

THE CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN STATE PARK TRACKER



Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park Newsletter Volume 6 Issue 3 December 2006

Ad-ap-ta-tion/ n, : alteration in structure or habit to improve condition in relationship to one's environment



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President's Message:

I am so pleased to have seen many of you visiting our new, now open, State Park! Although, the Park is open only on weekends until we can get the visitor's center complete (with parking lot), don't miss this opportunity to explore the awesome trail system. Stop by and meet our passionate volunteers as they provide Park information, trail guidance and knowledge.

The support you have provided to CMSP over the past few years has set the standard for State Park Friends groups. Your physical, vocal, written and financial contributions have been instrumental in keeping the State focused on our Park, the Volunteer program up and running, and the community involved. Thank you for your dedication to our environment and for your patience. With your continued support CMSP is destined to become the very best Park in the State, indeed the standard for all state parks.

Our Board of Directors will be holding elections in the near future. If you or someone you know is interested in serving CMSP as a part of the Friends of Cheyenne

Mountain State Park Board of Directors, now is the time to get involved. Please contact Board President Rick Upton or Secretary Lori O'Hare. Their addresses are listed later in this newsletter.

Please continue to tell others of our plan and priority goal, to help make the "top of the mountain", Cheyenne Mountain, a part of our Park. The nearly 1000 acres of pristine land will connect CMSP to the Pike National Forest and preserve the mountain as protected land forever. Your Friends group has designated a special fund for the purchase of the available land and can apply tax-deductible

donations to the fund.

Lastly, many of you will be receiving Friends membership renewal reminders very soon. I urge you to continue being a part of El Paso County and Colorado Spring's only State Park. I am certain that you can imagine how incredible a Park experience we can provide our visitors with your help.

Live well and enjoy the great Colorado outdoors!

Rick Upton



CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN STATE PARK:

Ready or Not ... Here Come the Visitors!



It was a clear, cold morning on October 21, 2006 as friends, volunteers, and staff of Cheyenne Mountain State Park gathered inside the visitor center to discuss the logistics and last minute details for the opening ceremony. No one knew what the morning would bring. Would the cold keep people away? Was there ample publicity for the event? Would the weather hold?

About 9:15 a.m. a few people trickled into the park via personal vehicle or bus. By 10:00 a.m., an estimated crowd of 300 had gathered, eagerly awaiting the opportunity to see the park and the visitor center. The pre-event jitters began to subside as

volunteers and staff mingled with an enthusiastic crowd. Enjoying the hot coffee and donuts, visitors gathered information about the park and shopped for souvenirs at the "Friends" booth. All the hard work and anticipation was beginning to pay off; we had begun to establish our customer base.

Bundled up in warm coats and blankets, a hardy group of on-lookers listened to dignitaries from local and state government agencies and supporting organizations explain the years of hard work, collaboration, negotiation, and planning that went into the acquisition of the land and the establishment of the park. Hopefully, the much asked question "why did it take so long?" was adequately answered. At the conclusion of the formal presentations, a ribbon-cutting ceremony signified the opening of the first State Park in El Paso County (also, the largest continuous tract of public land in the Colorado Springs area.) Afterward, visitors had the choice of exploring the park on their own, taking a guided bus tour or naturalist-led hike on the trails. As if on cue, the wild turkeys made a fleeting appearance during several of the bus tours and hikers also encountered them on the trail.



Mayor Lionel Rivera assists at the ribbon-cutting ceremony to open CMSP



With the formalities of music, speeches, expressions of gratitude, and acknowledgements fading in the wind, one can't help but wonder how John Lytle, landowner in the 1880s, would have reacted to all this hoopla. It is doubtful that, during his time, Mr. Lytle would have known the significance this land would play in the lives of future residents and visitors to the Pikes Peak region. In 1880 Colorado Springs was just 9 years old and not yet experiencing the growing pains of a mid-sized city. The establishment of Cheyenne Mountain State Park not only preserves a valuable natural resource but, in addition, a piece of the local, cultural history. As stewards of this legacy, our focus must now turn to its protection and conservation for wildlife and the generations of visitors that will follow.

By Pat Grove

SPECIAL GUESTS ATTEND CMSP GRAND OPENING: Former Residents on Hand for Celebration



The land that makes up Cheyenne Mountain State Park has had only three owners in residence. The first was the homesteader, John Lytle who lived at Turkey Creek Canyon and used the property for cattle ranching during the 1880's.

In 1890 Linda M. Touzalin and her sister bought the property from John Lytle. They lived there until 1939 when they traded 1500 acres, the ranch house, and adjacent buildings to Lloyd and Dorothy Jones in exchange for the Jones' house at 34 Lake Ave.



When Lloyd Jones first went to register his brand, he found that "LJ" brand was already taken, so he just flipped his initials, thus creating the "JL" brand, which in turn became the name of the ranch. Surprisingly, that "JL" moniker had nothing to do with the land's original settler, John Lytle.

In my search for information on this family, I talked with friends whose families had lived here for several generations. One friend, Bob Speer, had worked with Casey Jones, son of Lloyd and Dorothy, and knew some of the family. He introduced me to Norm Jones, son of Casey. Norm, "The Voice of the Avalanche" in Denver, suggested I call his first cousin, Torney Smith, son of Larry and Dorothy Jones Smith, in Spokane. Torney grew up on the ranch, and told me a lot about life there. He also sent me a dozen beautiful pictures taken in the 1950s of the land, the buildings, and the family. The family moved to Washington state in the mid 1960's because NORAD had taken all the water and they could no longer run cattle there. The house stood vacant for many years.



Later, I gave my notes to Dave Phillips at the Gazette who used them to write the articles at the time of the opening. The day before the opening, Dave sent me an e-mail saying that three of the Jones family would be here for the opening. I couldn't wait to meet them. After the ceremony, I found them in the visitors center. Torney and Larry Smith, sons of Dorothy Jones Smith, and Libby Jones, daughter of Casey Jones. They hadn't known anything about the Park until I called them. What a great meeting!



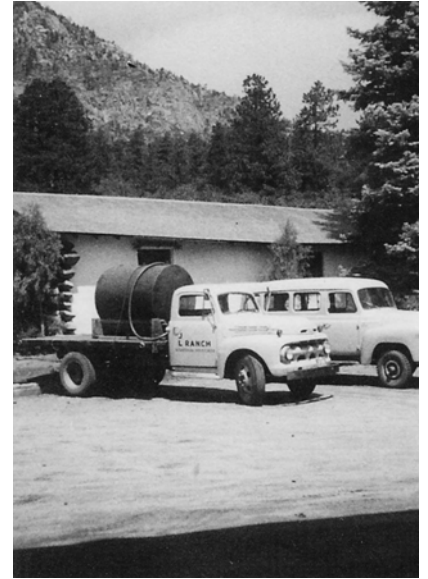
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Former Residents on Hand for Celebration (cont'd from Page 3)

At 2:00 that afternoon, Lucy Bell, Rich Dudley, a photographer and I met the three of them near where the house had stood. We climbed very muddy banks to the house site. They were happy to find the rock they used to climb on, and their favorite climbing tree. The house and outbuildings had been vandalized over the years, and the family accepted Fort Carson's offer to demolish all the buildings. From the contours of the land, the family thinks the buildings were torn down and buried. However, they found the shower head their grandfather used, much to their delight.

Can you imagine learning that the land you grew up on and loved all through your childhood, had been saved forever? Sometime after the cabins are built, I hope we can invite the Jones family to come back for a reunion to tell us the stories of their childhood. We also hope eventually to have a display of their pictures and a presentation on the history of this wonderful land as part of the permanent collection at the visitor's center.

Ann Brown



Trail Dust: Sunday on Sundance, December, 2006

Now that the Park is open on weekends, it's time to get out and inspect some of what our more than 18 miles of trail have to offer. Below, you'll find a few snapshots from along the way on a recent trek along the Sundance Trail.



To follow this route in a clock-wise direction, start just to the south of the Trailhead parking lot, head east briefly, and then south as you roughly parallel Highway 115. Soon Sundance heads west and begins to rise out of the grasslands and into the foothills shrubland to the very edge of the montane forests.

Wildlife Winter Survival: How Do They Do that?

Leaves have drifted one by one from the oaks, flowers once bright and vibrant with color are now naked brown stems and the wind that once warmed our faces now seems bitter and harsh. The park is beginning it's winter transformation and with that the wildlife now begin their sometimes long and difficult journey to survive.

We will also start preparing for winter by pulling out our favorite fleece jackets, hats and mittens while enjoying the warmth of our climate controlled houses. Our food sources are readily available as are the liquids to quench our thirst. What about the wildlife of the park? How do they survive the freezing temperatures, dwindling food sources and lack of heat in their homes? Come along on a short journey into the amazing world of wildlife winter survival.

In the animal world there are really only three choices for survival: hibernation, migration, or adaptation. The park may seem like it's in for the "big sleep" but in every nook and cranny the wildlife from the smallest ladybug to the burly bear are all trying to make it till spring.

BONUS FLIGHT MILES

Artic Tern: longest distance for a bird – 21,750 miles
per year

Monarch Butterfly: longest distance for butterfly –
2,00 miles

Caribou: longest distance by land animal – 700 miles

Migration - the movement from one place to another is one adaptation that wildlife will use to survive winter. Some migrate great distances and others migrate just a few miles. A true migrator will make a round trip, always to return to their original home. Others, such as earthworms just go deeper into ground to escape the cold.

Hibernation – a deep sleep in which body temperatures lower, breathing and metabolism slow. There are "true" hibernators that are so deeply in sleep that it's almost impossible to wake them. Some true hibernators are bats, chipmunks and marmots. Their bodies cool down until they are close to freezing or go into "torpor". They will stay in torpor for days and weeks at a time, warming up occasionally for a few hours a day. Bears on the other hand have a slight drop in their body temperature and respiration and can be easily awakened. Bears do

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Trivia Contest: Test your CMSP Knowledge!

What are the four activities currently listed under **Park Activities** at the Cheyenne Mountain State Park website?

E-mail your answer to cheyenne.park@state.co.us by 5:00 pm on Jan 15, 2007.

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.

Wildlife Winter Survival: How Do They Do that?

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not drink or pass body waste during the cold winter months. Imagine sleeping in one position for months and then deciding to get up one day and walk up a mountain. No problem for the bear!



Adaptation - making changes in behavior or bodies to adapt to cold temperatures and loss of food sources. Our park is host to many of these “tough guys”. They are the ones that stick it out during the coldest months. Because food sources are scarce some animals will change their diet from grasses and forbes to bark and twigs. Many of the rodents and birds will stash food for the upcoming winter months. Have you ever noticed how many birds seem to flock to-

gether in the winter? This idea of the “buddy system” conserves heat. Deer will walk in single file through snow drifts to conserve energy and will also huddle up at night. Winter birds will have a 50% increase in feather weight which creates more insulation as does the fur of mammals. Some insects will spend the winter as larvae or reside in large colonies keeping each other warm. The little chickadee will literally shiver as the temperatures drop in the evening, cool down their body temperatures and tuck themselves into a little ball creating a “nightly hibernation”.

So, as you prepare for the upcoming winter, keep our wildlife friends in mind. Most of us can't hibernate, but there are some amongst us who've learned to migrate (Ah, Arizona!), and all of us certainly take advantage of a variety of adaptations. Stay warm!

By Debbie Ackley

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	uptonrus@adelphia.net
Vice Pres.	Jim Schwerin	jim@windycreek.net
Secretary	Lori O'Hare	lajohare@msn.com
Treasurer	Pam Karr	mjkarr@yahoo.com
Member	Jack Busher	jbusher@qwest.net
Member	Jane Dillon	TEXASNY@aol.com
Member	Jerry O'Hare	lajohare@peoplepc.com
Member	Nan Scranton	NanScranton@elpasoco.com
Member	Glenn Scott	glenscott@adelphia.net

Non-Voting Members:

Park Manager	Rich Dudley	rich.dudley@state.co.us
Senior Ranger	Monique Mullis	monique.mullis@state.co.us



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.

TOSC visits Cheyenne Mountain State Park: An Evening Walk by Jack Busher

Thursday evening, December 14, 5:00 P.M.

Time for another CMSP experience! Trails and Open Space Coalition Director Dan Cleveland and Park Naturalist Pat Grove led a group of TOSC members on a flashlight-illuminated hike along Sundance Trail. TOSC is a local group that has been in existence since 1987. Their prime objective is to support various local governmental agencies in their quest to acquire and set aside open space, trails and bikeways that improve the lives of so many. Along with the Friends group, they have pro-

vided significant support in the process of developing Cheyenne Mountain State Park.



Dan Cleveland shares a hot chocolate with friends.

Unseasonably warm temperatures helped make the walk both pleasant and informative as the group of fifteen listened intently to Grove's occasional comments on a variety of interpretive topics. State Parks was represented by Senior Ranger Monique Mullis and Ranger Brian Kerrigan, who provided a service tent to shelter the hot chocolate and snacks that welcomed the hikers on their return to the Park's trailhead.

Volunteers on the Move by Jack Case

The park is open, kind of, and our volunteers are still engaged in a variety of activities. Each day that the park is open, volunteers provide a focal point for visitors to get trail information; learn about the skins, skulls, tracks, and scat displayed on one of the tables; buy one of the Friend's cap and shirt combo-packs; participate in our scavenger hunt for children; or to discuss the interesting bird they saw in the park by manning the park temporary 'visitor center' (a nice green tent with a few tables). While the weather isn't always perfect, the interaction with our

an informed, motivated, and energized group of volunteers to serve the visiting public and our environmental education programs. The training agenda has concentrated on areas in both natural and cultural history which provides a well rounded background to field visitor needs. Additionally, each volunteer puts their own finger print on their programs based on their personal interests and background. As you can imagine, this approach will result in a wide variety of offerings at the park.



early visitors has been very positive – they really like what they see and are excited to see more as development in the park continues.

Volunteer training continues as we strive to develop

Continuing volunteer work is being done on the trails, trail signs, weed management, visitors guide, herbarium project, as well as interpretive programs at our temporary center and on the trails. Plans are being finalized for a special Christmas program that will include hot chocolate, hot apple cider, craft projects for children, story reading, and resulting in decorating designated trees with appropriate treats for the birds in the park – this will be fun for everyone.

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Volunteers on the Move

(cont'd from Page 7)

Looking toward the future, several special plans are being worked to enhance the high quality volunteer workforce we all want. As we close the final page on 2006 and enter 2007 expect increased training opportunities in trail maintenance, visitor center operations, trail host duties, and general maintenance. This will allow specific supervisors to integrate interested volunteers into their ongoing operations. Plans to participate in an outreach program for school children should be ready to implement at the beginning of the New Year. We are also preparing the training agenda for the volunteer naturalists, Class of 2007. This training will have considerable hands on interaction in the park's resources.



Volunteers attend another interpretive class to prepare themselves for the Park's opening

As you can see, CMSP volunteers continue to make their presence known. This dedicated group of folks are ever ready to help all visitors create memories that will bond families and friends forever – they are the Memory Makers!

TALES FROM THE RANGER STATION:

By Brian Kerrigan

For those of you who don't know, we recently hired a new seasonal ranger as well as a seasonal gate attendant for the winter season. Mike Dahn is our seasonal, Title 33, Ranger. He is currently a student at UCCS and will be working with us for the winter season. Jessica Scott is our new gate attendant and will be working with us on weekends for the winter season as well. When you get a chance stop by and say hi to these wonderful new additions to our team!



Mike Dahn, ready to roll at CMSP



While Jessica Scott just rocks!

First Annual Holiday “Crafts For Critters” Program

submitted by Deb Ackley

Thanks to the participation of several Park naturalists and volunteers, the first annual “Crafts for Critters” program held on Saturday, December 16th, was a huge success.



Not even deterred by the fact that their tents, so diligently put up the night before, had been blown off their bases and into the “rough,” the group managed to set up several stations.



There, participants were trained by the volunteer naturalists to put together feeders for the critters. These animal treats were made from pinecones, sticks, suet, string,

cranberries, apples and cheerios. What a treat for our wildlife!

After crafting these feeders, the kids were read a story about a family whose Holiday tradition includes decorating a tree

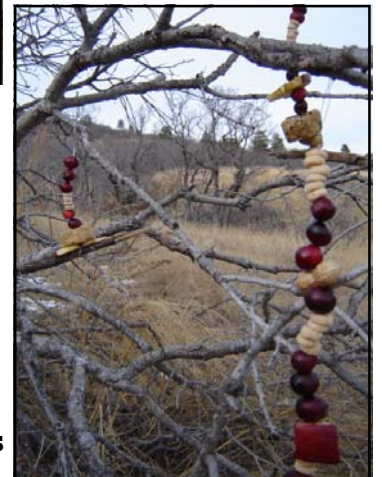


just for the wildlife. Boosted by hot chocolate and cider, the group then designated their own “Critter Tree” just over the bridge on the Zook Trail. Soon the tree was hung with the utmost care; truly a critter’s Holiday dream come



true.

What a wonderful way to spend a Saturday afternoon in the Park! Perhaps some other families will now enjoy this special tradition; regardless, we know it was an event these kids will always remember.



Park Manager's Update:



The Grand Opening is finally in our rearview mirror...whew!!! While we thought day would never come, it came and went so fast our collective heads are still spinning!

October 21st dawned cold and breezy, and the park was covered with a light layer of ice and frost...a perfect day for a Grand Opening! State Parks staff from around the south-east region and Denver were on hand to assist with this monumental event. Additionally, many of our hearty Friends and volunteers braved the cold weather to help man our retail, information, and refreshment booths. The event served not only as the park's Grand Opening, but the Ribbon-Cutting ceremony for the Visitor Center as well.

Approximately 400 people were in attendance as the Boy Scout Color Guard from Troop 1 presented both the Colorado state flag, as well as the American flag. A snare drum accompanied the Scouts as they emerged from a copse of oak trees, and marched down the path toward the stage. Once the flags were presented, Director Lyle Laverty lead us in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Harmony In Motion, Fort Carson's outstanding a cappella singing group then

sang the National Anthem, followed by America The Beautiful.

Speakers for the event included Mayor Lionel Rivera, County Commissioner Sallie Clark, Kae Rader from GOCO, Senator Andy McElhany, Michael Acree from the Lottery, Parks Board Chair Dr. Tom Ready, as well as Colorado Department of Natural Resources Director Russell George, who was substituting for Governor Bill Owens. Following the speeches that praised the partnerships and vision that made the park possible, this same group proceeded to the entryway for the Visitor Center and did the formal Ribbon-Cutting.

By all accounts, the Grand Opening event was a huge success! While the weather certainly limited the number of people in attendance, everything went off as planned. People were enthusiastic about the Visitor Center, and everyone was ecstatic about the trails finally being open.

My staff and I would like to express our gratitude to all of our Friends and volunteers who made this event possible. We simply could not have pulled off such a successful event without you!

During the interim since our last issue of the Cheyenne Mountain State Park Tracker, quite a bit of work has been accomplished.

- 1 It is now projected that the Visitor Center will be complete by mid-February. All of the alder millwork has been installed, as has all lighting fixtures. Additionally, we now have actual "live" phone lines to this building! There is still work to be done to the exterior building, as wells as substantial landscaping, and curb & gutter work to be done.
- 2 The Camper Services building,

Park Manager's Update: Cont'd from Page 10

which will be the operational center for the campground is taking shape. The building is completely framed and should soon be enclosed so that crews can work on it throughout the winter. The campground is now scheduled to open for Memorial Day weekend, 2007.

3 The Maintenance Shop and compound is nearing completion and we hope to move in sometime in February.

4 Soil cement, a stabilizing compound that will add to the life expectancy of our roads and parking areas, was applied to various areas of the park. The first round of paving in the lower portions of the park is complete.

5 Arrowhead Trails is now on site to begin clearing oak brush from the corridors of approximately 1.5 miles of new trails that are planned for the park. These trails are part of our trails master plan, and should be complete by early April, 2007. The two main spurs, Raccoon Ridge and Acorn Alley, connect our campgrounds, as well as to the trail system. Additionally, several short, but important trail connections, will be completed by Arrowhead as well.

6 Since our last edition, and just in time for our Grand Opening, two new full-time employees have been hired for the park. Bernie Klatkiewicz will be our Tourist As-

sistant, and will have the responsibility for running the Visitor Center, retail sales, and many other duties. Bryan Bond has been hired as our Park Resource Technician, and will be responsible for maintenance of our considerable infrastructure, buildings, grounds, and fleet. We warmly welcome them aboard, as they will be valuable members of the Cheyenne Mountain State Park team!

7 The park's Volunteer Program has been a whopping success! Through October, 42 volunteers have recorded 2957 hours in service to Cheyenne Mountain State Park! Many of those hours involved hard labor, cutting trails, pulling countless sunflowers, and lugging two-man, power augers all throughout the trail system in an effort to dig holes for our many signs.

As many of you are aware, construction will be a constant companion for us over the next few years. I ask your forbearance, however, because when construction is complete, we will have realized a vision that places Cheyenne Mountain State Park at the pinnacle of the Colorado State Park system. In the meantime, though, please enjoy your trails, welcome and educate our visitors, and be good stewards of this wonderful property!

A Year End Savings Plan!

Tax Deductible Donations -

There is still time to reduce your 2007 tax burden with a tax deductible donation. Your Friends of Cheyenne Mountain State Park (a registered 501 (c) 3) continues to accept tax deductible memberships and

donations for the 2007 tax year. Send your donation to Friends of CMSP, PO Box 51453, Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1453 to support the Park Volunteer program, education and interpretive programs and to add the "top of the mountain" to CMSP.

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** _____

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Thank you for your support of Cheyenne Mountain State Park!