

PEN

PARK EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

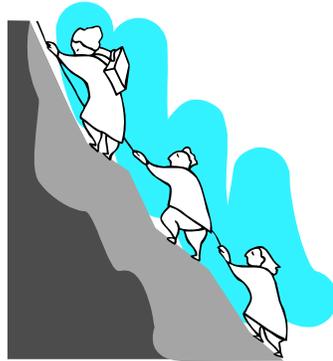


ADMINISTRATOR'S CORNER

By David Morrow

State Parks survived the 26th Special Session of the Legislature thanks to strong support from the governor's office, key legislators and many of Nevada's rural communities. It has been a struggle to keep parks open and operating, given the serious budget problems the State of Nevada is facing, but in the end, citizens of Nevada still have their state parks.

The challenge for everyone who works for State Parks is maintaining or even exceeding the level of service that has been provided in the past. Visitors will be paying more to use parks and will rightfully expect the services we provide to be worthy of the increased costs. Despite the budget cuts since FY 08-09, approximately 46%, we must continue to live up to public expectations. I hope every visitor leaves knowing the facilities and employees at Nevada State Parks are truly special.



We all need to place customer service at the top of our lists. We need to make sure we return calls, respond to written or email requests promptly, visit and talk with our visitors and program patrons and perhaps most importantly, treat every visitor as the valued customer they are.

The State of Nevada is facing unprecedented budget shortfalls and if state parks are going to remain open and operating, it will be a direct result of the support we receive from our visitors, local communities, legislators and the governor. We all need to be informed about budget issues we are facing and most importantly, the need to be as cost effective as possible in order to generate enough revenue to offset the significant reduction in state park's general fund appropriation.



As you visit with your friends, neighbors, park visitors and other park employees, listen for and share their suggestions for improving the way we operate our parks. We are open to discussing any ideas you wish to share.

DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

By Steve Weaver

For the record, we have also done a bit of reorganization in the division office. The Chief of Operations and Maintenance has been reclassified as the Deputy Administrator. And, instead of reporting directly to the administrator, the Chief of Planning and Development (P&D) will be reporting to the Deputy Administrator. At least for the time being, the deputy will also oversee park master planning (General Management Plan), federal grant programs administration, acquisitions, and State Clearinghouse review functions.

On March 26, Valley of Fire hosted an antique car show on the exact date the 1935 state legislature authorized the bill to establish our first four parks. It was with great pride that I had the opportunity to read Governor Gibbon's official proclamation in honor of this special event.



And, if you haven't seen it yet, look for the March-April edition of Nevada Magazine with its feature article on the establishment of our park system. Included is a photo of the original dedication of Valley of Fire State Park, taken 75 years ago.

In the meantime, I'm gradually taking on more operations functions, starting as chair of the 75th Anniversary Committee. I think the committee has done a great job in a very short span of time putting together ideas to celebrate State Parks' three quarters of a century of existence. An impressive array of special programs and contests are taking place, beginning with our 75th logo contest, statewide school kids' poster contest, and our upcoming geocache and photo contests.

The geocache contest consists of a north versus south challenge plus a statewide challenge for geocache aficionados. Participants will have to visit a minimum of six parks in either of the two regions or 12 parks for the statewide contest. They will find the geocache containers in each specified park and remove a special park specific 75th Anniversary memento card from the container.

DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR (con't)

After they've collected the prescribed number of cards, they can send them in to the region or division offices in order to be entered into the drawings that will take place on Nevada Day, 2010.

For those park visitors who do not geocache, we have a 75th Anniversary Photo Contest. Contestants will have a choice of submitting photos of entrance signs at 12 parks in order to be entered into statewide drawings (along with geocache entrants) or submit any number of photos that fit into one or more of the following three categories: 1) park scenery; 2) park wildlife; 3) family fun in the park. Photos entered into any of the latter three categories will be judged and prizes awarded to the winners, such as possible publication in a future Nevada State Park calendar.

Entry forms for the geocache and photography contests are on the division's website. Be sure to let all our visitors know about the 75th anniversary geocache and photo contests, and the great prizes we're offering, largely due to generous contributions from our concessionaires and non-profit partners. Prizes include: State Park passports, a Super Summer Theater gift basket, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival show packages, Spooner Lake cabin stays, Tahoe kayak outings/tours, Cave Lake yurt stay, Valley of Fire ATV tours, Valley of Fire buggy tours, dining certificates, T-shirts, and gift certificates.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

By Steve Weaver

After 20 years as Chief of Planning and Development (P&D), it seems a bit strange to turn over the reins to our new chief,



Mark Davis. Fortunately, Mark is catching on fast to a seemingly overwhelming array of duties. **Mark** is a licensed architect who has actually worked on several state park projects when he worked for the State Public Works Board (SPWB), the Nevada Department of Transportation

(NDOT) and with consulting architect **Ralph Eissmann**. Among those projects was the national award winning Memorial Point Overlook at Tahoe and the Kershaw-Ryan restrooms and group ramadas. So, the next P&D PEN report will be written by Mark.

His primary responsibility is, of course, supervision of the division's capital improvement programs, including all Question 1 (Q1) Bond funded projects. But he is also taking on several special projects that were on the back burner for awhile, starting with our Facility Condition Analysis update and a wholesale revision of our Standardization Manual.

A week before Mark came on board; we welcomed **Dion George** as our new Project Manager I. Dion has had a career



as a design-build architect and contractor. Over a span of nearly 20 years, he has worked on a variety of projects ranging from the very small to high rise condos and a couple of the major Las Vegas resort hotels, such as the Luxor and New York, New York. Dion replaced **Tom Tabacco**, who recently retired. As a result

of agency reorganization and ultimately our recent series of budget cuts, we lost the Supervising Landscape Architect position formerly held by **Bob Martin**, who retired some time ago.

Just getting underway is the new fee booth/contact station/office building at Kershaw-Ryan. **Marc Lepire** designed the building, while **Joe Cyphers** did the engineering; **Dion George** will be taking over construction management. The low bid was \$168,843, funded entirely by the Q1 bond program. Kershaw-Ryan will also be getting a new paved road and parking area later this year. **Joe Cyphers** has arranged to have NDOT tack the paved road part of this project onto their much larger State Route 317 road reconstruction project. This should substantially reduce the cost we would have encountered if we had to put the park road out to bid as a separate project. This project has a \$305,648 price tag, which is funded by a federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant and matched with Q1 bond monies.

Also currently underway is the Mormon Station Wagon Shed reconstruction project. Due to severe dry rot at the base of the wooden support posts, the structure was collapsing; so all of the support posts were replaced with new concrete footings. The low bid was half of our \$70,000 budget, which was comprised of a combination of Fee Overage and Q1 bond funds. **Ned Wallace** did the engineering, while **Bob Beck** is supervising the construction.



Marc Lepire and **Dion George** are working together to finish up the plans and specifications for the new ranger residence and detached garage at Berlin. They will be custom designed to emulate the architectural character of the existing historic buildings. Also included in the project is a new solar power system to power both the new and the old residences, along with the park office. The entire south facing roofs of the new residence and garage will be covered with solar panels mounted flush to the roofs and facing away from the historic buildings, in order to minimize the visual impact. We anticipate opening bids in May, with construction completed by September. The budget is \$350,000 and comprised entirely of Q1 bond funds.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (Con't)

We also hope to get a new 180,000 gallon wooden water tank installed on the hillside above Berlin's town site. Along with an 8" water main, we'll also install historic fire hydrants before the end of summer. This will finally provide decent fire protection for the historically significant site. Q1 bonds will fund this project with its nearly \$1 million price tag. **Ned Wallace** is doing the engineering, while **Bob Beck** is scheduled to provide construction management.

Marc is also working with a consultant architect to refine the design for interior renovations in Valley of Fire's visitor center. The focus of the renovation is the new **Nevada State Parks Cooperative Association (NSPCA)** sales area with some upgraded interpretive displays, a new audio/video presentation area, and numerous other maintenance related items. Renovations will take place later this summer. **Dion** will be the construction manager.

South Fork campground renovations, which include new ramadas, accessible campsites, a host site, and other miscellaneous site improvements, will also take place this summer. The park will also get 20 additional shade ramadas for waterfront picnickers and boat campers, a new boat ramp and boat parking along the reservoir's southwest shoreline. Staff Landscape Architect, **Eric Nelson**, is designing most of the improvements, with boat ramp engineering by **Ned Wallace**. The combined projects will be out to bid later this spring, with construction during summer. **Dion George** will supervise the construction this summer. The boat ramp project won't start until this fall; when lake levels are somewhat lower.



Through efforts by **Steve Weaver** and **Tom Tabacco**, we now have new interpretive displays depicting the historic California Trail at Mormon Station, Ft. Churchill and South Fork. Displays were also installed at six NDOT highway rest stops along the Interstate 80 corridor and eleven other locations along the original trail route. The project was funded by the 2005 legislature and promoted by the **Humboldt Highroaders** historic trail advocacy group. It was completed well under budget. \$100k was reverted back into the state's general fund, which is small bit of good news for the state's budget woes.

Before he left in November, **Tom Tabacco** supervised the installation of Spring Valley's new shade ramadas. The park's Day Use, Group Use and Ranch campground areas all got new ramadas. The project included a new campground Sweet Smelling Toilet (SST) restroom and other improvements.

Total project cost was about \$200,000; a federal LWCF grant was matched with Q1 bond funds.



With a little luck, the half-finished \$2.8 million phase I construction of the new Van Sickle Bi-State Park project, funded entirely with Tahoe Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) bonds, will get back underway this spring. We hope to have the ribbon cutting ceremony during the Tahoe Summit Forum in August. We are fortunate to have two persistent partners in this project, the **California Tahoe Conservancy**, which holds title to the California portion of the park, and the **Tahoe Rim Trail Association (TRTA)**, who will be operating Nevada's trailhead facilities at TRTA's expense until we are able to secure an operating budget. **Ned Wallace** is the project manager.

Washoe Lake will be the recipient of several funding sources for numerous badly needed repairs and upgrades throughout the park. Starting this spring, 2.4 miles of a paved bike path will be constructed along East Lake Boulevard. It is funded by a combination of \$175k from **Washoe County**, matched with \$175k from State Lands Q1 trail funds and another \$140k from our own Q1 funds. **Ned Wallace** is currently doing the engineering, while **Bob Beck** will handle construction.

Meanwhile, plans are also in progress for major Americans for Disabilities act (ADA) retrofits with funding from **SPWB Capital Improvement Program (CIP)** and totaling \$230,000. Construction will take place this summer. **Eric Nelson** and **Marc Lepire** are coordinating this effort with SPWB's ADA Coordinator, **Steve Barron**.

We also hope to initiate planning/design engineering for a new breakwater and dock, along with other boat launch area improvements, which will likely take place in 2011. These improvements will primarily be funded by a \$375k Boating Access grant with a 25% Q1 match. In addition, an anticipated federal LWCF grant for approximately \$160k and augmented with \$300k matching Q1 bond funds will allow us to upgrade facilities from the south end of Washoe's main beach all the way to the North Ramp area. **Eric Nelson, Ned Wallace, Marc Lepire, and Bob Beck** are all responsible for various facets of these upgrades. The estimate for these projects is close to \$1 million and will be funded by a combination of federal Boating Access funds, a federal LWCF grant, and Q1 bond funds.

Thanks to **Bob Beck**, the new Wild Horse fishing cleaning station will soon be a reality. A federal Boating Access grant amendment was just approved for installation by a licensed contractor. With the recent reductions in park staff, due to budget cuts, it was not possible for maintenance staff to install the new station, as originally planned. Installation should be completed by late spring.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (Con't)

We will also see completion of the Spring Valley dock refurbishment by the end of June, when the federal Boating Access grant expires. This \$45,000 project includes a new composite deck, shade ramada over part of the dock, bumpers and more. All materials have already been purchased. With help from **Dion**, southern region maintenance staff and a crew from Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) will do the installation. **Dion** will also supervise installation of an ADA retrofit at Big Bend's boat lagoon, which includes a concrete walk extension, stairway modification and accessible concrete tables.

By late fall, a new well and solar powered pump may become a reality at Beaver Dam. It will replace the old spring collection system that has periodic contamination problems. **Joe Cyphers** has already hired a hydro-geologist to help determine the best location for the new well, and an archeologist to provide clearance. Funding is from a \$55k federal LWCF grant matched with a like amount of Q1 Bond monies.

PLANNING

By Jenny Scanland

WHEW! We made it! What a crazy last few months for everyone! I personally have never seen and worked with more dedicated folks in my life than here at State Parks and in so many different venues! So many park supervisors and staff came through so strongly in the last few months to get done what needed to be done. You are all incredibly awesome! I feel blessed to work with all of you.



We all know there are pots of money out there that cannot be used for staff or operations. And we wish it could be used for our field troops, but some pots of "moolaa" have specific restrictions and specific earmarks. Part of my job is to find the usable pot at the end of the rainbow. I am constantly searching for money to help us with the basics in the field, but it's in short supply. I will continue my constant search.

75 miles in the 75th year! It's a new marketing project for our trails. Details will be on our website. The public can hike, bike, or horseback ride 75 miles of trail in any combination in our state parks. It's a program that folks can use to challenge themselves. They will track their own progress and once they complete and submit their entry form, they'll get a certificate from State Parks to brag to their friends. It's self-tracking, so nothing for us to stamp or ok! We hope it will get folks to the parks. More visitors, more revenue, happy budget!



Washoe Lake Bike Path: We got the funding from **Washoe County** and **State Lands!** We'll pave a brand new bike path by this spring!

Carson River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP): We got the funding from **State Lands Q1!** We are completing a HCP that includes habitat along the Carson River from Dayton State Park through Fort Churchill and the Carson River Ranches to Lahontan Dam. Wow! Can't wait to work with the **Conservation District, Carson Water Sub-conservancy District, Nevada Land Conservancy, Lahontan Audubon,** park staff and **Lyon County!** It will provide project descriptions and cost estimates on the many projects needed along that section of the river. We'll use that information to go after grants; my favorite thing!

Land and Water Program: The SCORP (the what?) 2010 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is in draft stages. The short story is this plan identifies the reason projects should be funded using Land and Water Conservation funds. Guess what the first two issues identified are?

- #1 Ensure proper maintenance and upkeep of existing outdoor recreation facilities. Manage impacts to outdoor recreation sites from increasing usage. "Take care of what you already have before building more facilities," has been voiced time and again to recreation providers and park managers. No shortage there!
- #2 Ensure sufficient ongoing funding for existing and planned outdoor recreation facilities. Well, my job security just went up!

This shows me our many recreation partners and providers throughout the state are all facing the same challenges and when we apply for funding to upgrade or rehab old facilities, we will have a step up on new facilities, I hope.

One other important issue noted:

- #3 Increase public outreach on outdoor recreation to children, students and currently underserved populations. The data we collected over the past four years indicate lower income families participate in outdoor recreation at rates below the population average. This group is, in effect, not seeking the lifestyle and health benefits of outdoor recreation to the same degree as other members of the population. This problem is self-perpetuating in that if lower income parents do not have the resources or the interest in promoting outdoor recreation to their children, this younger generation will not have the interest either. The benefits of outdoor recreation will continue to be lost on this group unless outside action is initiated. Congrats to Washoe Lake and Fort Churchill for taking this on seriously by hosting the camping seminar weekends for families last year! Keep it up folks!

Land and Water Funding: New projects include the Beaver Dam well and water system. Washoe Lake is also currently applying for a load of improvements, facility improvements at trailheads, bathrooms, campgrounds, ADA improvements and more. Improvements to Fort Churchill and Lahontan's toilets and showers are planned for next year. Hopefully, we will get more funding for 2011-2012!

PLANNING (con't)

Planning: Celebration! As I type this, I just dropped off the final draft of Valley of Fire's General Management Plan to Dave Morrow. This was a wonderful experience! I had a great time at four public meetings and working with the following partners: **Elise McAllister** of Partners in Conservation; **Matt LaCroix** of Clark County; **Deb Reardon** of the National Park Service Rivers and Trails program; **Marilyn Peterson** of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the horse and OHV groups. Special thanks to **Russ Dapsauski** (my mentor) and **Jim Hammons**, who made sure I left the park on two feet and refused to acknowledge my near miss on the motorized trails. I'd also like to thank staff and **Kelly Kolhoss** who kept me laughing no matter what. Congrats to **Jim**; your RecTrails (RTP) grant for trail closures and maintenance and an Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) is about to be awarded, we hope!

Cave Lake and Ward Charcoal Ovens (WCO): We are back on track to finish a joint Cave Lake/WCO General Management Plan. We'll combine the planning process and public meetings this spring. Thanks to **Steve** and **Terry** for patience on the slow movement of this plan. These guys were swamped all year and still made time for me and I really appreciate it! **Eric Johnson** will be working with me and staff on the final plans for these two parks and I hope they will be complete by mid-summer!

Washoe Lake: Their General Management Plan update starts this summer with a collection of all the information and "ground truthing" of the facilities/maps/trails, etc. It is going to be the premier northern Nevada equestrian park! First public meeting will begin in the late summer/fall and finish by the end of the year.



General Management Plan? It is the new name for Master Plans and they include a whole chapter on operations a park needs to finish. Still out there to be finished and submitted are the operation plans for Dayton, Spring Mt. Ranch, South Fork, and Valley of Fire (now that we are done with the first part). Several plans were completed by using consultants at Dangberg, Mormon Station, and Van Sickle. We will be working on the operation plan for those parks in a different fashion soon. You too Beaver Dam!

Beaver Dam: We got the funding straightened out! The consultant will be starting the final meetings this spring and the plan should be completed in July. Wow, that's what happens when a natural disaster hits!

Trails Assessment and Mapping: I am hoping to get a RecTrails Program (RTP) grant this year for **Beneficial Designs** to come to most of our parks and map and assess all of our trails under the Universal Trails Assessment Protocol. This is a huge benefit, if they get funding. We can then apply for funding for all new signs and fabulous kiosks and maps for our trails. I will let all know the results. I will be the contact on the project; **Randy**



will be administering the money. Keep your fingers crossed. I know I have forgotten something and probably forgot to thank someone, but know that it was not intentional. Take care out there! You are doing a great job!

RECTRAILS PROGRAM (RTP) *By Randy Moore*

RTP has a whole new look, new application process, new manual and new direction!

Over the past year, RTP has been doing some assessment of the Bureaucratic Trail (BT) for improvement and changes that promote user use and success. Just like putting tread on the ground, the BT process is not always easy and requires many steps. While assessing the BT system, we tried to identify problem areas, areas needing repair and enhancing, some areas that are working well and areas needing total reroutes. The assessment process consisted of two external audits of the RTP process, one federal and one state. This involved an internal review of files and operations from old and closed projects to the newest, and meeting with partners and users to vent needs, concerns and compliance issues.

Just as landforms often dictate where a trail must go, law and regulation dictate certain pathways the BT must take. These ways are not often the easiest and are full of obstacles and barriers. Yet we may overcome them with perseverance and diligence to create a better experience. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Cultural 106 Compliance Review have been two of the greatest obstacles. RTP is now allowing up to 15% of the grant to be used toward offsetting some of those costs. A pre-application process is now being used to review projects earlier and help evaluate, screen and communicate with the grantees faster and more efficiently.

The new grant application is primarily a "check the box/fill in the blank" process that covers more information in less time. However, narratives and presentations are still important and needed. The committee will be able to review projects faster.

Grant caps were also increased to help grantees leverage more funding; \$200,000 for non-motorized and no cap for motorized. In the case of motorized grants, the match has been lowered to the federal minimum of 5%. It is still 20/80 for non-motorized.

So, for RTP 2010, the BT has been roughed in and we will put on the finishing touches in RTP 2011.

Yes, it does appear there will be an RTP 2011! The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU) expired in 2009. The reauthorization of the program is still underway, but has taken a backseat to more pressing national issues. Currently, RTP exists under continuing resolutions one month at a time, limiting what can be done. A more substantial resolution is expected at the end of March. A full reauthorization is expected next year with substantial increases in funding for RTP. Keep holding the right thoughts; it's not done until it's done and maybe not even then.

RECTRAILS (con't)

Please remember to stay on the BT. Just like the ground trail, if you don't follow the cross slopes and cut the switchbacks, the trek may seem quicker and easier, but will create greater problems in the long run. Good Trail Trek'n!

LAKE TAHOE NV STATE PARK

By Todd Anderson

Greetings fellow minions of the park world. Today we will talk about the Crown Jewel of Nevada State Parks. No, we didn't create that title and I'm not sure who originally did, but it makes us feel good about ourselves. Seriously though, we are grateful to work here and even work at all for that matter. Let's begin with a brief synopsis of recent projects.



Just before the snow flew, I was able to secure funding to do some mistletoe abatement and hazard tree repair. Anyone that knows me will tell you that I love this and would do it for free if they'd let me. Ok, maybe not for free, but I like it a lot. We do not have the funds to do as thorough a job, but occasionally we are able to take an aggressive attack position. I had two climbers, a bucket lift and ground crew for two long days. We have cleaned up

to 70% of the beach front and building sites. I promise to nag, wine and snivel until I can finish this to my satisfaction.

Our Pilot and Captain, **Jay Howard** (the Big Cheese), has been blazing a paper trail as far as the eye can see. Of note, if the Capacity Study is set to take place this summer starting in May. It will determine whether or not Sand Harbor really does get too many visitors. It has been said the more, the merrier, but I don't know who invented the cliché and I think it must only apply to money and Christmas presents. Anyway visitors equal money; therefore maybe it's true, except I don't feel all that merry in the summer time.

Jay has also been working to wrangle us a new food concessionaire to help feed us, I mean visitors, during the busy season. The Request for Proposal (RFP) is out and soon a selection committee will pick a new entity to replace Harbor House. If you see us this summer and we look well fed, you'll know it worked out good for the park. In all honesty, it is pretty cool to go out to eat in your own park. We are also working with **NSPCA** to establish an expanded park store catering to the beach-goers. This would carry everything for the beach, an expansion on the logo trinkets normally offered at **NSPCA** outlets. This is a tremendous service to visitors as they manage to forget one thing or another when arriving.

The evolution of the Quagga/Zebra mussel inspection program is progressing. This year will change the fee schedule dramatically and positively. It will also add offsite inspection facilities which will also handle decontamination. They are going to be strategically located around the lake including one next to Spooner Lake. Sand Harbor will still have Tahoe Resource Conservation District staff conducting inspections on site. This has worked out well as long as their staff know

how regulated our boat ramp parking lot is. The Blue Boating program is starting this year and it will regulate boats to be clean and in good working order (a smog check for boats if you will).

We interrupt this typecast to bring you interesting news. Sand Harbor received more user fees this winter off-season than the mega-super-all-powerful northern region parks combined. Some of you may be thinking how this is possible, are they really that good? Others will say, they're the Crown Jewel, we should expect no less. Whatever your opinion, we like to say, "We was just doin' R job!" Tune in next time when we'll hear Ranger Dale say, "Oww...my UF-3 opening finger has a blister!"

Speaking of Ranger **Dale Conner**, he and the Super Admin., **Linda Bauder**, have been working on the first ever Junior Ranger program. They are a new class of rangers enlisted in the battle to keep law and order and justice for all in State Parks. Ok, not really, but there will be fun activities and projects for kids to complete and earn a Junior Ranger badge. It has taken a lot of work and I think it will be fun for kids, as well as educational. The dynamic duo has also been working on the expansion of the visitor center. This will include a new history panel specific to Sand Harbor. It is kind of the missing link, if you will. It will be done in the same motif as the Tahoe history panel. Many hours of research went into this, along with meeting relatives of historic characters who were influenced in Sand Harbor becoming the great park it is today. Thank you for your efforts!

They say behind every good man is the IRS...or no, a good woman. Well that is probably true for parks as well. Behind every great park is a great woman. Our great woman is **Linda Bauder** (AKA Linda Bee). She is almost off probation and we think she'll probably make it. She has been very beneficial to the park and everyone really likes her, but it's not just because the bowl of chocolate in her office is always full. Evolution has its missing link, but we found ours in Linda Bee. Hopefully, we will be able to keep the chocolate, I mean her around for awhile.



The other side of Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park is Spooner and Cave Rock; two parks headed up by Cliffhanger, **Bill Champion**. For those of you that saw the Stallone movie, **Bill** was the stunt double for Sylvester while he was dangling from granite. Of course **Bill** was in a lot better shape then, but he's not worn out yet.

Bill has a new park opening up this summer, Van Sickle Bi-State Park in Stateline, Nevada. It will be a hiking, mountain biking, equestrian area near the Heavenly's gondola at the south shore of Tahoe. A new park opening, in this economy you say? Well, it is rumored that **Bill** is expanding his empire in the hopes of one day taking over Lake Tahoe. It is unknown at this time whether or not Junior Rangers will be employed alongside Bunker Busters for this takeover. Tune in for updates.

LAKE TAHOE NV STATE PARK (Con't)

Maintenance has been busier than normal this winter despite no super storms dumping snow. Senior, ok only, maintenance repairman, **Mike "Shippy" Shipman** just finished re-plumbing our 3000 gallon pressure tank which holds the park's water supply. He was assisted by Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dumb, who shall remain nameless, but not worthless. Anyway, a fantastic job despite the cold and wet. "Shippy" as he is affectionately called, is the smartest person at our park. When we are troubled, he has the answer, our own in-house "EASY" button. Sand Harbor welding works has been turning our giant, heavy gates like they're chocolate chip cookies. Mike has been instrumental in this endeavor.



I have unfortunately been the sidekick of Master Pooplogist and Facility Supervisor, **Joe Fontaine** who is called other things by the locals here. My education in pooplogy has not come easy, as one might think. By the way, pooplogy is the study and repair of the transport and flow systems as they

relate to "CACA" movement. We have had more pump failures this fall/winter, than in my whole career in parks. I now have an iron constitution, no really, show me anything and I can take it. **Joe** is a pump rebuilding wizard and every good wizard needs an un-voluntary subject, which is me. In fact, as I write, **Joe** is in my office waiting for me to come help him exchange pumps in the hopes of finding/troubleshooting an even newer and harder problem. We have about as many pumps as visitors. I would describe the grizzly scene, but most of you are not trained to handle such effluent knowledge. Have you ever wondered "why me." Oh, by the way **Joe** doesn't get paid enough! Happy Summer!

NORTHERN REGION

BERLIN-ICHTHYOSAUR STATE PARK

By Jeff Morris

Congratulations are in order as long time Park Technician **Robin Riggs** was offered the position of non-commissioned Park Ranger I in December. **Robin** spent 10 seasons at Berlin learning the ropes and is the resident expert on ichthyosaurs. His knowledge and people skills are an invaluable asset to the park.

Tour season has already begun, with fossil tours being offered on weekends. Several school groups have already made reservations and with the onset of spring-like weather, the park should be very busy. We were fortunate to fill one of our seasonal positions before the hiring freeze to help during the busy season. **Don Quilici** accepted the Park Technician position and will begin in April. Many of you might recognize him. **Don** is a retiree from the state where he spent many years working for the Division of Forestry. His years of experience should allow us to complete many projects this summer. Welcome aboard!



DANGBERG HOME RANCH STATE HISTORIC SITE

By Mark Jenson

Like many of the other parks, winter at the Dangberg is when we catch our breath after a busy season, plan for next year, and catch up on as many delayed projects as possible before 2010 tours begin again on April 7.

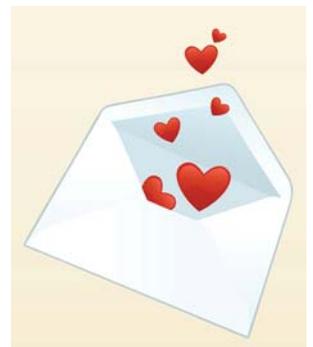
Park visitation in 2009 increased 22% over 2008, and the annual holiday and toy exhibit in December capped a successful year. Though a cold snap kept exhibit attendance down, those who came enjoyed displays of vintage toys and Christmas decorations, hot cider and home-baked cookies, and music played on the park's 1916 grand piano.

In the final months of 2009, the park was fortunate to receive a generous donation of artifacts from **Steve Achard**, the last member of the Dangberg family to grow up at the Home Ranch. Included in the gift were clothing, books, letters, photographs and more. These treasures include an 1866 christening dress worn by two generations of children, numerous 19th century portrait photographs, and mementos from Douglas County High in the 1940s. One photograph in particular is worthy of note. It shows the 1896 University of Nevada graduating class in their caps and gowns, and the prettiest girl in the group (forgive our bias) is Gertrude Hironymous. Two years later, Gertrude married into the Dangberg family. Considering the university doesn't even have this image in their archives, we like to crow a little now that it's in the park's collection.



Gertrude is in the third row, third from the left.

Throughout the winter, staff and volunteers have continued the work arranging and describing the park's large document archive. The family's correspondence not only provides a lot of information about Carson Valley's past, it also tells a lot (sometimes too much) about individual lives--humor, travel, relationships, joy and heartache. An entire exhibit could be developed from the four sisters' love letters alone.



DANGBERG HOME RANCH STATE HISTORIC SITE (con't)



Eight eagles in one tree in February.

In February, the park was again a stop on the annual **Eagles and Agriculture** bus tour. Hosted by the **Douglas County Chamber of Commerce**, the tour brought 211 visitors to the park in search of eagles and other raptors. Though eagles had been easy to find earlier in the month (eleven were counted in our trees in a single morning), by the time the buses arrived they move on to other parts of the valley.



However, four participants were able to say "hi" to one of the park's great horned owls, who obliged the group by perching on a low tree branch all morning. This is the second year in a row that Mrs. Owl has nested in a small tree next to the park office, and on some mornings Mr. Owl can also be caught visiting. Three owlets hatched last year, and as of this writing Mrs. Owl has been nesting for about four weeks. So, a fresh brood is soon to arrive. (Please, no gifts.)



Four exhibits are planned for the park's 2010 season, beginning with "Dangberg Short Stories" on April 16-18. Featured in the exhibit will be artifacts, documents and photographs that tell stories about three wars, three children who died young, three

world's fairs, four adventurous sisters, one Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, and more. We hope that you and yours are able to come to the exhibit to learn more.

FT. CHURCHILL STATE HISTORIC PARK

By Paul Schmidt

Greetings from the fort! With all the recent moisture, we are getting pretty good at making adobe bricks around our boots. Mud is everywhere!

There has been lots of activity around the fort over the past few weeks. **Forestry** (NDF) was in earlier working on a Tree Hazard Management plan in the campground. We had climbers (monkeys) up in the trees cutting limbs and fallers on the ground dropping big cottonwoods. Ground crews also were working with the "dinosaur" boom truck until it succumbed due to age. A lot of work was completed and now the **Nevada**



Conservation Corp crews are in working on a Hazard Fuels Reduction Plan scheduled to take about five weeks. It should look pretty good down there when all is done.

We are getting ready for a big event over at Buckland Station on April 3. Parks is hosting the 150th anniversary Celebration of the first Pony Express ride in 1860. We teamed up with the Nevada Division of the National Pony Express Association for the event. There will be gunfighters, civil war volunteers, chatauquans, as well as mailbag exchanges, wagon rides and historians present. Kid games and demonstrations of all kinds will also be there. It should be a busy, yet fun day.

Linda Conlin and **Mike Dinauer** will also be working on hosting the annual Carson River Festival on April 29. Last year's event brought almost 600 kids into the park in the span of about four hours. Everyone had fun. Our ever faithful **Howard Wren** will be returning again this year on March 15 and **Robert Groberg** will also return as Howard's assistant. Have a great spring!

SOUTH FORK STATE RECREATION AREA

By Jim Wilkinson

Another winter has flown by. We are gearing up for what will be another busy season. Just like moths attracted to a lone bright light on a dark night, anglers anxiously await the receding of the ice cap on our reservoir. We have a great group of local residents who really enjoy South Fork. They buy annual and senior permits every year and are more supportive of State Parks than we will ever know. They always leave the areas they use cleaner than they found them, follow the rules and would be there to help if park staff was ever in a pinch.

Ordering the correct amount of toilet paper, trash bags and cleaners to last through the middle of July is an imperfect art I have not perfected in over 20 years. Deciding whether to buy 1 ply or 2 ply toilet paper is never subjective and cannot be a matter of trying to think visitors will not notice. They always do and they always use twice as much of the one ply.



SOUTH FORK STATE RECREATION AREA (Con't)

Mark Bivens left again and has now disappeared forever into the Nicaraguan jungle. He bought over 30 plus acres of farm land with what he and the natives call a "finka." I can only envision him laying down on a hammock, Cuban cigar in one hand and a cool drink in the other, surrounded by new found friends. On the other hand, he might build a beautiful church that will truly inspire. What he does is up to him. I just hope he doesn't slowly go mad like the character in the movie "The Mosquito Coast." I am just kidding. He will be fine and he can be reached on Facebook. We wish him the best.

Our new Maintenance Specialist comes to us by way of Smith Valley. **Jeff McKovich** started on March 22. He impressed the interview panel with his attention to detail, excellent answers and has shown to have a great personality. It is never easy to make the switch from the private sector to state government. We will help him in any way possible to succeed.

Nick Brunson will also start as a Park Ranger I for us on April 12. He currently works for NDF. Having knowledge of how state agencies work and specifically practical working experience in the Department of Conservation will definitely be a huge advantage for him. Again, we will do everything possible to help him succeed.

With the exception of **Bryce Johnson**, who is the lone returning seasonal, we will also have entirely new seasonal staff, which is quite a transition for us. Unfortunately, things did not work out for some and others had better opportunities or were closer to their families elsewhere. We are appreciative of their time and service here at South Fork. We hope you have a safe spring!

WASHOE LAKE STATE PARK

By Donna Silva & Dave Pardew

Well spring is officially here and as is typical for this time of year, one day it is snowing and the next day you could sunbath. Welcome to Northern Nevada.

Winter did not produce the kind of snowpack we hoped for. The storms started earnestly in November, but pretty much died out in early February. We have had a few rainy days recently, but just enough precipitation combined with some sunshine to produce those nasty little weeds such as puncture vine and all the various types of yellow weeds. As always, we will wage our war on tall white top weeds this spring and summer.

Some of our seasonal employees will come on board soon. We look forward to a great season with both new and returning staff. We have a number of special projects planned and our park will host a variety of interpretive programs this summer.

News from the maintenance department of Washoe Lake: Region Maintenance Repair Specialist **David Pardew** was transferred from regional headquarters to Washoe Lake to tackle a myriad of maintenance projects. These projects include water system repairs, irrigation system repairs, shop

re-organization, and many ongoing maintenance issues. **David** also performs maintenance at Dayton, Mormon Station and Dangberg Home Ranch state parks. **David** is a perfect addition to Washoe Lake.

We would like to send a special thank you to **Eric Johnson** and his sister for donating of the large pellet stove for our park office. **David Pardew** superbly installed the stove, which keeps us toasty warm every day. It is so nice not to work in a 46 degree office anymore! Yeah!!! Hope everyone has a great summer!

WILD HORSE STATE RECREATION AREA

By Andrew Bass



It's been a busy winter for Wild Horse. Good fishing and ice conditions have kept the visitors coming. Ice skating is the newest attraction at the park and has been receiving a lot of positive feedback. With this additional family activity, the rink becomes the deciding factor on coming to Wild Horse instead of another lake. Even for visitors from other states.

The local resort has closed its doors, so the park, in conjunction with the local residents, took over the annual trout derby this year. This turned out to be a huge success with 157 registered participants. The longest trout was 23 3/8 inches. I saw several larger trout the next weekend, but they were a little late to win money.



SOUTHERN REGION

SOUTHERN REGION HEADQUARTERS

By Simonne Purdy



My daughter, Megan, started working at Valley of Fire on February 26 and during her first week; she was rewarded with this sighting. She captured the picture on her cell phone camera.

BIG BEND OF THE COLORADO STATE RECREATION AREA

By Steve Micklus

I know most of you have grown accustomed to reading **Alan Conklin's** quarterly PEN articles, but after hours of begging and pleading he agreed to let me be the park journalist. Things are really picking up down by the river. There are boats and jet skis as far as the eye can see. The campground has been filling up for weeks and will remain steady through Bike Week and into May. **Alan Conklin** participated in the second annual Wings and Wildlife event in March and was a fan favorite.

Staff gave a temporary farewell to Park Aid, **Andralee Drescher** at the end of February and will look forward to her return. Park Aid **Brian Tudor** returned in March for his sixth season. He's been completing trail and grounds work with our volunteers **Andy** and **Eli**.



We were pleased to host the third Southern Region interpretive meeting. Thanks to all those who attended. Special thanks go out to **Guy Dudley** and **Jim Cole** for outfitting the Dodge truck.

I am getting used to my new home and realize that Big Bend is an awesome park to work at. Of course, feel free to ask me again, after I experience a Laughlin summer.

KERSHAW-RYAN STATE PARK & ELGIN SCHOOLHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE

By Jonathan Brunjes

Finally, winter is almost behind us. The trees in the canyon are beginning to bud out and the lawns are turning green. With campers and groups beginning to come to the park, the busy season is getting underway.

During the winter months Kershaw-Ryan held its first holiday event. Park visitors endured the rain/snow mix to visit with Santa Clause and enjoy hot peach cobbler. Part of the event included a successful toy drive where we were able to give several bags of toys to families in need during the holidays. We appreciate all the volunteers and staff that helped to make this event successful.



Between raking leaves and shoveling snow we have been hard at work in the green house making preparations for the spring growing season. With around 1,500 plants started, soon we will plant them for visitors to enjoy.

Construction is underway on the new park office/fee booth. Additionally, the pool is being repaired and repainted in the next few weeks and should look very nice as we make preparations for our 75th anniversary event.

We welcome new seasonal **Ken Adams** to our park staff this year. **Ken** is a life time scouter, avid gardener, and has spent most of his life here in Lincoln County. He will fit in perfectly here at Kershaw-Ryan. We look forward to the busy season and hope everyone has a great spring season.

SPRING MOUNTAIN RANCH STATE PARK

By Park Staff

First, we would like to welcome aboard Park Interpreter **Mandy Keefer** and Park Ranger **Dean Defoe**. Both have hit the ground running, and are learning a lot about life on a ranch. We are also welcoming back veteran seasonals: Park Technician **Carolyn Richardson** and park aids **Roy Buttorff**, **Deb Rohlman**, and **Mike Ward**. We have a new weed Park Aid, **Al Ing**. We have been keeping busy with the winter rains and snows, which should make the ranch beautiful this spring and give **Al** lots of weeds to eradicate.

We have had some visits by some old timers, and some updates from previous staff: **Larry Clinesmith** stopped by and had photos of his wedding to **Kathy** at the Spring House. Some may recognize the best man as former Chief, **Bob Franke**. **Larry** donated an antique saddle that belonged to his dad for our "Cowboys" display during his visit. Thanks **Larry**.



**SPRING MOUNTAIN RANCH STATE PARK
(con't)**

Former Ranger **Russell Nutt** took a job with the U.S. Post Office, where he told us, "A lot less stressful!" We wish him and his family well back in Tennessee. Former Ranger **Tim Gause** is now with New Mexico State Parks and we hear he is doing great. And longtime ranger/maintenance man **Ray Richardson** is helping **Scott Egly** out at the Old Fort. Can't keep him away!



We are planning a lot of activities this spring, including an ambitious morning and evening hike program by **Mandy**. She also planned the following other events: Introduction to Fly Fishing, Easter Egg Hunt, Ranch Days, Docent training and fireside chats, and several natural history hikes. We sure will be busy, but time flies when your having fun! We had our first successful event, the annual Martin Luther King Day of Service, despite cold and rainy weather. We had 20 volunteers show up to pick up litter, fix trails and fence, and just help make the ranch a pleasant place to be. Thank you to all those who came and served. We hope to see you next year.

VISITOR SURVEY REPORT CARD

By Joy Elwood



I have gathered data based on the final input of our new visitor surveys for 2009 and compared some of this data with results from 2008. Due to the restructured regions, some comparisons are not possible.

15,092 surveys were made to distribute, but per monthly reports, only 7,421 were given out, which means almost half (49.1%) of the surveys were never distributed. We received 778 surveys, which is at least a .95% increase over last year.

The following is the overall rating for all state parks:

		<u>Increase or Decrease over 2008</u>
Excellent	80.8%	10.2% Increase
Good	14.8%	9.4% Decrease
Average	2.7%	.2% Increase
Poor	.6%	1.3% Decrease
Unacceptable	1%	.2% Increase

THE REGIONAL SCORES

Ranked the highest amount of Excellence:
First - Southern Region Second - Northern Region

Ranked the lowest amount of below average ratings:
First - Northern Region Second - Southern Region

THE PARK'S SCORES

Results are based on a minimum return of 30 surveys for the year. 30 samples are generally recognized as the minimum number required providing statistical valid survey results. So,

only 11 parks made the list (*remember 49.1% of the surveys were never handed out*).

Ranked on the highest amount of Excellence:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1-Mormon Station | 7-Spring Mtn. Ranch |
| 2-Cathedral Gorge | 8-Big Bend of the Colorado |
| 3-Berlin-Ichthyosaur | 9-Rye Patch |
| 4-Dangberg Home Ranch | 10-Washoe Lake |
| 5-Cave Lake | 11-Lahontan |
| 6-Valley of Fire | |

Ranking on the lowest amount of below average ratings:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1-Mormon Station | 7-Valley of Fire |
| 2-Berlin-Ichthyosaur | 8-Spring Mtn. Ranch |
| 3-Dangberg Home Ranch | 9-Lahontan |
| 4-Cave Lake | 10-Washoe Lake |
| 5-Cathedral Gorge | 11-Rye Patch |
| 6-Big Bend of the Colorado | |

ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

The following are the report activities done in our parks and a comparison from 2009's participation:

		<u>Increase or Decrease over 2008</u>
Relaxing Outdoors	64.8%	3.8% Decrease
Hiking/Walking	58.2%	5.6% Increase
Camping	46.9%	1.7% Decrease
Picnicking	26.3%	2.1% Increase
Group Activity	15.3%	2.8% Decrease
Pleasure Driving	31.5%	1.2% Decrease
Nature Study	22.4%	.4% Decrease
Photography	40.6%	5.5% Increase
Historic Sites	39.8%	8.7% Increase
Special Events	6.3%	1.4% Increase
Boating	11.1%	6% Decrease
Fishing	17.6%	9.6% Decrease
Swimming	10.4%	8% Decrease
X-Country Skiing	3.9%	1.4% Increase
Snowplay	.4%	.5% Decrease

Top 10 activities enjoyed at our parks:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1-Relaxing Outdoors | 6-Pleasure Driving |
| 2-Hiking/Walking | 7-Picnicking |
| 3-Camping | 8-Nature Study |
| 4-Photography | 9-Fishing |
| 5-Historic Sites | 10-Group Activity |

EXPENSES/REVENUE

More money was spent within a park's county, by 52.3%. Highest average, per person, expense was on rental equipment and the lowest was at a bar. Top five expenses were:



- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Fuel/Vehicle Expense | 4. Restaurant |
| 2. Groceries/Picnic Supplies | 5. Other (i.e. Gambling, gifts, fishing license, etc.) |
| 3. Hotel/Lodging Fees | |



#4162
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Nevada Division of State Parks
901 S. Stewart St., Ste. 5005
Carson City, NV 89701-5248

Return Service Requested

PERSONNEL

By Anke Simpson

Despite the statewide hiring freeze effective March 1, 2010, we were able to fill several of our vacant positions. It also looks like many of our seasonal positions will be filled. The justification process for any future vacancies will be much more difficult.

New Permanent Employees:

Three of our commissioned Park Ranger I positions were offered and accepted. **Marco Negovschi** started on 2/12/10 at Valley of Fire and **Nicholas Brunson** starts on 4/12/10 at South Fork. The position at Ward Charcoal Ovens will be filled as soon as our applicant finishes the background test. **Gaetano Corrado** was hired on 3/8/10 to fill the non-commissioned Park Ranger I position at Valley of Fire. Both **Nicholas** and **Gaetano** came to us from the Division of Forestry. South Fork also has a new Maintenance Repair Specialist II; **Jeffrey McKovich** started on 3/22/10. We also have two new employees at the division office; **Dion George** filled the Project Manager I position on 2/8/10 and **Mark Davis** came to us from the State Public Works Board on 3/15/10 as the new Chief of Planning and Development.

Promotions:

After working for State Parks as a seasonal for many years, **Robin Riggs** promoted from his seasonal Park Ranger Technician I position at Berlin to the permanent non-commissioned Park Ranger I position on 12/14/10.

Transfers:

Don Bolton transferred laterally from his non-commissioned Park Ranger II position at Valley of Fire to the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort on 2/8/10. **Robert Misiti** also took a lateral transfer as a commissioned Park Ranger I from Lahontan to Rye Patch on 2/8/10. **Steve Micklus** started working at Big Bend on 2/8/10 as a commissioned Park Ranger II after going to POST and working several months at Valley of Fire. **Randy Ralphs** transferred from his Maintenance Repair Specialist II position at Spring Mountain Ranch to the Southern Region Headquarters office on 3/22/10 in order to help out at the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort and assist on projects throughout the region.

Good-Byes:

Mark Bivens resigned from his Maintenance Repair Worker II position at South Fork on 1/14/10 and move to Nicaragua. **Patricia Blanchard** left her commissioned Park Ranger I position at South Fork on 1/29/10. **Rob Holley** surprisingly retired on 4/4/10 from his commissioned Park Supervisor III position at Lahontan after almost 24 years of state service to start some new adventures.

