

# THE CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN STATE PARK



## TRACKER



Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Newsletter    Volume 5    Issue 2    September 2006

sat·is·fac·tion/ *n.* : the fulfillment or gratification of a desire, need, or appetite.



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## President's Message:

The anticipation is nearly unbearable. Our Cheyenne Mountain State Park is about to open to the public! Construction crews are working feverishly completing the final tasks. Park staff is on board and gearing up for what may be the busiest State Park in Colorado. Volunteers are being trained to help make the park experience second to none. And the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park have been and continue to be instrumental in the process. In the past few months the friends have provided advice and input on nearly every facet of what it takes to open a state park. We have met with local, county, and state officials in support of park issues and progress. Because of your generosity and membership dues, we have been able to purchase many items for staff and volunteer interpreters to use to educate Park visitors about wildlife, plant life, and our environment. Thanks to all of you Friends out there for maintaining your passion for the environment, a love for the outdoors, and an emotional connection to the first State Park in El Paso County and the city of Colorado Springs.

Mark your calendars for the Cheyenne Mountain State Park Grand Opening on October 21st. Come visit with your Friends Board Members, as well as other local, county, and state dignitaries who will be here to help celebrate the event. Let us know what you think and give us some ideas on how best to support our new Park. The Friends of CMSP has been active since 2001, just about five full years, but the real purpose and value of our



Check out what the recent rains have done for many grasses that inhabit the environs of Cheyenne Mountain State Park.

organization is just beginning. Tell all of your friends and associates about the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park and encourage them to join with us and help support the Park.

Rick Upton,  
President

# Park Manager's Update:... to mark this occasion,"

By **Rich Dudley** /Park Manager

After years of planning and development, it's hard to believe that the opening of Cheyenne Mountain State Park is only weeks away. The Grand Opening is planned for Saturday, October 21, 2006 and a ceremony to mark this momentous occasion is planned for 10:00 am. I hope you, our friends and supporters, will join Colorado State Parks as we celebrate our remarkable journey to this park opening. It will be particularly rewarding to watch the public discover this amazing park for the first time, and to see the results of our vision and hard work.



Friends and volunteers depart from the Visitor's Center on one of several familiarization hikes designed to acquaint these future naturalists and trail hosts with the trail system of Cheyenne Mountain State Park

fully complete. When the park opens on October 21, the trails, day-use picnic areas, and the Visitor Center will be ready for public use. The campgrounds, a key component of our operations, will open sometime next summer. The group picnic area, Event Center, and cabins will follow within the next few years.

These past few months, leading up to the opening, have been busy ones. Here's a peek at what we've been up to:

- Construction continues on the Visitor Center, entrance station, and trailhead



Trail work continues as helicopters haul loads of gravel to be spread on trails throughout the park

While I look forward to seeing the fruits of our labor at the opening, the planning and hard work, by no means, is done. The park is opening in phases, therefore we still have more development and construction to undergo before Cheyenne Mountain State Park is

comfort station. These buildings will be complete by opening. We are finalizing the details for the interpretive exhibits and the retail store.

- Ground has been broken and construction is underway on the camper services building and the park's maintenance shop, and we anticipate these buildings being finished early next year. Completion of both of these buildings is vital before the campgrounds can open sometime next summer.
- Working closely with **4240 Architecture**, we have now completed the design phase for the cabins that are planned for the park. Funding is the critical issue now, and we anticipate phasing-in the cabins over the next few years.
- An additional phase of trail construction will start soon. Important trail connections, as well as the construction of one more trail, is included in this phase.



## Park Manager's Update: ...continued from page 2

- Since the last newsletter, Monique Mullis was promoted to Senior Ranger of the park. I'm pleased to announce that the Ranger position has been filled by Brian Kerrigan. You can learn more about Brian on page 8. Two full-time positions remain to be filled—the Tourist Assistant, as well as the Maintenance Technician. Both of these positions are critical to park operations, and I hope to have them filled soon.
- The volunteer program that started in April has been very successful. The program boasts 40 members and is shaping up nicely. See Jack Case's article on page 8 to see what they have been up to lately.



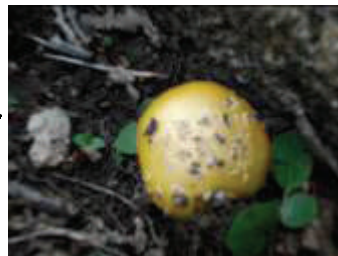
Senior Ranger Monique Mullis, along with volunteer co-ordinator Jack Case, introduce a group of Friends to the under-construction Visitor's Center

It is clear that there is still much to be done and that the park is a work in progress. In fact, you will see at the opening that there is paving and other finishing projects, in addition to construction of new facilities, to be completed over time. We will work hard to try to limit the impact the construction has on our visitors. So, while we may need to ask you to "pardon our dust" as we continue to develop the park, I am sure that you will appreciate that the time has come to swing open the gates and invite the public into this amazing park. Your patience is about to pay off, and I thank you for your continuing support and enthusiasm for the park.

## Trail Dust: A photo essay from August and September, 2006

Photos by Kathleen Cook

Anyone fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to wander the trails of CMSP recently would wonder at this season's crop of mushrooms that have found themselves a home. Here's a quick look at what the monsoons have brought:



### Our Mission:

"The Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park serves to protect, enhance, and preserve, for all time, the natural state and spectacular beauty of the park. We are also dedicated to working with park staff to promote recreational and educational opportunities as well as advocating for important park issues."

# CMSP Resource Summary: Geophysical Features

*This is the sixth and final excerpt from the CMSP Stewardship Plan, printed with permission. This issue focuses on the unique geophysical features that are found in the park.*

The geophysical features, which collectively include the geology, soils, and hydrology at Cheyenne Mountain are likely to be one of its strongest attractions to visitors as well as presenting some of the most challenging aspects of planning and resource management to park managers and staff. Significant features of geological interest and interpretive value include:

- A park setting with a dramatic visual backdrop of rocky cliff faces and steep ravines from Cheyenne Mountain with its granite core and surrounding sedimentary rock.
- Unique geological circumstances such as the evidence of Pikes Peak granite that was “squeezed” out from pressures of surrounding rock and overlay much younger sedimentary rock.
- Evidence of more recent geologic activity that has developed from landslides and debris flows, which have redistributed massive amounts of earth.
- The possibility that fossils may be embedded in areas of limestone
- Springs and seeps that serve essential hydrological functions, are important for invertebrates, birds, and mammals, and host specialized plants species that are adapted to grow only with these hydrologic conditions.
- The presence of large fault contacts that run north south along the western side of the park

Cheyenne Mountain State Park is geographically situated on the southeastern flank of Cheyenne Mountain with a dramatic setting of rocky cliff faces and steep ravines at the boundary of the eastern plains of



Western Park View

Colorado. The topography on the western side of the park presents slopes up to 80% and elevations up to 8000 feet. In contrast, the eastern side of the park has broad alluvial slopes from 0 to 15%, and an elevation approximately 6000 feet. Cheyenne Mountain, the most dominant feature towering above the park, consists primarily of Pikes Peak granite, while over time constant erosion has removed enormous amounts of sedimentary rock exposing the underling core. These core rocks are made up of schist's, granites, and gneisses that were derived during the Precambrian age (1 to 1.75 billion years ago). The Laramide Orogeny,

**Orogeny**—The process of mountain formation, especially by folding of the earth's crust

which occurred during the Tertiary Period (~65 to 54 million years ago), was the second of two events that created the Front Range anticline by geologic uplifting, followed by millennia of erosional processes.

The Pikes Peak granite at the base of Cheyenne Mountain has expanded horizontally and overridden adjacent sedimentary rock for a distance of

approximately a mile and abuts with Pierre Shale. Within the park boundary there are geologic faults that run generally north south. The Ute Pass fault is accompanied by two other faults that are located in the western half of the park boundary. Indications of quaternary movement have been identified (Kirkman and

**Quaternary**-during the Pleistocene Ice Age

Rogers, Earthquake Potential in Colorado, 1978); however presently there is some disagreement as to the activity level of these faults. Other characteristics of the geology here are far more active. In early 1999, heavy rain caused significant landslides on adjacent property (M. Squires, pers. comm.) and likely created mudflows (unconfirmed) within the park area. Rock falls of varying size and intensity have also occurred within the last 40 years (see past and present conditions section)



Eastern Park View

Proper management and stewardship provided by Park oversight will aid in both the short- and long-term preservation of the resource. Once again, the plains and foothills that make up the park will exist for the good of all their users.

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### Significant Features

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- Unique geological circumstances such as the evidence of **Pikes Peak granite** that was “squeezed” out from pressures of surrounding rock and overlay much younger sedimentary rock.
- Evidence of more recent geologic activity that has developed from **landslides and debris flows**, which have redistributed massive amounts of earth.
- The possibility that **fossils** may be embedded in areas of limestone
- **Springs and seeps** that serve essential hydrological functions, are important for invertebrates, birds, and mammals, and host specialized plants species that are adapted to grow only with these hydrologic conditions.
- The presence of **large fault contacts** that run north south along the western side of the park



### Trivia Contest: Test your CMSP Knowledge!

Name two noxious weeds that currently occupy space in the Park that need to be eradicated?

E-mail your answer to [cheyenne.park@state.co.us](mailto:cheyenne.park@state.co.us) by 5:00 pm on Oct 15, 2006.  
Include your answer, your name, address, and telephone number.  
A winner will be randomly selected from the correct answers.

The winner will receive a gift package that includes a Cheyenne Mountain State Park baseball hat.





**Grand  
Opening!**

# CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

## OPENING CEREMONY

Be there to help us celebrate this long-awaited event!  
**Saturday, October 21  
10:00 AM**

**Parking and shuttle service:  
From PPCC Centennial Campus,  
Located on South Academy Blvd.  
Beginning at 8:30 AM. Come Early!  
Enjoy the Fun!**

### Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Board

Have questions or want to find out how you can help support Cheyenne Mountain State Park? Contact a Board Member for more information.

- |            |              |  |
|------------|--------------|--|
| President  | Rick Upton   | <a href="mailto:uptonrus@adelphia.net">uptonrus@adelphia.net</a>       |
| Vice Pres. | Jim Schwerin | <a href="mailto:jim@windycreek.net">jim@windycreek.net</a>             |
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| Member     | Glenn Scott  | <a href="mailto:glenscott@adelphia.net">glenscott@adelphia.net</a>     |

- Non-Voting Members
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|---------------|----------------|--|
| Park Manager  | Rich Dudley    | <a href="mailto:rich.dudley@state.co.us">rich.dudley@state.co.us</a>       |
| Senior Ranger | Monique Mullis | <a href="mailto:monique.mullis@state.co.us">monique.mullis@state.co.us</a> |



This newsletter represents the opinions and views of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park. Except as specifically identified in an article, the views and opinions do not necessarily reflect official policy or endorsement by the State of Colorado or Colorado State Parks.

# Friends Introduce Other Friends to the Park: “Hike-and-Bike” and Geo-Caching Events

by Jack Busher

July and August saw the Friends group significantly ramp up their activities around the soon-to-be-opened Cheyenne Mountain State Park.

Not only has the Friends Board recently supplied much needed naturalist and interpretive supplies so that Rangers and volunteers can begin preparation of programs for visitors, but the group has continued to be amongst the most active volunteers-in-training.

And to help keep interest and awareness high, the Friends also sponsored several exciting on-sight activities. First was a *Hike-and-Bike* that allowed Friends and guests to begin to get the full flavor of park trails. The mountain bike portion of the event was led by board member Pam Karr, who made sure a few Friends worked out their quads and elevated their heart rates as they traversed the Sundance Trail. Meanwhile, new member Ann Brown, and veteran Linda Overlin both entertained a group of hikers who wandered Zook Trail, taking in the beauty the park has to offer.

Thanks to Ranger Monique Mullis and Board members, Jerry and Lori O’Hare, all participants enjoyed a quick snack to round out the event.

The next major Friends sponsored event was an *Introduction to Geo-*



Friends enjoy the Hike and Bike event in the park on July 31

*caching*. This modern style of orienteering is a new form of map-and-compass search. Better yet, it’s a High-Tech Treasure Hunt! In this bow to technology, the participants search out several hidden “caches,” usually a hidden “ammo” box,

coffee can, or whatever. Each cache typically is filled with several small exchange items. For more detailed information, go to [www.geo-caching.com](http://www.geo-caching.com).

The location of these caches are established and identified, and

seekers then use GPS devices to track down each cache. Upon finding the prize, the idea is to exchange a small item of your own with one found at the scene.

For CMSP’s opening event, Park Manager Rich Dudley, as well as Corey Davis and Pam and Dan Scott, were responsible for placing the initial Park caches. Some were obviously

more challenging than others, but in time all

were found. Friend and volunteer Jim Purdy obviously knows his way around a map as he was the initial finder of two different caches. Board member Jerry O’Hare also scored, as did Deb Ackley, who may have found the day’s most difficult stash.

## Volunteers on the Move by Jack Case

For the last few months, volunteers have been involved with a wide cross-section of activities in preparation for the park opening this fall. It started with volunteer open houses and park orientation visits designed to determine if the volunteer program was a good match for interested individuals. With a core of about 30 potential members, training started in earnest.

In an effort to provide the background to enable volunteers to exceed visitor expectations, many subjects have been presented to develop a wide variety of skills. The group has been exposed to everything from rules and regulations and customer service to some of the specifics of geology, ecosystems, cultural history, mammals, birds, and finally followed by interpretive skills intended to help volunteers put it all together. But this is not all; volunteers have been involved in much more.

**Continued on page 8**

**Continued from page 7**

Again, to assist visitors make decisions that will enhance their Cheyenne Mountain experience, volunteers have been hiking the various trails to familiarize themselves with the characteristics of each trail, such as length, difficulty, and interesting in some wonderful sightings and scape. Deer, turkeys, prairie dogs, key vultures, and prairie falcons tion walks. Also, bear, bobcat, been seen in addition to tracks for turkey, and any number of smaller been exciting, it has all occurred meadows filled with wildflowers thanks to this year's generous



Volunteer Botanist Linda Overlin discusses the oddities of Indian Paintbrush.

features. These hikes have resulted observations of signatures on the land—golden eagles, red-tailed hawk, tur—have been seen on these familiariza—elk, deer, turkey, and rodent scat have a small mountain lion, bear, elk, deer, rodents. While these findings have in an outstanding setting of green and an unusual display of mushrooms rainfall.

It is also easy to find our now 40 vasive weed removal, trail building future programs like geo-caching, research of the property and cultural history of the area, and the beginning of a stewardship program for the park in the form of a herbarium project.

strong volunteer pool involved with in—and maintenance, and the early traces of

While all of this must seem like a busy schedule, it fails to mention the self study of the various field guides and reference books that provide the background for future park presentations and programs. As you can now see, Cheyenne Mountain State Park volunteers are definitely on the move—moving towards the park opening and the future it offers.



## Tales from the Ranger Station By Brian Kerrigan

My name is Brian Kerrigan and I am very excited to become the new ranger at Cheyenne Mountain State Park. I've lived in the Colorado Springs area, on and off, for about 15 years, and I am very familiar with what the area has to offer. I've been working, full time, with Colorado State Parks for a year, and I've spent that time as a Ranger with Pueblo State Park. The bulk of my seasonal experience with Colorado State Parks has been spent on the western Slope, in the Steamboat area, with a small stint at St. Vrain State Park.



I've had the opportunity to work for several different agencies throughout my seasonal career, including the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. My education is in Forestry from Colorado State University. I am very passionate about Colorado's natural resources and the recreational and intrinsic opportunities that they provide. I enjoy participating in the diverse opportunities that the Pikes Peak Region provides, including: running, hiking, fishing, and backpacking.

With only two months left to go before the opening, there's still a multitude of work to be done. I know that Cheyenne Mountain State Park is a long-awaited opportunity for the Colorado Springs community. I am certain that the Friends group will continue to play a major role in making this park as great as I know it can be. I am also convinced that the opportunities provided by Colorado State Parks are some of the best in the nation. Part of what makes Colorado State Parks so special are people like you—dedicated volunteers and individuals willing to make a difference in our great state. I look forward to meeting and working with each and every one of you.



# Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Membership Application

**I / We wish to join the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park**

**New / Renewal** (circle one)

- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$25 Annual Individual Membership**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$35 Annual Family Membership**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$50 Annual Supporting Membership**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$100 Annual Contributing Membership**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$100 Annual Small Business Membership**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$500 Annual Corporate Membership**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **\$500 LIFETIME MEMBER: Never pay dues again!**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address** \_\_\_\_\_

Help us save postage! Please check here to receive "The Tracker" newsletter via e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Make your check payable and please mail your application to:**

Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park  
 P.O. Box 51453  
 Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1453



**Thank you for your support of Cheyenne Mountain State Park!**