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Editor’s Note:
This is your newsletter about volunteer and educational events, people and happenings within Colorado State Parks. We welcome all contributions and ideas for articles. If you would like to contribute, send articles and photos to Vicki Leigh at vicki.leigh@state.co.us. Please keep articles to 250-500 words in length. We reserve the right to edit any contributions.

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The Value Of Volunteers

Volunteers and Fundraising
Adapted from Martin Cowling’s Effective People E-Newsletter

According to research by Fidelity Charity Gift Fund, volunteers are 10 times more likely to give money to the agencies they support than non-volunteers. (JFFixler Quarterly)

Many agencies do not factor their volunteers into their fundraising efforts. In fact, there is some embarrassment and reluctance to ask volunteers to be financial supporters. This is a poor strategy: volunteers are already committed to the cause. Research shows that volunteers will donate - especially if they have a positive volunteering experience.

1. **Plan** to include your volunteers in fundraising.

2. **Educate** your volunteers about your cause regularly.

3. **Provide** your volunteers with financial information so they know agency needs.

4. **Automatically include** volunteers on the fundraising database, but give them the opportunity to opt out.

5. **Ask** your volunteers to be involved either by donating funds directly, asking their friends to support the cause, or being involved in fundraising events.

6. **Give them a chance** to opt out of fundraising and respect their choice. If they say “no”, don’t hound them.

7. **Highlight** volunteers who have been successful in fundraising efforts, but don’t alienate uninvolved volunteers.

8. **Share** tools with volunteers; e.g. invite them to link to a campaign on facebook. Make sure every volunteer has donation forms.

9. **Keep** them updated on the fundraising goals.

10. **Involve** them with the evaluation of fundraising.

HATS OFF!

**PHENOMENAL YEAR IN VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT!**

Congratulations to all of you on continuing to support your volunteers so they may thrive and as a result, we as an agency, leverage more bang for our buck than ever. Volunteers contributed over **208,600 hours in 2010** (up over 10,000 hours from 2009). This is equivalent to 100 FTE’s in time and according to the Independent Sector @ $20.85/hr (www.independentsector.org) is worth $4.3 million in cost-savings. Since 2002, volunteer hours have more than doubled and continue to climb. At the same time, we have improved our reporting consistency tremendously.

Thanks, to all of you and your hardworking volunteers for providing such extraordinary customer service to our visitors and for supporting all areas of State Park operations.
**Invest in Your Health – Discover the healthy benefits of Volunteering**

*Article adapted from www.dogoodlivewell.org*

There are many reasons to volunteer, like giving back to the community or social networking. There is another important reason to volunteer that you may not have considered: Volunteering is good for your health. A recent survey by United Healthcare and VolunteerMatch found that 68% of those who had volunteered during the past year reported that volunteering made them feel physically healthier. According to the “Do Good. Live Well” survey of 4500 Americans, 41% volunteered during the past year. Of those volunteers, 84% agreed that volunteering improves physical health, and 96% agreed that volunteering makes people happier.

Yes, studies show that volunteering provides benefits to both your mental and physical health. This means that the time you spend volunteering offers a double advantage: You help others and you’re also helping yourself. Research demonstrates that volunteering:

- **Improves physical well-being.**
  - The social interaction that volunteering entails can actually reduce heart rate and blood pressure, increase endorphin production, enhance your immune system, and buffer the impact of stress.

- **Raises self-confidence and self-esteem.**
  - Evidence suggests that volunteering has a positive effect on social psychological factors. The experience of helping others can lead to a sense of greater self-worth and confidence. And volunteering can provide you with a sense of purpose, especially in tough times.

- **Encourages friendships that buffer against stress and illness.**
  - Volunteering gives you the opportunity to meet and connect with new people, in new surroundings. It helps you build vital interpersonal ties and social networks that can combat depression and isolation.

- **Volunteering may help you live longer.**
  - Studies show that being actively involved in ongoing volunteer work actually increases life expectancy—while improving the quality of life at the same time. And the earlier you start, the better. Research tells us that those individuals who volunteer at an earlier point in their lives experience greater functional ability and better health outcomes later on in life. The bottom line is that there is a relationship between volunteering and health benefits. Source: GetInvolved.gov, “Health Benefits of Volunteering”

2. Source: GetInvolved.gov, “Health Benefits of Volunteering”
3. Source: Moen et al., 1992; Lum and Lightfoot, 2005; Luoh and Herzog, 2002; Morrow-Howell et al., 2003

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**New Friends Group at Stagecoach**

For the last six months Stagecoach State Park volunteers have been working together to form a “Friends” group. The Friends of Stagecoach State Park is working on developing a work plan, setting up the 501(c)3 status, and recruiting members for their board. The first donation to the Friends was from the Stagecoach Property Owner’s Association and totaled $800. This generous donation will be used for advertisement and to help the park with the new skate skiing trails.

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Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson
NEW INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR VOLUNTEERS

Remember, you no longer need to alert us when you have volunteers coming on board that require “extended/power tool” insurance coverage AS LONG AS you make sure those volunteers are working under a signed volunteer agreement and are entered into the database as “active” volunteers. We now have “extended” supplemental accident medical coverage for ALL active volunteers through CIMA up to a maximum benefit amount of $50,000 per incident. Following is the link to access CIMA’s Steps for Filing a Claim: http://www.cimaworld.com/htdocs/app.htm/volclaim.cfm.

Please check out commonly asked questions:

- **Does Colorado State Parks’ volunteer accident coverage (through CIMA) reimburse deductibles that volunteers have to pay to their primary insurer?** YES! The volunteer accident coverage does pay the deductible or co-pay as well as medical expenses not covered if the volunteer has health care coverage. The premise is that the coverage will cover out of pocket medical expenses for the volunteer. Then, should a volunteer have no health care coverage, the volunteer accident insurance will become primary from the first dollar.

- **Who can sign as “authorized sponsoring organization’s representative” for the purposes of filing a Proof of Loss**?

  For CIMA’s purposes, Faye Koeltzow is considered the “Director” of volunteer programs. As such, she can authorize each PARK MANAGER, REGION or PROGRAM MANAGER (PMIV or GPIV and higher) to sign the claim form as “authorized sponsoring organization representative.” The claim form will still need to include our client code (COLAKE2) as well as the Denver Office address (1313 Sherman St., Room 618, Denver CO 80203) as that will be the file CIMA will check to make sure coverage is in place.

  *Please note: On the Proof of Loss Form check the box with VIS(MHH010303).

- **Should volunteers who work sporadically be listed as active in the volunteer database?** (For example: volunteers who present a couple of interpretive programs each year; or temporary employees who volunteer on an as-needed basis in the off-season).

  It is not necessary to “inactivate” volunteers that you anticipate returning within a relatively reasonable period of time (i.e. within 6 months). When we discussed our official “number of volunteers” with CIMA, they indicated that they were okay with us providing a ballpark estimate of maximum # of volunteers we have on any given day.

Yampa Ski And Skate

The Ski and Skate was a great event held at Yampa River State Park on Jan 15th. We had several visitors during the day and after dark to enjoy our freshly groomed snowshoe and ski trail (illuminated by glow sticks in the evening), skating pond, sledding hill, campfire, and refreshments. We used the event to answer questions about the park, possible seasonal employment, and volunteer opportunities to all visitors, and received excellent feedback from the local guests. This was a chance for people to come and enjoy the park in the winter and see what Yampa River State Park has to offer.
Two little known facts: (1) the Colorado Natural Areas Program (CNAP) is the only state program that has the protection of rare plants in its mandate from the state legislature; (2) Half of the 89 designated Colorado Natural Areas are designated for features that include a rare plant species. This explains why CNAP has played a large role in the monitoring and protection of rare plants in Colorado over the past 30 years. Recently, CNAP has been ramping up our efforts to monitor and protect our often forgotten green cousins with help from volunteers!

Monitoring of rare plant species is a necessary component of any conservation strategy due to the need for up-to-date and relevant information about their condition and threats. Only with current data can land managers effectively address threats to imperiled plants. Since 2007, CNAP in partnership with Denver Botanic Gardens and in close collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management and other landowners, has been involved in the creation of a new program to get citizen scientists involved in collecting essential rare plant data.

The Rare Plant Monitoring (RPM) Stewards program involves volunteers who are ‘revving-up’ rare plant monitoring around Colorado (pardon the pun). These volunteers commit to ‘adopting’ a rare plant monitoring project that they will lead for years to come; providing invaluable data to land managers and decision-makers who are trying to make informed decisions about conservation strategies. These volunteers are doing more than ‘watching the grass grow’ as they use technical monitoring protocols to track changes in plant populations over time.

In 2010, RPM Stewards provided over 800 hours of sweaty and tedious service to the rarest plants in Colorado. They have helped such groups as the BLM, The Nature Conservancy and Occidental Petroleum to learn more about the rarest species on their lands. Through their efforts, we can see if conservation efforts are really being successful. As pressures increase on many of the rarest plants in Colorado, CNAP and RPM Stewards are working tirelessly to ‘put the petal to the metal’ and protect the sedentary flora that needs some help.
Mueller Volunteers Reach New Milestone

Mueller volunteers were recognized in January for breaking a new record in 2010 by reaching 3725 hours. This is up almost 1000 hours from 2009. Over 50 people showed up to join in with the recognition festivities. Mueller Staff in attendance included Park Manager, Howard Paul; Ranger, Mark Silas; and Administrative Assistant, Susie Yost. Special guests included Assistant Region Manager, Rich Dudley; Ranger, Amanda Hobson; and Volunteer Resource Provider, Vicki Leigh.

Mark Silas recognized every volunteer that supported Mueller in 2010 with a volunteer certificate and a small token of appreciation along with volunteer passes for those who qualified. In addition, several local businesses including restaurants, grocery stores, and Walmart donated gift certificates for the volunteers.

A few volunteers were recognized in a special way for their extraordinary contributions. Three volunteers gave over 150 hours of service and each received a $40.00 REI gift card. They are:

- Jack Berger – 171 hours - trails/backcountry.
- Don de Halas – 305 hours - trails/backcountry. (Don is an octogenarian – over 80 years old.)
- Bob Lambert – 164.5 hours - trails/backcountry.

Thacker Higgins was recognized as the new volunteer with the most hours – 98. Mueller’s 2010 Volunteer of the Year was Billy Adams. He had 178 volunteer hours working on trails and the backcountry.

Hats off to the hardworking Mueller Volunteers!
2010 was a year of huge transition for most Colorado State Parks with personnel turnovers and shortages, deep budget cuts and a painful economic environment throughout the country. With a total 8537+ volunteer hours, Cheyenne Mountain State Park Volunteers stepped up to the plate, navigated the challenges and kept CMSP moving forward! To recognize CMSP achievements, the Friends of CMSP proudly sponsored the 5th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet, which was coordinated by new Senior Ranger Danielle Hill and new Park Manager Mitch Martin.

Mitch Martin kicked off the festivities by thanking Volunteers for their generous contributions of time and energy to CMSP. He asserted that Volunteers were instrumental in every aspect of the park’s success - past, present and future. Planning for the Top of the Mountain’s trails and stewardship goals; interpretive programs for families, young children, schools and other groups; plant, wildlife and bird hikes for public and private groups; CSP biological stewardship programs’ surveys and monitoring; Visitor Center receptionists, Camper Services and maintenance around the park; Camp Host hospitality and much more were acknowledged with praise and appreciation. His heartfelt message was that Volunteers made it happen, and are needed even more now and in the coming years.

Dani Hill surprised attendees with a catered dinner by Black Tie Gourmet Catering, and it was a treat indeed! After a delicious meal together, Faye Koeltzow provided an in depth briefing of the status of Colorado State Parks and what we could expect in the coming year...or not expect. The bottom line was that Volunteers are crucial to the success of Colorado State Parks and we need to explore new ways to provide resources for our parks.

CMSP Volunteers felt very appreciated as they were recognized and awarded tokens of thanks for their time and efforts. Those who donated 10 hours this past year received a 2010 Volunteer pin and a handy eco-friendly tote bag that will serve many purposes, including a reminder to conserve and preserve whenever possible. Forty Volunteers worked at least 48 hours and earned an annual Volunteer Parks Pass. Volunteers who provided special programs, projects and/or unique contributions were recognized individually:

- The 500 Hour Club award went to Camphosts Sue and Ron Schulz, as they received thanks and praise for their super Hosting this summer. They will be missed as they move to Texas to help family members. Camphosts Jim and Darlene Hatley were also recognized but were unable to attend due to a family emergency.
Cheyenne Mountain  Continued

- The New Volunteer of the Year Award went to power-couple Barry and Pat Cooper! In addition to serving the most hours among new Volunteers, they led the charge with creative interpretive programs on bats, rattlesnakes and native plants among many other impressive accomplishments.

- Most Hours award recipient, Janeen Igou, garnered many hours during the Naturalist’s off-season as she co-organized the Valentine and No Child Left Inside programs with Volunteer Cheryl Holling. She also coordinated the Raptor Monitor Program and participated in many school, family and children’s programs plus other projects.

- The Order of the Flying Pig inducted a record number of deserving Volunteers for laying the solid foundation that supports so many park programs today. New honorees include: Debbie Ackley, Jeremy Agnew, Sylvia Agnew, Debbie Barnes, Lucy Bell, Ann Brown, Jack Busher, Barry Cooper, Pat Cooper, Jerri DeCarolis, Pat Grove, Janeen Igou, Jerry O’Hare, Lori O’Hare, Linda Overlin, Jim Purdy, Dan Scott, Pam Scott, Susan Simmons, and Lee Tatum. Their names were inscribed on the legs of the Flying Pig award to signify that these Volunteers are the Pillars of support for the park.

- The Outstanding Customer Service award went to Janice Craver for her enthusiastic service to park visitors.

- Superior Maintenance Awards were given to Jack Busher, Pat Looney, and Jim Purdy for their outstanding performance and dedication to the upkeep and improvement of the park’s trails and maintenance needs.

- The Unconditional Volunteer award was earned by Pam Scott for her super ability to make herself available for park programs, especially teaching GPS, on short notice whenever needed!

- Our Outstanding Naturalist, Pat Grove, was recognized for his innovative, educational and fun programs, including the new Junior Ranger Program that was introduced this summer!

Outgoing President of the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park, Dr. Glen Scott, was presented the Outstanding Leadership award for his many years of hard work and dedication to supporting the park. Many thanks to Glen and we look forward to his continued participation as a Friend of CMSP!

After putting away the tables and chairs, everyone departed with a feeling of “Well Done!” for 2010 and excitement about our goals for the coming year. Best wishes to all for a great 2011!!
A Remarkable Volunteer-Vega State Park
by Jody Rosier, Tourist Assistant

Helen Spence is a remarkable person and a priceless member of the State Park’s team at Vega. She has been our GOCO Seasonal Interpreter from May through September for the past eight seasons at Vega. Before joining the Vega team, Helen taught third grade for 35 years with Plateau Valley Schools which has given her valuable knowledge of the area; knowledge that she happily shares with visitors.

During the off season she continues to donate her time and attention to the park as a volunteer; as much as 40 hours per week. Helen’s love of the park and her desire to educate Mesa County’s students is extraordinary.

On snowy days when the average volunteer would prefer to stay home, Helen is right here at the park reminding us how beautiful winter really is. She is always busy updating and scheduling the outreach school and park interpretive programs. In addition, she helps with office administrative tasks such as filing, proofreading documents, answering phones, and all of the other tasks required to keep the Visitor Center running smoothly.

The holidays really come alive with the beautiful decorations that she has collected and shares to brighten the Visitor Center. Being new at Vega, I greatly appreciate having Helen here to greet our winter guests and get ready for the summer’s educational programs, events and volunteers.

Josh Stoudt—Sylvan Lake State Park

By Kristen Green, Tourist Assistant

Josh Stoudt is determined to see all four seasons at Sylvan Lake State Park.

“It’s amazing to see all of the different aspects of the park in the different seasons,” Josh said. “Each season offers something new. There are a lot of different activities to do, and new people come to the park with each new season. I love talking with them about Sylvan and everything they can do in and around the park.”

Josh came to Sylvan Lake as a seasonal ranger last summer, and liked the experience so much, he decided to stay on as a volunteer through winter and spring. He has already earned his free volunteer pass and uses it every chance he gets to explore the park on his own.

Among his winter volunteer duties is heading up the college internship program, helping attract good seasonal employees for next summer. But, he contributes wherever he is needed, whether it’s snow removal or managing the visitor’s center.

“The full-time staff at Sylvan really love having Josh around,” said Ranger Matt Westerberg. “He helps all of us cover every aspect of the park. He is professional, self-directed and always does a great job.”

When he’s not volunteering at the park, Josh works full time for the Western Eagle County Metropolitan Recreation District. He also enjoys fishing, OHVing, hiking, hunting, playing hockey and skiing. As for his future, Josh is sure he has found his path and his place. He will return to Sylvan as a seasonal ranger next summer and then apply to be a full-time ranger.

“My first summer was awesome! It was everything I expected and more,” Josh said. “I worked with great people and learned a lot. It really made me realize I want a career in state parks as a ranger. I decided to volunteer so I could continue my career in parks and gain more experience.”
Winter Camphosts
At Ridgway
By John Freeborn, Senior Ranger

The attached photo is of Chelsea Murray and Linda Reed both are living (separately) on the park this winter. Linda is primarily helping out in the visitor center. Chelsea is helping in the visitor center, helping me with the volunteer program, and doing some special projects including creating a park brochure about our tree thinning project on elk ridge, working with Kirstin(Park Manager) to establish our watchable wildlife program, and helping the ranger staff with snowmobile patrols to name a few.

Chelsea has worked as a ranger for the past three summers and decided she wanted to stay at the park this winter and see what it was like, and hopefully try and get on as a full time ranger. Linda has been volunteering with Colorado State Parks since 2006. She has volunteered at Ridgway for 5 years, and has also put in time at Rifle and Fruita during that time. As you can imagine both Linda and Chelsea are a huge asset to the park, and we wouldn’t be able to do half of what we do without them and the rest of our volunteers.

Barr Lake Winter Camphosts
By Michelle Seubert, Barr Lake Park Manager

I always knew building the park host sites was much like the field of dreams -“If we build it they will come.” This is so true – since starting the park host program in 2008 they have made countless contributions to the overall success of the park.

The top picture is of my winter hosts Dan and Ruth Brown. They have been at Barr Lake since the end of November. They have previously hosted at Cherry Creek and Golden Gate. They have done a wonderful job while at Barr Lake. Ruth always greets everyone at the nature center with a big smile and has been a big help organizing and working on special projects. Dan can fix, paint, clean, put back together - you name it and Dan can do it. They have both been a great addition to the Barr Lake team.

The bottom photo shows my summer 2010 hosts. From the left-Vic and Dee Lucas, Vickie and Gary Amack, and Amy and Dave Radvany. I was looking back at the summer and all the projects we accomplished. They all often went above and beyond the call of duty - taking the patrol boat late at night to get a stranded boater, mowing in 100 degree weather, cleaning bathrooms, working in the nature center, changing blades on the tractor bat wing that hadn’t been changed in over 10 years and, last but not least, doing it all with a smile. Hats off to the Barr Lake Park Host 2010/11 team; your efforts have made Barr Lake a better place.
Art Exhibit Inspired by Castlewood Canyon State Park
By Liz Bade, Volunteer Naturalist

When my husband and I moved to Colorado six years ago, we were delighted when we discovered we lived just north of incredible Castlewood Canyon State Park. Three years later I learned about the volunteer program and I’ve been officially touting the park ever since. As a very amateur watercolor artist, I figured any artist could spend a lifetime depicting the park and never run out of subjects. This led to the idea for Castlewood Canyon through the Seasons – a project that would benefit the park and local artists.

Not surprisingly, many artists had just been waiting for this opportunity – “You can imagine the thrill of seeing the call-for-entries flyer at Guiry’s right after visiting and sketching at Castlewood and Roxborough parks! We are so blessed to have both in our backyards,” watercolorist Craig Davis wrote. We offered Art Takes a Hike walks for artists who may not have been familiar with the park. Frank Weston, author and photographer of “Colorado State Parks & Natural Areas,” generously sent us a photograph he specifically took for our use.

But … where to hold the show? Connie Mohrman, Exhibits Manager, The Wildlife Experience, was enthusiastic about the idea from the beginning. The Wildlife Experience is a trove of information about the natural world with an emphasis on Colorado. Our exhibit is a terrific fit with their mission.

For the past year, local artists have been photographing, painting, drawing, and creatively interpreting Castlewood Canyon State Park’s landscapes, ruins, flora, and fauna. A committee of park volunteers selected 42 stunning works that are on exhibit at The Wildlife Experience, 10035 S. Peoria St., Parker, through May 8, 2011.

The works include views from all four seasons. Many show the fabulous canyon with its exposed Dawson arkose or the Castlewood conglomerate that rises above the canyon floor. Park wildlife also captured the artists’ imaginations. In one painting, a surreptitious bobcat steps gingerly out of snowy woods; in another, a coyote surveys the scene.

Several artists have depicted, in various poses of stately decomposition, the often elegant snags that our wildlife use as food, homes, and roosting spots.

In keeping with the theme, Castlewood Canyon through the Seasons, visitors will see art capturing the exuberance of spring, languid summer near the creek, brilliant fall color, and snow scenes that will inspire viewers to visit the park anytime of the year. I asked the artists to give me some background on their work – the following exemplifies the affection many have for Castlewood Canyon:

“The family has a long history with Castlewood Canyon. My husband first spent time camping there when he was just a teenager in the 60s. This was before it even became a state park. In the 80s & 90s when our kids were young, Castlewood Canyon was our favorite destination. We loved hiking, picnicking and exploring in all of the seasons. Now that our children are grown, they still frequent Castlewood to rock climb or take their dogs for an outing. My artwork follows along that same vein.”

- Deb Kaylor.

Visit www.thewildlifeexperience.org for hours and admission information.
Two Colorado State Parks’ programs received awards from the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) for their outstanding work in helping youngsters understand their role in the environment. The Art in Nature Program at Eldorado Canyon State Park and the Roxborough State Park Interpretive and Environmental Education Program received a CAEE Government Award at the annual banquet on Friday, Feb. 4. Since 1996 the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE) has taken the opportunity to honor the amazing work and efforts of environmental educators and organizations across the state through the Awards for Excellence in Environmental Education Program.

**Eldorado Canyon**

Eldorado Canyon received the award for its Art in Nature Program. The program was created and implemented by Constance Roth, the Park’s seasonal GO CO Interpreter of many years. Inspired by the work of the English artist Andy Goldsworthy, Constance wanted to create a program that recognized Eldorado Canyon as a beautiful form of art. Eldorado Canyon, just southwest of Boulder, is an extraordinary day-use park and a hidden treasure along South Boulder Creek with towering sandstone cliffs.

Art in Nature is a two-hour, hands-on program connecting participants to nature by creating sculptures using only the natural materials easily found in Eldorado Canyon State Park. After reviewing Goldsworthy’s books and video, the twelve to eighteen participants brainstorm and discuss ways in which people have been artistic in the park. Participants then hike to a selected site and collect natural materials to create their own sculptures, present them to the group, and discuss their meanings. Each sculpture is photographed for an album displayed in the park’s visitor center.

After being contacted in 2009 by Demetri Medoff, director of Recognizing Opportunity for Change (ROC), the Art in Nature program became the perfect vehicle to engage this under-served audience of adjudicated youth. Touching the resource and creating a piece of art greatly benefited them, both physically and emotionally. The youth start out yawning, uninterested, and fidgety, but once outside their attitudes change. They become children again, laughing and playing in nature. Program goals are exceeded as a sense of pride and community develops within these youth building their sculptures and working together.

Sam Barnes, current ROC Director, says about Art in Nature, “Nature can be a wonderful teacher especially to our students as it teaches patience, hard work, community, natural consequences, and beauty, just to name a few. It shows them there is a world outside of what they are used to, and they can express themselves in ways that do not hurt themselves or others along the way. They begin to understand that getting out of their comfort zone is not as scary as they may have thought and not all risk-taking has to be negative. It is essential if we expect these youth to put aside gangs, drugs, and crime we also show them another side to this world that provides them with dignity, self respect, and achievement.”

Kudos to Constance Roth for creating this wonderful program!
Roxborough

Roxborough State Park received CAEE’s award for its comprehensive and extensive environmental education (EE) program. Roxborough is a day-use park nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in southwest Littleton and is best known for its dramatic hogbacks and spectacular red sandstone formations jutting up to the sky. For many, a visit to the park may be their first exposure to the natural world. And what an extraordinary place to visit! Roxborough offers unsurpassed beauty with one billion years of geologic history, abundant wildlife, and diverse plant communities.

The park’s mission is to foster environmental stewardship by developing awareness and understanding of the natural and cultural resources of the park. This mission is fulfilled thanks to park staff and resourceful Volunteer Naturalists implementing the diverse offerings in the EE program for school, scout, and public groups. In 2009, Roxborough’s EE program provided offerings for over 7000 participants including over 400 Scouts and well over 2000 students.

Roxborough’s EE programs have evolved and been revamped over the years to meet visitor needs and requests from surrounding counties including Douglas, Jefferson, Arapahoe, Adams, and Denver. Boy and Girl Scout programs fulfill badge requirements while exposing Scouts to the park’s natural resources, and are structured to be fast-paced and to address multiple learning styles. Pre-kindergarten through sixth grade school programs are led by Volunteer Naturalists, who infuse wonder and excitement while creating and enhancing connections between what students learn in the classroom and what they experience at the park. Specific grade-level curriculum is matched to feature the park’s natural resources and school programs are correlated to state standards.

The newest EE program is the Junior Naturalist (JN) program, created in response to the recent emphasis on getting families out into parks and helping them connect with the natural world together. The JN booklet has many activities to stimulate discovery and the accompanying hikes and interactions with Volunteer Naturalists nurture learning.

As the above examples demonstrate, Volunteers are essential for the success and implementation of the EE program. Roxborough’s renowned Volunteer Naturalist Program began in 1982 and today more than 160 active volunteers, with a lifelong passion for the natural world, are conducting EE programs. These volunteers are highly trained, participating in a thorough 32-hour park course spanning four weeks. It is a testament to Roxborough’s dedication to EE that one of the only three full-time positions at the park is that of Volunteer & Interpretive Services Manager. This unique position in all of state parks has been covered for several years by Angel Tobin. Angel provides expertise, experience, and consistency for the volunteers, helping them design and implement the multitude of EE program offerings.

Kudos to Angel and the Volunteer Naturalists for making the EE program such an integral part of what Roxborough has to offer!
Interpretive Volunteers Extraordinary at Rifle Falls State Park

By Terry Wise, Rifle Volunteer and Former GOCO Temporary

Rifle Gap State Park Complex offers interpretive and environmental education opportunities for all ages. Nature programs, hikes, campfire programs, and junior ranger programs are just a few of the ways families and visitors can learn about the flora, fauna, wildlife, geology, and a history of Rifle Falls.

Featuring Mark Hanson

During the late summer months, one could see adults along with children wading in the cold creek waters of Rifle Creek to study the habitat of the aquatic insects.

Mark Hanson, volunteer extraordinaire from Rifle, CO shared his passion and expertise for the visitor to experience. “There was a park naturalist who swallowed a fly….” (an introduction to fly fishing) and “It’s A Bugs Life” (an aquatic insect program) were offered for all to enjoy.

Featuring Bobby Layman

Throughout the summer months, Bobby Layman, volunteer extraordinaire from Silt, CO staffed a hands-on interpretive table at Rifle Falls. Topics included animal tracks, bats, beavers, and the geology of Rifle Falls.

Featuring Judy Killion and Lou Bradley

Judy Killion, retired 5th grade elementary education teacher from Plano, Texas and volunteer camp host at Rifle Falls assisted Terry Wise, GOCO park naturalist with several interpretative programs including wildflower hikes, a “thriller” of a ghost story campfire program, and a program to honor the age old tradition of cowboy songs around the campfire. Lou Bradley, lead guitarist along with Wise on the keyboards led the crowd with traditional campfire songs during this interpretive program. Bradley participated in several ‘sing-around’ the campfire events at several of our Western Slope parks this past summer.

Terry Wise, GOCO park naturalist, also incorporates guest presenters to the park who also have a passion for sharing their expertise with children. Independence Day 2010 weekend was the backdrop of Skulls And Adaptations and Labor Day 2010 weekend was the backdrop of Snakes Alive! Visitors at Rifle Falls had the opportunity to test their knowledge about adaptations that animals make after a presentation by Brian Gray, Division of Wildlife Officer. Visitors at Rifle Gap, Harvey Gap, and Rifle Falls had the opportunity to learn and see several corn snakes, native to Colorado, owned by Greg Rohr, Life Boy Scout from Lakewood, CO. Visitors were able to observe the snakes eating their lunch and for those who were daring, the opportunity to touch a snake was available.

Where will your next Kid adventure be?
The important thing is not so much that every child should be taught, as that every child should be given the wish to learn.

~John Lubbock

Students Learn and Grow At St. Vrain State Park

As an advocate of the Colorado Kids’ Outdoor Bill of Rights, St. Vrain State Park wants to help as many children as possible explore the wonders and gain the benefits of the great outdoors. To this end, the park staff recently developed new programs for schools in the surrounding communities. Teachers can chose among more than 40 programs ranging in topics from the history of the St. Vrain Valley to wildlife adaptations, snow science, pond life, outdoor safety and much more. These programs are a great way to supplement natural and social science curriculum, and to spark youngsters’ interest in getting outdoors to learn more about their local natural environment. These are some of the teachers’ comments: “Motivating, interactive activities related to our studies”; “It was exactly what we wanted.”

In the program “Mothers and Babies”, students compare and contrast different mothering strategies. As they walk around the pond searching for different types of animal mothers, they stop periodically to discuss what it would be like to have a snake, fox, trout, or other type of animal for a mom. For example, if your mom was a trout you would have 25,000 brothers and sisters! Your mom wouldn’t stick around to take care of you, but she would assume that since she laid that many eggs, at least a few would survive.

The park staff is constantly developing quality programs to supplement the courses taught in the classroom. These educational, fun, and hands-on programs can all be adapted to meet the needs of preschool through 12th grade. The length of the program depends on the age of the students and the classroom needs. If a teacher is unable to come to the park, but wants to use a St. Vrain program, park staff sometimes bring the lessons into the school classroom. For example, a “local wildlife” program in the classroom uses mammal hides, skulls, and appropriate games to engage the students in learning about the wildlife species that live nearby and their different adaptations.

Programs held at the park are led in part by volunteers. This is a great opportunity for current volunteers, but also to attract new volunteers. Volunteers interested in participating go through an orientation to learn about the programs offered, to discover what they are most interested in teaching, and to ask park staff any questions they might have. After orientation, each volunteer will go through some training with park staff and tag along on at least one school program before they lead their own program.

If you are interested in volunteering for these exciting new programs, or just want to learn more about it, please contact Becca Frager at 303-485-0186 or st.vrain.seasonal@state.co.us
By Peter Jones

Five hundred and fifty-four Boy Scouts, including more than 100 from central Arapahoe County, took home the highest honor in Scouting this month for 2010 – a record-breaking number in the nearly 90-year history of the Boy Scouts of America’s Denver Council.

To receive the coveted Eagle rank, Scouts performed a total of more than 98,450 hours of volunteer service for projects that have an estimated value of $2.6 million to the metro Denver community.

Each Scout was responsible for planning, organizing and executing his own major service project with an average time commitment of more than 300 hours.

“They start from scratch,” said John Cabeza, CEO of the Scouts’ Denver Council. “They go through an approval process to ensure the project meets the standard for an Eagle Scout – things that are going to have a lasting impact. You don’t just go out and collect trash, for instance.”

The projects ranged from installing an irrigation system for a volunteer community garden to constructing a memorial for a fellow Scout who died of cancer.

Jason Carroll took on the ambitious task of replacing all the seating in the 30-year-old amphitheater at Cherry Creek State Park. Carroll raised more than $13,000 in corporate and private donations and recruited friends, family and fellow Scouts to conduct about 750 man-hours of volunteer labor.

“There’d be times when I was working on the project and I didn’t know if I’d get it done or not because it was such a big project,” Carroll said. “I’ve always liked the outdoors and I wanted to give back to the community by doing something for Colorado State Parks. It turned out to be a lot of work.”

Eagle Scouts are required to earn 21 merit badges, become proficient in outdoor activities and hold a leadership position in their troop for at least six months – all before their 18th birthday.

Denver-area Eagles were recognized Feb. 25 at the Eagle Scout Recognition Banquet at the Renaissance Hotel in Denver.

To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.

- Anatole France
Vicki,

My husband and I volunteered at Barr Lake State Park for 2 months this winter, and I would like to let you know what a wonderful person Michelle Seubert is!

She is an outstanding manager, and cares for her volunteers/workers. She works hard, and is always available to answer questions, even on her days off. Our short 2 months at Barr Lake were exceptional, due to Michelle’s caring personality, work ethics, and hard work. I hope Michelle has a long career with the Colorado State Parks, she is a jewel.

Sincerely,
Ruth Brown

Hi Vicki,

It’s great to have you back.
Francesca has been great to work with and she has been a huge help with our volunteer database issues.

- John Freeborn, Senior Ranger Ridgway.

Dear Awesome, Irreplaceable Volunteers for 2011 Trade Shows:

On behalf of the Volunteer Program, we would like to thank you for volunteering your time and enthusiasm to the last trade show. As you know, we could not participate in these events if it weren’t for your help.

THANK YOU
Francesca Giongo
Volunteer Programs Assistant

Greetings Tim and Joe! (At Cherry Creek State Park)

Thank you for providing a venue for our training with the new ranger group yesterday! I really appreciate the help your staff provided from Patti and Mike helping with set up and take down and Jason helping to order the pizza for lunch.

Most of all, I’d like to thank you for allowing Mike to participate. His helping with the planning for the training content and agenda and participating all day with the training is an excellent addition to our day.

Thanks again.
Cheers.
We appreciate your support.

Vicki

CAEE Awards

Thank you for attending the CAEE banquet last night. Your show of support means a lot to me and all the volunteers at Roxborough. I was not able to say a few words of thanks last night so I thought I would leave them here with you now.

I would like to acknowledge CSP’s Leadership for their commitment to provide environmental education to the citizens of Colorado.

I would also like to give thanks to our communities that support us and understand the value of outdoor nature experiences for our children today and future generations of stewards.

Mostly I want to thank Roxborough’s Volunteer Naturalist for their passion, dedication, and commitment to provide outstanding educational programs and fostering an appreciation for the natural world.

Thanks to all of you for making it a special evening.
Angel
Angel Tobin, CVA Volunteer & Interpretive Services Manager Roxborough State Park
Colorado Volunteer Center Network

The Colorado Volunteer Center Network (CVCN) is an association composed of seven volunteer centers that promote and strengthen volunteerism by utilizing all of their assets to improve the quality of life in Colorado. CVCN works to support the expansion of volunteer centers in the state, leverages resources to build volunteer center capacity, facilitates networking and information sharing to strengthen current centers, and works to build a statewide presence.

City of Westminster Volunteer Center
www.ci.westminster.co.us
REGION: City of Westminster - Adams County

Eagle County Volunteer Center
www.eaglecounty.us/hhs/volunteers.cfm
REGION: Eagle County - Vail - Edwards - Eagle - Avon

MetroVolunteers
www.metrovolunteers.org
REGION: Denver Metropolitan Area

Pikes Peak United Way Volunteer Center
www.volunteerpikespeak.org
REGION: El Paso County - Colorado Springs - Monument - Black Forest

United Way of Larimer County’s Volunteer Center
www.uwaylc.org
REGION: Larimer County - Fort Collins - Loveland - Estes Park - Wellington

United Way of Weld County
www.unitedway-weld.org
REGION: Weld County - Greeley - Windsor

Volunteer Connection of Boulder County
www.volunteerconnection.net
REGION: Boulder - Longmont - Broomfield - Lyons - Lafayette - Superior

Colorado Native Plant Master Program Announces 2011 Courses

The Colorado Native Plant Master® Program has announced a newly expanded 2011 course schedule. These award-winning courses are offered across the state by twelve Colorado State University Extension offices.

Participants in Native Plant Master courses learn identification, ecology and human uses of selected Colorado plants emphasizing sustainable landscaping and invasive weeds. Students learn to use a botanical key including scientific names and families. Also offered this year are special classes such as Native Plant Landscaping, Invasive Weeds, Basic Botany, Orchids and Subalpine/Alpine Lifezones.

Classes are open to all on a space available basis. Most courses are held outdoors, but some are classroom sessions. A few advanced courses have prerequisites. The cost ranges from $20 to $90 per course.

These popular classes have a waiting list each year, so those interested are advised to register early. To register, see www.conativeplantmaster.org or contact the program directly at yhuang@jeffco.us, (303) 271-6620. For research-based information on more than 1,000 Colorado plants, browse the Colorado Plant Database at http://coloradoplants.jeffco.us.
2011 Statewide Volunteer Program Training Schedule

*Some training scholarships available. Check with Vicki Leigh at vicki.leigh@state.co.us.

Teaching Outside the Box
Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education
Millennium Harvest House in Boulder, CO
April 29 – May 1, 2011
www.caee.org

GOCO & Their Supervisors Annual Training
Session One: State Forest State Park
May 14 – 15, 2011
Session Two: Ridgway State Park
May 17 - 18, 2011

Colorado Conference On Volunteerism
May 24 - 25, 2011
Denver, CO Johnson & Wales University
www.denverdovia.org

Mini – 2 day Certified Interpretive Guide Workshop
Lead Facilitator Mary Ann Bonnell, City of Aurora Parks and Open Space
August 23-24 at Ridgway

In addition, to the above trainings, database trainings will be offered in the spring with the schedule coming out soon. Staff is able to provide tailored trainings for your parks or program if requested. There are a variety of trainings provided by community organizations, available throughout the state, on either the management of volunteers or environmental education. Contact Vicki Leigh for more information at vicki.leigh@state.co.us.

- Lorna Wilson
National Volunteer Week
April 10-16, 2011
www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw

(National and) Global Youth Service Day
April 15-17, 2011
http://ysa.org/gysd

Earth Day
April 22, 2011
http://www.earthday.net

National Arbor Day
National: April 29, 2011; In Colorado: April 15, 2011
(always the last and third Friday in April, respectively)
www.arborday.org

Join Hands Day
May 7, 2011
http://joinhandsday.org/about-jhd/future-dates/

National AmeriCorps Week
May 7-14, 2011
http://americorpsweek.gov/index.asp

National River Cleanup Week
Now a year-long event

National Trails Day
June 4, 2011
www.americanhiking.org/NTD.aspx

National Get Outdoors Day
June 11, 2011
www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org

Colorado Cares Day
July 31, 2010
www.colorado.gov/gccs

International Volunteer Day
December 5, 2011 (always on this date)
www.worldvolunteerweb.org/intl-vol-day.html

National Public Lands Day
September 24, 2011
www.publiclandsday.org

Kids Care Week
October 16 – 22, 2011
www.kidscare.org/about/kidscareweek

Make A Difference Day
October 22, 2010 (Fourth Saturday in October)
http://www.usaweekend.com/section/MDDAY

National Family Volunteer Day
November 19, 2011
http://www.pointsoflight.org