

# PEN

# PARK EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



## NEW ADMINISTRATOR

*By Eric Johnson*

Most of you know me fairly well, but we have many new employees so my PEN article will be for those that don't know anything about me.

I'm honored to be this agencies administrator, particularly when I think back to my younger days. I was a state park user long before I worked here, but I was always getting pulled over for something. Admittedly, I drove too fast, had questionable fishing practices and pulled down too many trees for bonfires. There is also a possibility I hunted in closed areas from time to time. I was only an average college student, but my education did teach me the errors of my ways and I'd like to think that, as a result I made better decisions regarding natural resources throughout my career.



I started as a seasonal at Lahontan when I was 19. A friend in school told me I could make six bucks an hour and all I had to do was dig holes and clean restrooms. I got the job because I told the ranger I was a decent first baseman (this was back when there was quite a softball rivalry between Lahontan and Lake Tahoe).

I went to Peace Officer Standards Training (POST) after I graduated the University of Reno (UNR), worked my last season at Lahontan and was hired at Valley of Fire that same year. I had a great time at Valley of Fire (Hammons was a brand new ranger at that time and hasn't changed a bit).

After three years, I got a little homesick and transferred back to Lahontan, but realized quickly I was still burned out on all the antics at Lahontan and transferred to South Fork. It was a good job, generally converting the old Tomera Ranch sites to a recreation area, but I didn't stay long. I was single, owned nothing and liked to wander around so I took a Park Supervisor I job at Echo Canyon. I remember being scared to death, because I started just a few days before Memorial weekend and had no idea what to do. I was also somewhat intimidated by Mr. Newberry, who set unbelievably high standards. I went to Newberry after about two years and said I wasn't challenged any more at Echo Canyon. He promptly assigned me to Spring Valley (you went where you were told to go in those days). Managing Spring Valley was pretty

tough but awesome and I miss it to this day. I would have gone nuts in the winter without my dog, Roscoe. This was pre-cell phone and internet, no TV signal; couldn't even get a radio station. I left Spring Valley after a few years (my reasons for leaving would take up too much space) and took a voluntary demotion to a new position at Fort Churchill, which was created to build public accesses on the newly acquired Carson River Ranches. Hard to imagine a better gig. I had a tractor, an almost unlimited budget and was told to build trails and fences, create parking areas and manage the ranch lease. It was great.

I knew the regional manager position in Fallon was going to be open in a few years, so took a job as the Park Supervisor at Washoe Lake to put myself in a better competitive position for the job also since I had plans to live in Fallon. After three years spent almost entirely repairing water lines, I got the region manager job in Fallon. It was a major life decision when it came time to accept or decline the job as I knew it would take everything I had. I'm glad I did it and hope I made a positive difference.

I never wanted the Deputy Administrator job, but Dave guilted me into applying after about seven years in the region. He made it sound like it was the best thing for the agency, so I took the job and realized I had a fairly vertical learning curve ahead of me. I learned a lot, enough to know there is no way to succeed without the support of people who know more than I do. With that knowledge, I accepted the administrator's position and will continue to rely on all of you to help me move State Parks forward.

*Eric's received Badge #1 as the new Administrator (from left to right): daughter Ashley, grandson Braxton, Eric Johnson, wife Stacey and daughter Stephani.*



**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (P&D)***By Mark Davis*

Excessive travel has been required to oversee the Valley of Fire Water System and Big Bend Residence projects by our non-Question 1 (Q1) funded staff. P&D has already expended the vast majority of its travel budget. For all projects that are funded either partially or fully by Q1 bond, the Q1 program will pay for the travel required to oversee the projects. If we do not have Q1 dollars dedicated to a project, we require assistance from park staff to help us oversee non Q1 funded projects.

**PROJECTS COMPLETED****VALLEY OF FIRE WATER SYSTEM, PHASE I**

The contractor part of this project is completed. Additional funding through Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has preliminarily been approved. The additional funding will enable us to move forward with either rehabilitating the existing well, or drilling a new well.

**Blake Clark** designed and managed the construction of Phase I with assistance from **Joe Cyphers** and **Marc Lepire**. The State Park's portion of the system is the telemetry. **Jamin Hunter** will install a new transducer for the remaining existing tanks. He is waiting on the telemetry at the shop to be re-programmed. This should all be completed by the printing of this PEN. Upon completion of these components, the system will finally be able to run fully automatic.

**PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION****BIG BEND OF THE COLORADO, RESIDENCE #1**

Completed items are foundations, concrete slabs, framing, sheathing, windows, doors, stucco, rough mechanical, rough plumbing, and roofing. The first contractor was substantially done with the main structure as of October 31. A separate contractor was awarded to install cabinets, finish plumbing, flooring and base. They are expected to begin on November 5, with an anticipated completion date of November 26 and then the residence should be move-in ready. The project is currently being managed by **Marc Lepire** and **Blake Clark**. This project is funded by \$133,333.33 in Risk Management dollars (insurance) and \$197,116.67 in State Parks Q1 Bond.

**WILD HORSE CAMPGROUND IMPROVEMENTS**

The existing campground was improved with some pull through RV campsites. Sites were graded, access road rehabilitated, shade ramadas installed and ancillary campsite amenities added. This project was bid ahead of schedule and construction began in mid-October. The south loop grading is near completion. The construction will continue until weather



no longer allows and will begin again after the "thaw." It is expected to be complete by late spring.

**Marc Lepire** designed the project with assistance from **Joe Cyphers**. **Bob Beck** will manage the construction with assistance from **Marc Lepire** and **Joe Cyphers**. Funded by \$157,230.00 in Parks Q1 Bond funds and \$150,000 in LWCF funds and \$29,999.00 in State Parks staff in kind match.

**PROJECTS BIDDING****BIG BEND EROSION CONTROL AND SHORELINE IMPROVEMENTS**

The vast majority of the contract will be completed by the U.S. Marines, Civil Engineer Corps at Camp Pendleton as stated in the last PEN. The work on the Groynes, dredging the mouth of the lagoon, and any work the U.S. Marines cannot complete during their time on site will be bid separately.

The project has been moderately delayed due to the need for an interlocal agreement with the U.S. Marines. The agreement is in the hands of the U.S. Marines' legal staff, which may have been delayed by federal shut downs. Before the printing, we are hopeful that we will have solicited and contracted for the dredging of the lagoon. This project was designed by **Joe Cyphers**. Construction will be managed by **Joe Cyphers** with assistance from **Blake Clark**.

**CATHEDRAL GORGE'S POWER FOR THE DAY USE AREA AND CAMP SITES**

Lincoln County power provided a quote to install power to all camp sites and the day use area. This will provide a resource users have been requesting for some time.

This project is funded with \$16,000 in utility fee surcharge, \$10,000 in user fee overage and \$10,700.00 in Q1 bond dollars. **Marc Lepire** is the project manager and is submitting the power company's plans to State Public Works Division (SPWD) for permits and to oversee construction.

**NEW ECHO CANYON CAMPGROUND**

Project design is near completion. Some of the materials for the project have been bid and came in on budget. The access road project design is at the SPWD for review.

Lincoln County and State Parks plan to put both the projects out to bid in February 2014. State Parks completed the civil design by **Joe Cyphers** and landscape architecture design plans by **Eric Nelson** for the campground. **Sunrise Engineering** is working on the electrical infrastructure plans and coordinate the campground packaging and bidding for Lincoln County. Construction on both projects is scheduled to begin in late February 2014 or early March depending on weather. Lincoln County anticipates the campground will be finished before the end of June 2014. **Eric Nelson** handling the project management.

This project is funded with \$87,500 in Q1 bond, with \$87,500 expected to be approved in LWCF monies as match to the Q1 for the access road. The project is also funded with \$2,100,000 in Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) grant money for the campground itself.

**SOUTH FORK, SOUTHWEST SHORELINE PHASE II**

The project is currently bidding and a contract should be out by the time of the printing of this PEN. Given the weather, it is likely the contractor will begin work as soon as it is contracted, but could also be delayed due to freezing temperatures. It should be completed by late spring to early summer. **Joe Cyphers** designed the project and **Bob Beck** will assist with bidding, contracting and construction administration.

**DESIGN PROJECTS****SAND HARBOR SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT**

This project will replace asphalt walks with concrete walks, the beach overlooks will be removed and replaced with smaller, more functional units and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) beach access at the main beach. **Bob Beck** is handling designs and construction administration with **Joe Cyphers** supervising.

The Tahoe Fund group solicited \$35,000 additional funds to aesthetically improve the project. Some of the promised funds have been received by the Tahoe Fund group, some have not. Therefore the total contribution from the Tahoe Fund group is not yet known. The EIP program is expected to fill the budget gap to complete the total needed project budget of \$380,488.

As soon as State Parks has the final amount contributed through the Tahoe Fund, the project drawings will be modified to meet that budget and the project will be bid. We anticipate all funding from Tahoe Fund and the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) by winter. This will enable us to bid the project in the early spring and complete the work in the next TRPA authorized construction season.

**SAND HARBOR BOAT LAUNCH PLATE EXTENSION**

The base of the ramp has been compromised by boat prop wash, caused by launching and landing boats. A steel plate will be attached at the bottom of the boat ramp to reduce issues with trailers getting stuck which now drops off a short distance to the rock/sand below. **Joe Cyphers** will design the project and **Marc Lepire** will manage it. **Dana DaPolito** is assisting with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) permitting process. We hope funding assistance will be granted via the NDOW Boating Access Program.

**LAKE TAHOE RED HOUSE STRUCTURAL STABILIZATION**

The Red House will receive a historic survey and design with the intention to preserve the building via structural stabilization and grading to reduce erosion caused by run off. The design will be the basis of a grant request thru the **State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)**. The project is funded with \$20,000 a 2013 Historic Preservation Fund Grant (through SHPO), \$5,000 Thunderbird Foundation grant, **Dube Group** in kind donation of \$1,250 and Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park (LTNSP) Category 05 funds in the amount of \$3,444 for a total project budget of \$29,694. P&D staff surveyed and provided the data to the consultant. The project is being managed by **Dana DaPolito**, EIP Coordinator, with assistance from park staff and P&D.

**SPRING VALLEY POWER REPLACEMENT (DESIGN THROUGH CONSTRUCTION)**

State Parks was required to provide \$350,000 in Q1 bond monies. The Q1 bond money is a part of the total project cost. The Legislatively approved portion of the fund makes up the difference. **Cliff Davidow** is the SPWD Project Manager. **Mark Davis** will manage the project until it gains traction then **Joe Cyphers** and/or **Blake Clark** may take over.

**VALLEY OF FIRE EAST AND WEST ENTRANCE PAY KIOSKS - Still temporarily on hold.****WASHOE LAKE CAMPGROUND IMPROVEMENTS**

This project includes improvements to the Campground to include ADA compliance. This project will be back into the design phase by the printing of this PEN article. **Eric Nelson**, **Marc Lepire** and **Joe Cyphers** will be working on the design. **Bob Beck** will be the construction manager.

**LAKE TAHOE NEVADA STATE PARK (LTNSP)**

*By Alisa Johansson*

Fall is quickly segueing into winter on our shores. Fall colors were enjoyed by many in the backcountry, while beach-goers at Sand Harbor continued to enjoy the last warm rays of summer.



Many successful projects were completed over the peak season, including, the solar-powered lighting for the walkways near the Shakespeare bowl. Theater-goers were very pleased and we can all feel good about providing this amenity to our visitors in such a sustainable way. Other projects included successful removing graffiti with sandblasters throughout the park and the installation of shiny new picnic tables and grills in the picnic area. As I'm sure you can all appreciate, the to-do list for spring is already growing.

Tahoe's numerous concessions had another season of success, with a few record-breaking days for Sand Harbor's rental and food concessionaires. Gift shop sales and Shakespeare festival turnouts were impressive as well. Spooner's bike concession may have had a slow start, but we are optimistic and excited to see what Aramark has in store next year.

Finally, with the snowy months approaching, staff is full of ideas for winter activities and interpretive opportunities. Wild hairs being considered include secular holiday displays and activities at the Visitor Center, ice skating and cross-country skiing in the south lot, and snow sculpture competitions. We may even make a few snow angels ourselves!

## NORTHERN REGION

### NORTHERN REGION HEADQUARTERS

*By Bob Mergell*

Well we all made it through another busy season. Maybe it's just me getting older, but the busy seasons don't seem to last as long. Maybe it has something to do with the lack of calls I get now at 2:30 a.m. to go get a drunk guy out of a tree, or break up a fight, or find someone who has managed to get themselves lost and stuck in the sand with two babies and their grandmother who all require insulin shots they managed to run off and leave in the refrigerator at home. (*Can anyone guess what Park I worked at last???*)

Anyway, I am sure you are all looking forward to a little time to get caught up on all of the projects you weren't able to get to this summer. Sometimes it seems all of the extra time and effort we put in to just getting by in the busy season goes unnoticed or unappreciated. I want to make sure you all know you do a great job for the agency and the park visitors do notice. It is evident in the overwhelmingly positive responses we get on our visitor surveys throughout the year. Occasionally, someone will be upset because their favorite site was occupied; they didn't see a ranger or they happened to use the restroom right after someone made a mess of it; or some drunk guy fell out of tree and landed on them (ok that hardly ever happens, but you get the point), but on the whole we get very positive feedback, so thank you all very much!

I would like to welcome **Jeremy Martin** to our Northern Region family. He is the newest member of our maintenance crew and seems to be a very good fit. He is skilled in many areas and has a good sense of humor (he will need that dealing with the rest of the crew). For those of you that haven't had a chance to meet him yet, he is planning on attending the Park Academy in January so make sure to welcome him to the family.

I will keep this article brief (since I am writing this at 11:00 on the day of the deadline), but I wanted to take the opportunity to wish you all a very happy holiday season as it quickly approaches and just say thank you in general for all that you do day in and day out.

### BERLIN-ICHTHYOSAUR STATE PARK

*By Jeff Morris*



One of the busiest seasons in Berlin's history is slowly winding down as we receive our first good snow of the year and the days get shorter. I'm not certain, but we may have

reached an all-time high for revenue collection and the number of people on paid tours. Park staff conducted 312 tours for 2,622 people this year and our schedule hasn't ended yet. In fact, I have people camping in six inches of snow waiting for one last fossil tour as I write. By now, both of our seasonals have left for the year. Park Tech **Karsen Case** and Park Aid **Todd Wheeler** both did an outstanding job this year. Without their help, we could not have had such a successful season.

On another note, a big thank you goes out to both the maintenance staff and Bob Mergell. They have been there when we needed them and also gave us an early Christmas present in the form of a new Ranger side-by-side ATV! This will help us immensely save in fuel and vehicle maintenance costs. Anyone who has visited the park knows how much wear and tear our vehicles go through on the dirt roads. We will also receive a new truck soon. Three out of the four assigned vehicles assigned to the park are from 1998 or older. Well it's tour time again! I hope to see many of you at the Park Academy and wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

### CAVE LAKE AND WARD CHARCOAL OVENS STATE PARKS

*By Steve Gray*

Winter is moving in fast around Cave and Ward. We have been a little cooler this year than normal. Our visitation continues to rise every month so far; some more than others. Cave Lake had a total of eight confirmed German Brown Trout over ten pounds this year. One was dead, and the other was gill netted. Six people caught the others. The biggest was caught by **Clay Coombs** out of Las Vegas at a whopping 15 pounds. Water levels have stayed right on course and at full capacity. Our overflow water head pressure is down, but still flowing strong. We will have to see where we are at in spring, like many of the other parks.



Park Aids **Tracey Doutre** (nine seasons of service), and **Alexa Neilson** (one season), made it through the summer with plenty of laughs and memories. **Alexa** enrolled to start her degree in Natural Resources with hopes to become a ranger. I wish her the best. We haven't been able to do much with our many projects this summer, but we are moving forward with the NDF crews cutting trees throughout for fire breaks and general forest health. I still need to get about 12 cords of wood in the next two weeks. They cut the trees, but we have to go in and haul the wood off the mountain with ATVs and then split it all. It makes for a brisk morning workout.

Ward Charcoal Ovens continue to struggle with visitation. Some years we get large groups in the campground that skew the years we do not receive them. This year we had a few hunters, but no large groups to speak of.

## CAVE LAKE AND WARD CHARCOAL OVENS STATE PARKS (con't)

Allen Wooldridge received a RecTrails grant to completely rebuild the interpretive trail at the Ovens. Hopefully we can start interpretive sign layout and design this winter. All ground work will begin in May pending weather.

Everyone likes to laugh at my animal disasters, so I will close with my brief encounters of the furry/feathered friends:

- I had two dog incidents no humans were injured.
- I got attacked, and wing battered to the ground by a blue heron.
- Had a fawn jump up and rip my shirt off with its front paws pounding me until I fell backwards over a sagebrush.
- I got sprayed by a skunk in my right eye and face area while picking up a beer can.
- I was trying to help a coot get out of fishing line and it grabbed my ear lobe and cut it pretty bad.
- The good news is; I never had to babysit an eagle this year.

## RYE PATCH STATE RECREATION AREA

*By Jim Hawkins*

I think Josh and I are both glad to see the summer of 2013 behind us. With winter finally forcing the warm dry Indian summer days out, things might actually get a much needed drink around here. Trying to get things to grow in the park has been dismal. Last spring, Nevada Division of Forestry helped us seed roughly 170 acres. Despite seeding efforts, after terrible wild land fires in the late 1990s, the land never recovered. I am very sad to say Mother Nature wasn't smiling on us with this last effort. With virtually no moisture, the seeding was a total loss on the burned areas. Fortunately, we did bank enough seed in cold storage to make another attempt this fall. There is still hope for some of the hardier seed in the rangeland mixture that can stay dormant for a couple of years until conditions are right for germination. All we can do is continue to do our part and hope nature cooperates. We did have a little luck in the outlying areas in our river campground. We tried sowing some winter wheat to help out the sedentary populations of wildlife and considering the dry conditions and human impact it did well. "If you plant it they will come." Turkeys, mule deer, pheasants, and quail are all easily seen throughout the lower campground. Fall campers have been very vocal when it comes to the abundance of wildlife in the park this year.

While the terrible drought had adverse effects, especially on our water-based parks, but it hasn't been all bad. While the boat ramp campground was a ghost town compared to past years, the lower campgrounds were booming every weekend and abnormally busy during the week. Most were using the campground while heading out for rock hounding and prospecting excursions. Other folks were hitting the nearby ghost towns and attractions like Lovelock Cave. Some were simply leaving the park on ATVs exploring the vast amount public land surrounding the park. The need for law enforcement has been minimal this year with only a couple of

occurrences coming to mind. From past experience, for some unknown reason, when the boat ramp campground fills up with campers one can anticipate some kind of problem and a need for law enforcement. With the boat ramp campground barely alive most days, park staff was able to dedicate more time to projects that would have otherwise been put off. There was a lot of much needed painting and staining going on.



We were also able to dedicate a lot of time preparing for our event, the **First Annual Rye Patch Nugget Shoot**, where visitors of all ages learned many things involved in recreational gold prospecting. The event kicked off with a metal detecting hunt where unique brass tokens were strategically placed at a discrete location within the park. Park Ranger **Josh Ivins** was instrumental in traffic control and parking vehicles that arrived single file bumper to bumper in a relentless onslaught. I remember one of the members helping us host the event yelling out, "Here they come!" As I looked over to the road leading to our starting area, my mind instantly recalled one of the ending scenes from the movie *Field of Dreams*, no joke, the line of cars seemed endless. I have to admit my stomach had those butterflies that show up when you suddenly think you might be in a little hot water. The whole event went off without a hitch. We had two hundred and fifty contestants line up shoulder to shoulder metal detectors in hand, and on the signal from the cannon they were off swinging away. At one of our overflow parking lots we had dry washers, sluices, and panning stations set up. **Josh** and I gathered gold bearing gravels from a local spot for people to learn to pan and try their luck. One small boy was lucky enough to find a small nugget. Holding the nugget in the cupped palm of his hand, he turned to his mother watching and said, "I think I got the gold fever!" The entire day was simply fun for everyone involved. Words cannot express how thankful I am for all of those who made the nugget shoot possible. **Coeur Rochester Mine** for their generous contribution, **Glen Myers** and members of his club **Reno Prospecting and Detecting**, **Larry Robbins** and his many members of the **GPAA of Northern Nevada Reno #727** who all had a roll in planning and organizing the event. We thank **Bob Mergell**, **Terri Ivins**, **Mike Dinauer**, and northern region's maintenance staff for all their help.



## SOUTHERN REGION PARKS

### EASTERN NEVADA STATE PARKS

*By Dawn Andone*

The fall season started off with the Dutch Oven Cook-off at Cathedral Gorge. We had a huge turnout with 11 cooks who made 27 dishes between them. The food was wonderful, as usual, so choosing a winner was difficult, but **Major Mastin** with his elk stroganoff, walked off as the first place winner.

Anglers love the serenity and biting fish at Beaver Dam. This fall, in conjunction with the **Spring Creek Fishery**, we increased the number of rainbow trout in the beaver ponds and streams throughout Beaver Dam Wash. More fish are added every year to sustain reproduction within the fishery.



With our numbers growing, this was another fun and successful year for the **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Park to Park Pedal-Extreme Nevada 100**. From 40 riders the first year to almost 200 this year, riders came from all over the west; including one from Idaho who said, "I found the ride on the Internet, it looked fun so I signed up, drove 500 miles and here I am!" He later stated he had so much fun that next year he is going to bring a few friends.



There were a number of first time riders who stated they would be back next year, because the experience was so great. We also had more husband/wife and family teams this year, proving it to be a real family event. The weather was beautiful, except for the north blowing wind that slowed the riders on the way down Pioche Hill. They had to fight a head wind most of the way back to Kershaw-Ryan.

The ride starts and finishes at Kershaw-Ryan making it a full century (100 miles) for those riding the entire course. Two more courses are offered for those who want to enjoy a more leisurely ride or who just aren't quite ready for 100 miles. The 60 mile option (metric century) takes the riders to Cathedral Gorge and through the towns of Caliente and Pioche. The 40 mile option (almost a half century) tours through Caliente and Cathedral Gorge then back; with the full century taking in both towns, Cathedral and Echo Canyon and Spring Valley state parks.

Ride weekend saw an increase in visitation and campers at both Cathedral Gorge and Kershaw-Ryan, especially Kershaw. The campground, with 15 sites, saw more than 30 camps, double its normal capacity! The government shutdown also contributed to our numbers. Cathedral was over capacity for much of the shutdown. With our parks being "the best kept secret in Nevada" it was an opportunity for visitors to find us and discover what we have to offer.



Kershaw-Ryan's annual **Pumpkins in the Park** event saw over 150 participants with the highlight being the haunted hike up Rattlesnake Trail. Every year a little something is added to the hike to make it a bit different. This year Park Supervisor **Andrew Porter** and Seasonal **Dillon Cluff** put up projectors to display 3D images of moving spiders and an image of the Prince of Darkness himself—Dracula.

Congratulations to our newest Ranger **Josh Rhein** who graduated from POST in November. Way to go Josh!

Further congratulations go to **Shaylen Budreau** and Cody Tingey for their 10 and 15 years of service (respectively) with Nevada State Parks.

**OLD LAS VEGAS MORMON FORT STATE HISTORIC PARK**

*By Daniel Wassmund*

We just wrapped up a very busy fall here at the fort with the record breaking month of October. It started off with some major renovations to the park grounds. We finished installing new irrigation lines out front in the islands around the parking lot and brought in new decorative rock to cover the lines and give the park a nice clean look. We had State Forestry crews out raking leaves and branches, filling up a monstrous dumpster as the park underwent a cosmetic makeover with the grounds now looking cleaner than ever.



The craziness continued with our biggest event of the year, Nevadaween, a celebration which combines Nevada Day and Halloween. It was a huge success with over 400 people coming out to the fort for all kinds of activities. We had everything from pumpkin painting to candle making to soup tasting and cookie decorating. This year was the best turnout we have ever had for this event, and everyone had a great time!



The following week we had **Governor Sandoval** at the fort to kickoff Nevada's Sesquicentennial Celebration! Over 200 people came to hear the Governor speak and to watch the unveiling and re-placement of the first Old Spanish Trail Centennial Marker. We also had an excellent presentation by the first lady of Las Vegas herself Mrs. Helen J. Stewart, portrayed by **Dr. Linda Miller**, to end the ceremony. Then came the official closing with the singing of "Home Means Nevada" by 50 kids from the Journey Academy!

It has been a busy start to our fall season here, which is welcomed with excitement after a slow end to the summer. Our program numbers have greatly increased for the month of

October, with the scouts and school groups coming in strong and the adobe bricks piling up high!

**SPRING VALLEY AND ECHO CANYON STATE PARKS**

*By Ben Johnson*

Echo Canyon had a late monsoon season, but the water was pretty low. We did not get lucky with visitation from the closure of National Parks; they stayed south. Echo has now been winterized, but is still open for late season cow or elk hunters who like to stay at a lower elevation for warmth and some late season snow birder's heading back.



Spring Valley State Park was business as usual short staff (no pun intended). **Josh Rhien** graduated from POST on Nov. 15, and took a little trip to see his parents back east. **Matt Fretwell** has been running around between both parks and to Vegas to help out with the shortage of maintenance

staff. It will be nice to see what employee's look like when both get back.

The weather is starting to drop down to single digits at night and up to the lower 60's during the day. Our annual Ice Hole'r Golf tournament is January 18, if there are any duffer's come on down. I had some returning seasonals and some newby's **Phil Trousdale, David Powers, Sue Lewis, Kyle Hunt, Alex and Ryan Lloyd**, who completed a lot of projects in both parks and assisted in some of the fairs in and out of state. Stay Warm.

**HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST AT THE DIVISION**

The department had their annual Halloween bake sale and costume contest. First place went to **Anke Simpson's** rendition of Ozzie Osborn.

Other participants were **Jenny Scanland** and **Eric Nelson** as pirates.





#4162  
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 Nevada Division of State Parks  
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Return Service Requested

**PERSONNEL**

*By Anke Simpson*



**Anke's Rendition of Ozzie for Halloween**

It is fall and I would like to remind everybody that this is a good time of the year to catch up on some mandatory or just informational classes offered by the Division of Human Resource Management. Many of the mandatory classes can now be taken online which will make it easier on staff in the rural areas. The online classes can be accessed by logging on to <http://nvelearn.nv.gov/moodle/> Some of the coursed available online are:

- Defensive Driving (Refresher)
- Nevada Information Security Awareness
- Sexual Harassment Prevention (Refresher)
- Alcohol and Drug Testing Procedures

- Evaluating Employee Performances
- Handling Grievances
- Interviewing and Hiring
- Introduction to Equal Employment Opportunity
- Progressive Disciplinary Procedures
- Work Performance Standards



Direct Deposit has been mandatory now for all permanent and seasonal employees since October 1. Exceptions to this requirement are limited. Exemptions will only be granted at the discretion of the State Controller based on the evidence provided by the employee.

We only had a few changes among our permanent staff since the summer PEN article. Interviews are being scheduled to fill our new Maintenance Repair Specialist II position in the Southern Region.

New Permanent Employees:

**Jeremy Martin** started in the Maintenance Repair Specialist II position at Northern Region Headquarters on 9/16/13. **Chris Johnson** accepted the non-commissioned Park Ranger I position at Valley of Fire on 9/30/13.

Retirement:

**Donna Silva** retired on 10/4/13 from her non-commissioned Park Ranger II position at Washoe Lake with over 33 years of service with Nevada State Parks.