

THE  
**CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN**  
STATE PARK  
**TRACKER**



Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Newsletter Volume 4 Issue 2 December 2005

## Cheyenne Mountain State Park: Becoming a Reality



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### President's Message

Hello to all of our good Friends out there. I am honored to be serving you as your Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Board President for 2005/2006. During our October 2005 elections we also chose Jim Schwerin as the Board Vice President, Pam Karr retained her duties as Treasurer and Lori O'Hare continues as the Secretary. Many heartfelt thanks to Jerry O'Hare, your outgoing President, for an action packed and fun 2004/2005 filled with activities, progress and politicking. I say "politicking" because Jerry was by our Park Manager's (Rich Dudley) side through some very trying times over the past year and more. Representing you, the Friends of CMSP, Jerry attended and spoke at countless city, county, state and organizational meetings to demonstrate the sincerity and passion of the people who support our State Park. Thanks so much, Jerry.

This next year promises to be equally as exciting. With many of the political and physical hurdles jumped, we are on our way to a Park opening in 2006! Like most of you, I can hardly wait. I have been involved with the Park for over 5 years, and I am ready for opening day.

You have a very strong Board, with 3 new members, introduced later in the newsletter. I know that I can speak for the entire Board in saying that we look

forward to a year marked by involvement, record progress, exciting activities and opportunities and a Park ready for record breaking visitation!

Thank you for your care and concern of the land and our environment.

**Rick Upton/President**

### Update from the Manager

By Rich Dudley, Park Manager

There has been significant progress at Cheyenne Mountain since the last newsletter, and if you have driven by the park recently you have noticed that the area is really taking shape. it's exciting to see the trailhead and other facility areas being cleared, picnic tables and grills being placed, and concrete for campsites being poured. Years of hard work and patience are paying off for all of us as the property is starting to look like a park.

See **Update page 2**



## “...the property is starting to look like a park.” -- Rich Dudley

### Update from page 1

Progress at Cheyenne Mountain has reached numerous benchmarks in the past several months and the following are just a few of the exciting developments.

\*\*The improvements at the intersection on Highway 115 at the main entrance are nearly complete, and paving into the park should be completed by month end. This phase of construction was part of an agreement with Denman Investments to allow roadway and utility access into the park and it is an important piece of the puzzle to have completed.

\*\*The first phase of construction, which includes roads, utilities, and the creation of parking lots, picnic areas, and campgrounds, is slated to be completed this December. This major phase of development creates the infrastructure of the park and really brings those planning maps to life.

\*\*We are still in the planning stage for the second phase of construction and hope to have the planning package completed by the end of this month. This phase includes buildings, site development, landscaping, trail connections and various other finishing details.

\*\*A construction bid has been awarded for the Visitor Center, Fee Station, and Trailhead Comfort Station. We are in the contracting phase right now. Once the legalities are settled, we expect to break ground on the new buildings in December. The construction could take up to twelve months to complete. I am anxious to see if the buildings look as great in person as they do in the architect's pictures.

\*\*Speaking of architects, we recently selected 4240 Architecture to design the cabins for the park. 4240



Utilities being laid in the campground.

designed the Visitor Center and Event Center. If you have seen the artist's renderings for these buildings, you know that we will have first-rate cabin designs when this process is over.

\*\*We currently have approximately eighteen miles of trails waiting for hikers in the park. This past June, 1.25 miles of the Boulder Run Trail were completed by VOC. The project was a lot of fun and concludes the VOC's three-year commitment to the park.

\*\*We have just started the process of planning the Interpretive Exhibits for the Visitor Center. This is a particularly important planning process, as the displays we select will tell the significant stories of the park and convey the uniqueness of Cheyenne Mountain to our visitors. Along these lines, we have started looking through impressive mock-ups for the interpretive signage for the trails and I am pleased with how they are coming along.

\*\*Finally, the park now has its second full-time employee. Park Ranger, Monique Mullis, transferred here in September after fifteen years at Lake Pueblo State Park. Initially she will be responsible for developing many of the programs and putting together many of the services the park will provide. Currently, she is working on completing the park's Master Interpretive Plan, creating the park's volunteer program, and getting the park's revenue and visitor services programs put together.

As you can see, Cheyenne Mountain State Park is becoming a reality. Every week brings us one step closer to getting the park open. So that brings me to the question that is on everyone's mind: when is the park going to open? With the progress that has been made over the past several months, and barring any more major, unforeseen complications we are working hard to make 2006 the year for Cheyenne Mountain State Park. Stay tuned because park development is full-steam ahead and it will not be long before we can open our doors to the public.



The "locals" take the construction in stride.

## Members for Life!

Please join us in welcoming Lyda Hill and P.J. Anderson as our newest Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Lifetime Members. Besides the obvious benefit of paying dues just once, Lyda and P.J. will receive a 2006 State Parks Pass.

You can become a lifetime member of the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park with a one-time \$500 dues payment (payable over 1 year). Just complete the membership application included in this newsletter, attach your check (made out to FCMSF) and drop it in the mail.

# The View from the Top of Cheyenne Mountain

By Rick Upton

Cheyenne Mountain provides a dramatic backdrop to our State Park that bears the mountain's name. Park property, however, does not currently include the mountain itself. Cheyenne Mountain is comprised of three peaks. The northern peak and its surrounding acreage is owned by the Broadmoor Hotel. You may have heard of stories of the Broadmoor Lodge or the Honeymoon lodge built by the Broadmoor and visited by presidents as well as common folks long ago. The Lodge was torn down in the 1950's but its foundation remains today. The two peaks to the south of the Broadmoor property include 2 parcels of land that amount to approximately 925 acres and border Cheyenne Mountain State Park property. The owners of this land include descendants of the original homesteaders of Cheyenne Mountain and recently treated the community to a first class tour of the property.

The Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park co-hosted the September 17, 2005 event which brought over 200 people to the top of the mountain for walking tours,



unmatchable views, a short presentation and a tasty lunch. Guests included many community leaders, outdoors groups and the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Board. The owners of the top of the mountain made it clear that they wanted the land to remain open space and wilderness, in keeping with the wishes of the original homesteaders and their descendant's. Adding this land to our Cheyenne Mountain State Park would provide a huge benefit to Colorado and our people. The purchase of this property would link our State Park to the Pike National Forest and to several other trail systems that stretch throughout Colorado. The two southern peaks of Cheyenne Mountain represent what is believed to be the southeastern-most edge of the Front Range and the Rocky Mountains. Preserving this part of the Front Range in its natural state is paramount.

One of the goals of the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park is to raise funds towards the purchase of this historical, pristine property. This event was the first of many that will bring attention to the importance of obtaining this available property. Your Friends Board of Directors has established an account specifically for the purchase of this land and our fund is growing.

Anyone wishing to assist financially with the purchase of the property should contact one of your Board members or send your check, in any amount, to FCSMP at the address on our membership application. Mark your check for "land purchase" in the memo block.

Remember that your Friends group is a non-profit 501(3) C organization and all of your donations are tax deductible.



## New Friends Of CMSP

**With Friends like these, we are bound to do great things!**

Welcome our new members...

Debbie Ackley  
**P.J. Anderson** (lifetime member)  
 Larry and Connie Bourke  
 Jeanne Breeding  
 The Divittorios  
 Marilyn Feaster  
 Ben Harvey and Che' Freeman  
 Kids Alfresco Foundation  
**Lyda Hill** (lifetime member)  
 Monique Mullis  
 The Neumann Family  
 Nan Scranton  
 John and Carolyn Spillane

## Snowshoeing Anyone?

Join the Friends on February 4, 2005 for a great day of snowshoeing. If there is no snow, we will enjoy a brisk hike. Either way, you will get a rare, sneak peak of the trails at the park.

Don't have snowshoes? Don't worry, you can rent snowshoes for the day at the Mountain Chalet at 226 N. Tejon.  
 Just give them a call at 719-633-0732 for details about rentals.

**Don't miss all the fun!**

**RSVP to Lori O'Hare at 719-260-1391 and get on the list!**

**Get on the list, and we will send you the details closer to the date.**

# CMSP Resource Summary: Our Smallest Inhabitants

*This is the fourth excerpt from the CMSP Stewardship Plan, printed with permission. This issue focuses on our smallest Park inhabitants*

A large black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) colony occurs on the eastern side of the park near the highway and a second colony occurs along the southeastern border of the park.



The US Fish & Wildlife Service recently listed black-tailed prairie dogs as a candidate species for federal protection. Several factors have led to population declines, with the most significant factors being sylvatic plague, habitat fragmentation and poisoning. Plague may have recently swept through the colony at Cheyenne Mountain; many of the burrows appear empty and it seems that the population at the park is recovering from a recent population decline.

Prairie dogs, a keystone species for short-grass prairie, are ecologically important to the health and maintenance of the short-grass prairie ecosystem (Hoogland 1995). Burrowing and grazing activities increase soil fertility and plant nutrient content and are beneficial to the maintenance of grasslands under natural conditions (Gershman, 1999).

Abandoned prairie dog burrows are used by many other species for shelter, including state-threatened burrowing owls, and mountain plovers (a candidate species for federal protection).

Prairie dogs are also an important food source for many species; ferruginous hawks feed extensively on prairie dogs throughout the year.

**Keystone Species:**  
A species whose role is essential for the survival of many other species in an ecosystem.

Federally threatened bald eagles rely heavily on prairie dogs for food during the winter months while they are in Colorado, as do many other raptors, swift foxes and western rattlesnakes. A number of rare or sensitive rodent species potentially occupy the grassland areas of the park where development is slated to occur. These species include: the 13-lined ground squirrel, the spotted ground squirrel, the plains harvest mouse, the olive-backed pocket mouse, the plains pocket mouse, the silky pocket mouse.



**Plains Harvest Mouse**

Little is known about the presence of amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates in the park. Due to the absence of any continuous running water and the scarcity of wetland areas, amphibian species may be minimal. Bull snakes (*Pituophis catenifer*) and western rattlesnakes (*Crotalus viridis*) are common in the grasslands and in the oak scrublands, as well as along the perennial drainages. Racers and western hognose snakes may also be

common in the grasslands and oak scrublands. Although unconfirmed, short-horned lizards (*Phrynosoma hernandesi*) are likely throughout the site, while eastern fence lizards (*Sceloporus undulatus*) are likely to be present in the rocky outcrops throughout the grasslands and drainages. (CNHP 2001).

## Looking for the Perfect Holiday Gift?

Want to share your the excitement about the park? How about a Cheyenne Mountain State Park cap or shirt?

We have Cheyenne Mountain State Park polos and T's that are a high quality 50/50-cotton/polyester blend. They wear well and rarely wrinkle. We also have CMSP caps. All logos and words are embroidered.

**Caps** - \$15, smoke gray, Cheyenne Mountain State Park on front; or beige, bear logo on front, park name on back.

**T-shirts** - \$15, forest green, mountain lion logo and park name on the front; or heather gray, bear logo and park name on front. **Polo**

**Shirts** - \$25, beige, mountain lion logo and park name on front; forest green, falcon logo and park name on front.

**Contact Rick Upton**  
(phone 576-9141 or email [uptonrus@adelphia.net](mailto:uptonrus@adelphia.net)) to get your souvenir before the Park opens!

All proceeds go to the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park.

## Tales from the Ranger Station By Monique Mullis

Hello, friends! My name is Monique Mullis and I am the new Park Ranger at Cheyenne Mountain State Park. I cannot tell you how excited and honored I am to be a part of opening this great park. When I first got this position, someone told me that I had "won the prize," and that's exactly how I feel.

I transferred from Lake Pueblo State Park in September after fifteen years there; seven and half were as a full-time Ranger. While at Pueblo, I developed an interest in environmental education and got involved in Project Wild, Teaching Environmental Sciences Naturally, and became a certified interpretive guide with NAI. Beyond interpretation, I really enjoy working with park seasonals, managing campgrounds, and helping park visitors, so I knew that Cheyenne Mountain was the perfect opportunity to expand my knowledge and use my skills.

On a personal level, I still live in Pueblo. I have a great old house that was built in 1940 and I'm just not ready to leave it yet to move to Colorado Springs. I enjoy working around my house and often find myself in some crazy home improvement project that I never should have started! I am single and spend way too much time doting over my two cocker spaniels, Bonnie and Clyde, two turtles, and several fish.

Over the past few months I have met several of Cheyenne Mountain's friends and I have felt so welcome. I want to thank everyone I have met for being so warm and gracious and I'm looking forward to meeting more friends in the future. If you ever have any questions or if there is anything I can help you with, please call me at 719-227-5266 (office), 719-359-0765 (cell), or email me at [monique.mullis@state.co.us](mailto:monique.mullis@state.co.us).



### Just a Reminder

The 2006 Colorado State Parks Annual passes arrive on November 16th.

**You can get yours at..**

The South Region Office  
(4255 Sinton Road, CO Springs)

Any State Park

At: [www.parks.state.co.us](http://www.parks.state.co.us)



Volunteers moving boulders during the VOC Trail Building Event in June 2005

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 the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

## Everybody Needs Friends! Benefits of Friends Membership

The most important benefit that you will receive as a Friend of Cheyenne Mountain State Park is knowing that you are helping to protect this wonderful state park now and in the future!

You will also:

-- **Contribute** a tax-deductible donation to the extent allowed by law

-- **Receive** the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Newsletter and keep up-to-date on the park's progress

-- **Be invited** to events and hikes scheduled exclusively for the Friends

-- **Create** a legacy of citizen support by enhancing and preserving Colorado's newest and most spectacular State Park.

# Meet Your New CMSP Friends Board Members

By Rick Upton

During this past year you elected three new Board members to serve for 2 years each, Jack Busher, Jane Dillon and Nan Scranton.

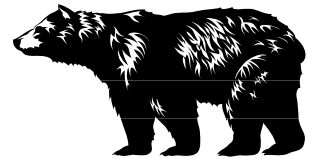
Jack Busher comes to us from Ohio where he taught school and coached several sports. Since 1980 Jack has been teaching at Cheyenne Mountain High School and coaching both boys and girls soccer. Jack quickly became a year-round outdoors enthusiast in Colorado and has been participating and volunteering as a steward of our environment for many years. In Jack's words, "I have always believed it is incumbent on all of us to give back to our community in whatever way we can. For me, my experience as a volunteer has been the most rewarding. Because of this, I got involved in the Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park and hope to be of whatever assistance I can to the board and to the membership in general."

Jane hails from Texas but was transplanted to the Big Apple, after college and a bit of experience. After a very successful election campaign she worked with the Rudy Guiliani administration as the Assistant Commissioner of Business for the City of New York. Childhood memories of Colorado's outdoors and open space brought Jane to this area in 1999. Since that time she has been immersed in the community serving in several extremely important Boards and Committees. Jane is passionate about the outdoors and says, "I enjoy hiking and have a great interest in preserving open space for future generations. CMSP is very close to where I live and I want to help with the development of this wonderful piece of land."

While Nan Scranton is originally from Indiana, she has lived much of her life in Colorado. Her career has caused her to leave Colorado on more than one occasion, but she always found her way back home. Nan is a Registered

Nurse and practiced as a Critical Care Nurse for 17 years before obtaining her Juris Doctor at the University of Denver College of Law. For the past 5 years she has worked with the 4th Judicial District Attorneys Office. Nan works out and spends as much time as possible in Colorado's great outdoors to stay in shape. In her words, "To live so close to a developing State Park is incredible and to be able to participate in its development as a board member is yet another privilege."

Jane, Jack and Nan bring an energy and excitement to your Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Board of Directors that is refreshing and welcome as we move closer to our park's opening. The experience and diversity of this group add a new dimension and meaning to the board's purpose of supporting our State Park and preserving the land for all to experience and enjoy.



## Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Board

Contact a Board Member and find out how you can provide time and talent in support of your newest Colorado State Park.

- |                    |                                |                            |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| President          | Rick Upton                     | uptonrus@adelphia.net      |
| Vice Pres.         | Jim Schwerin                   | jim@windycreek.net         |
| Secretary          | Lori O'Hare                    | lajohare@gbronline.com     |
| Treasurer          | Pam Karr                       | mjkarr@yahoo.com           |
| Member             | Glen Scott                     | glenscott@adelphia.net     |
| Member             | Jerry O'Hare                   | lajohare@gbronline.com     |
| Member             | Jack Busher                    | jbusher@qwest.net          |
| Member             | Jane Dillon                    | TEXASNY@aol.com            |
| Member             | Nan Scranton                   | NanScranton@elpasoco.com   |
| Non-Voting Members |                                |                            |
| Park Manager       | Rich Dudley                    | rich.dudley@state.co.us    |
| Park Ranger        | Monique Mullis                 | monique.mullis@state.co.us |
| Newsletter         | Monique Mullis and Jack Busher |                            |

**Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.**

~John Muir

# 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 Individual Annual Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 Family Annual Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Annual Supporting Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Annual Contributing Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Annual Small Business Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Annual Corporate Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Never pay dues again... become a LIFETIME Member \$500**

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

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

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

**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!