranking of the parks based on the highest amount of Excellence:

- Berlin-Ichthyosaur
- Kershaw-Ryan
- Cathedral Gorge
- Valley of Fire
- Spring Valley
- Ft. Churchill
- Old Las Vegas Mormon Ft.
- Rye Patch
- South Fork
- Lahontan



The following is the ranking of the parks based on the lowest amount of below average ratings:

- Berlin-Ichthyosaur
- Spring Valley
- Cathedral Gorge
- Old Las Vegas Mormon Ft.
- Ft. Churchill
- Kershaw-Ryan
- Rye Patch
- Valley of Fire
- Lahontan
- South Fork

STATE PARKS' VISITOR SURVEY REPORT CARD (con't)

ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

The following are the report activities done in our parks and a comparison from 2007's participation:



		<u>Increase or Decrease over 2006</u>
Relaxing Outdoors	68.8%	3.6% Increase
Hiking/Walking	54.2%	.4% Decrease
Camping	43.2%	4.2% Increase
Picnicking	32.8%	3.8% Increase
Group Activity	21.7%	.4% Increase
Pleasure Driving	30.6%	.6% Decrease
Nature Study	23.4%	0% No Change
Photography	33.6%	0% No Change
Historic Sites	37.1%	3.3% Decrease
Special Events	6.7%	1.2% Increase
Boating	17.4%	2.4% Increase
Fishing	22.4%	1.6% Decrease
Swimming	17.9%	4.5% Increase
X-Country Skiing	2.1%	1% Decrease
Snowplay	.3%	.2% Decrease

So the following are the top 10 activities enjoyed at our parks throughout all of Nevada:

- Relaxing Outdoors
- Hiking/Walking
- Camping
- Historic Sites
- Photography
- Picnicking
- Pleasure Driving
- Nature Study
- Fishing
- Group Activity



**LIGHTFOOT
Wants You To Follow the TREAD Pledge**

Travel on trails or other legal areas

- Keep your feet and wheels on open roads, trails or in legal riding areas.
- Ask an adult before crossing and/or playing in streams and rivers.
- When you step off a trail to search for camp sites, fishing holes or a nice spot to rest, watch your step and don't trample plants.
- Remember riding up and down stream beds can damage soils, plants and animals in the water.
- Use maps and signs to help you stay on the trail.

- Walk or ride slowly through puddles and mud on the trail – not around.
- When you are on a bike or ATV, if you can go over an object, turn back and report the obstacle to the ranger.

Respect animals, plants and people

- Don't chase, scare, feed or try to pet animals.
- Don't carve on tree bark or draw graffiti on trees and rocks.
- Watch out for other people on the trails.
- Keep the noise down, especially in camp.
- Don't shine your flashlight into other camps.
- Don't ride or run through other camps.

Every time you go outdoors, think safety, bring a friend and be prepared

- Always tell an adult where you are going, who you are with and when you will be back.
- An adult should be with you when riding ATVs or dirt bikes and when traveling in the backcountry.
- Remember to pack the seven important items: water, food, first aid kit, raincoat or poncho, flashlight, sunscreen and a whistle.
- When trail riding or hiking, don't leave the trail – you are less likely to get lost and much easier to find. *If you think you are lost, stay where you are and blow your whistle.*
- Don't wander off at night.
- Bring a map, check the weather and find out about wildlife to be aware of in your area.
- Bring the proper clothes including good shoes and a jacket – wear a helmet and other protective gear when you ride.

Always leave the outdoors better than you found it

- Don't litter or leave food or trash behind.
- Pick up trash left by others – as long as it is safe.
- Wash your bike or ATV and other gear after every side so you won't spread weed seeds.
- Leave plants or flower for others to see.
- Lend a hand, plant trees and other plants with your local ranger.
- Clean up after your pets.
- Convince others to keep the land and water clean.



Discover how fun the outdoors can be when you Tread Lightly!

- Keep your parents and rangers happy – follow the rules.
- Remember the great outdoors is home to Lightfoot and his friends – treat it with care.
- You will have more fun if you take care of the outdoors.
- Make the right choice – if you do something wrong, others might follow and make more damage.



#4162
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 Nevada Division of State Parks
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Return Service Requested

PERSONNEL



By Anke Simpson

As our busy season is winding down most of our seasonal employees are now laid off. This is a good time of the year to catch up on some mandatory or just informational classes offered by State Personnel. We did not have a lot of changes among our permanent

employees since the last PEN, but we are now able to recruit for the vacant Park Supervisor II positions at Washoe Lake, Fort Churchill and Spring Valley and a Maintenance Repair Specialist II position at Fallon Headquarters.

TRANSFERRED EMPLOYEES

Randy Moore transferred from a Conservation Staff Specialist II to the RecTrails Manger position at the division office on 8/11/08.



GOOD BYES

Jose Aguirre, Maintenance Repair Specialist II at the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort transferred to Buildings and Grounds in Las Vegas on 8/22/08. **Gail Dansby** transferred from her Accounting Assistant III position at the Carson Region Headquarters to an Administrative Assistant III position at Nevada Division of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Federal Facilities in Las Vegas on 10/6/08. **Dawn Swan** resigned from her Administrative Assistant I position at Lake Tahoe effective 11/15/08 to enjoy her busy personal life and spend more time with friends and family.

Kurt Krause retired from his Maintenance Repair Specialist II position at Lake Tahoe on 9/8/08 after 11 years of state service. **Pete Gill** retired on 10/13/08 with 35 years of service with State Parks from his Park Supervisor II position at Spring Valley.

Good Luck to all of them in their new adventures.

