



THE MONOLITH

A PUBLICATION BY THE COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT ASSOCIATION ■ SPRING/SUMMER 2007

Monument Superintendent Bids Farewell

By Bruce Noble



It is hard for me to believe that I'm writing my last article for the Colorado National Monument Association newsletter. If someone had asked me a year ago whether I would leave Colorado National Monument by March of 2007, I would have said "no way!" The Grand Valley had proven to be such a great place to live and work that it was hard to imagine being anywhere else. Alas, life had other plans in store for me.

Leaving is hard, but I am very excited about my new National Park Service position in Oklahoma. As superintendent of Chickasaw National Recreation Area, I oversee all National Park Service sites in the state including the Oklahoma City Memorial, Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, and Chickasaw itself. I also serve as the Oklahoma State Coordinator which means that I represent the National

Park Service Regional Director in all interactions with the Governor and the state of Oklahoma. This job will keep me plenty busy and I'm honored to have the opportunity to serve in this position.

The future is very bright for Colorado National Monument. The park has a fine staff, there is great community support for the monument, the association is very strong, and the monument itself is a fabulous resource.

Although I am leaving the monument sooner than I might have imagined, I am still very proud of the accomplishments that took place during my tenure of slightly less than three years. When I first arrived at the monument in 2004, I met with each of the staff members and used those meetings to develop an action plan for the park. I will spend the remainder of this article describing relevant accomplishments under each of the highlighted goals in the action plan.

Rebuild the Interpretive/Educational Programs:

The park received a \$75,000 permanent annual base increase in 2005 to support interpretive

programs. This funding has gone toward hiring additional staff and offering additional programs.

The park spent nearly \$100,000 in 2005 upgrading the park auditorium with new seating, new paint, new screen, new sound system, and new projection system. Other auditorium improvements include a new geology audio-visual program that has become a regular feature, thanks to the efforts of the University of Colorado Geology Department.

The number of interpretive programs offered in the monument in 2006 increased by over 50%.

Improve the Monument's trail network, including the development of linkages with the local and regional trail network:

The new Corkscrew Connector Trail was dedicated in November 2006. This trail creates a loop trail that starts and finishes in the Wildwood parking lot by connecting the Liberty Cap Trail to the Corkscrew Trail that was originally built by John Otto in c. 1919. This project carried forward the recommendation from

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Farewell

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the 2005 General Management Plan that the monument should develop more loop trails to supplement the current system of point-to-point trails.

I have worked closely with the Riverfront Commission to develop a connection between the monument trail system and the Riverfront Trail. The most likely connecting trail is the historic Fruita Dugway Trail and the foundation has been laid for developing that connection in the future.

Engaging in community outreach designed to maintain and expand our network of public & private partnerships in the Grand Valley:

I secured the assistance of a facilitator from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program in Denver to lead the development of a Mesa County Trails Plan. This planning process is underway and will produce a county-wide plan for a trail network that includes mountain bikers, hikers, ATV's, horses, and other modes of travel. A variety of community partners have participated in this planning process with numerous representatives from the federal, state, and local level.

I actively worked on planning for a future Public Lands Information Center



Bruce Noble dedicates the Corkscrew Trail in November 2006.

in the Fruita area. If built, this center will provide the visiting public with information about the tremendous variety of recreational opportunities on public lands in Western Colorado. The center would also provide the monument with a presence closer to the interstate and the opportunity to direct more visitors to the park. The planning process will continue in the future with the participation of the many partners involved in this project including the National Park Service, BLM, the US Forest Service, the City of Fruita, Dinosaur Journey Museum, the Colorado Welcome Center in Fruita, and the Grand Junction Visitor & Convention Bureau.

I have had success in strengthening the partnership between the monument and the BLM and Forest Service in order to improve the ability to respond to wild fires and to conduct prescribed fires in the monument.

Securing the personnel and funding necessary to serve the public in the most effective possible manner:

The monument anticipates a permanent operational increase of \$266,000 per year in 2008 if the President's proposed budget is approved by Congress. This money will go towards interpretive operations. Other increases anticipated in 2008 include an additional \$26,000 for interpretation, \$32,000 for protection (law enforcement) rangers, and \$40,000 for maintenance. All this funding will go toward seasonal hiring. While these increases still must be endorsed by Congress, their collective impact on the monument's budget will be huge if they are approved.

Greater efficiency in the operation of the monument's entrance fee program resulted in greater revenue for the monument; 100% of the entrance fee money is kept by the monument and spent on capital improvements.

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Teacher to Ranger to Teacher Program

By Michelle Wheatley

During the summer of 2006, Colorado National Monument participated in a new program involving several Intermountain Regional national park units and teachers from underserved schools and school districts throughout the region. The Teacher to Ranger to Teacher (TRT) program focuses on the education community and engages teachers from underserved schools that are not currently being reached with park programs.

During the last three summers, teachers have worked in different national park units performing a variety of duties that directly support Interpretation and Education. Jobs included developing and presenting interpretive programs for the general public, developing, reviewing and presenting curriculum-based materials for the park, providing activities for underserved youth groups from area schools, and serving at the visitor center information desk. During the school year, participating teacher-rangers bring their experiences and their park back into school classrooms.

Teri Lindauer, from Mesa Valley School District 51, was selected as Colorado National Monument's first Teacher to Ranger to Teacher. Teri has been an educator for over 25 years and, prior to teaching in public schools, worked as



Teri Lindauer leads students on a hike at Colorado National Monument.

a Park Ranger at Dinosaur and Colorado National Monuments. During her time of service as a teacher-ranger, she played a vital role in providing curriculum-based programs for schools visiting from various areas throughout the Western Slope. Together, Teri and interpretive ranger Michelle Wheatley were able to provide 103 environmental education programs to 2,967 students visiting the monument. Teri also researched, developed, and presented guided walks and porch talks for the visiting public, as well as staffed the visitor center information desk.

This April, during National Park Week, Teri wore her National Park Service uniform to school and provided several programs related to America's national parks to faculty and students. She discussed the role that park units of the national park system like Colorado National Monument play in pre-

servicing our natural and cultural heritage.

The TRT program will be instituted into several other park units in the Intermountain Region in 2007. Park Service funds will be restricted to first time participants during this expansion phase. But, thanks to funding from the Colorado National Monument Association, Teri will be able to return to Colorado National Monument and continue to provide programs as a TRT.

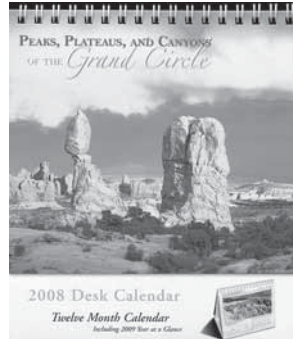
In 2006, 103 environmental programs were presented to 2967 students through the Teacher to Ranger to Teacher program at Colorado National Monument.

Bookstore Bests

Don't forget to stop at the visitor center next time you drive through Colorado National Monument. We have lots of great new products in the CNMA bookstore including books, trail guides, jewelry, and the Colorado National Monument 2008 calendar.



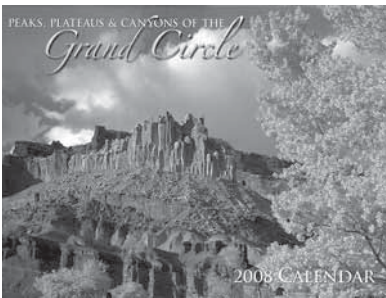
Colorado National Monument 2008 calendar: \$9.95



Peaks, Plateaus, and Canyons 2008 desk calendar: \$4.95



Peaks, Plateaus, and Canyons 2008 pocket calendar: \$3.00



Peaks, Plateaus, and Canyons 2008 wall calendar: \$8.95



Silver Jewelry by JC

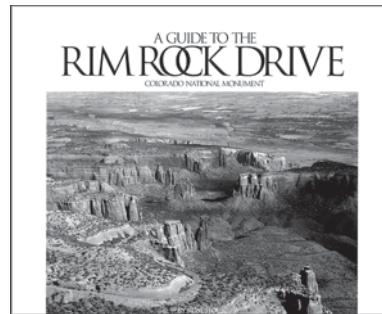
We carry earrings, necklaces, charms, and pins.



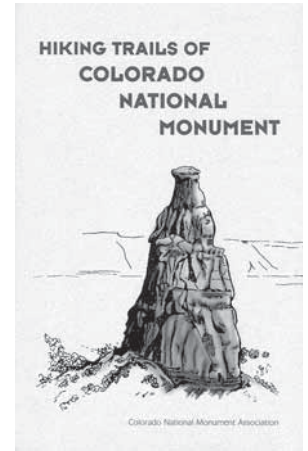
Styles include Independence Monument, juniper, lizard, and prickly pear.



Prices range from \$13.95 to \$29.95.



A Guide to the Rim Rock Drive: \$8.95
This bestselling favorite is back in print.



Hiking Trails of Colorado National Monument: \$2.95
Maps and descriptions of the spectacular hiking trails in the monument.

Farewell

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Last but certainly not least, the Colorado National Monument Association is on very solid footing. The bookstore has set gross sales records in 2005 and 2006 and the association membership is at record levels. The association staff and board members deserve credit for these accomplishments

and they have certainly been outstanding partners.

All things considered, the future is very bright for Colorado National Monument. The park has a fine staff, there is great community support for the monument, the association is very strong, and the monument itself is a fabulous resource. I am proud of the accomplishments achieved during my tenure and I thank all of you

for the many things you have done to make this success possible. My wife and I are owners of a lot in the Redlands and we anticipate the day that we return to the Grand Valley, build a house, and have the pleasure of living among you once again. In the meantime, take good care of yourselves and the monument. It is truly a treasure.

Colorado National Monument Association

2006 - The Year in Review

By Denise Hight

2006 was a milestone year for the Colorado National Monument Association. The CNMA had its best sales year ever in its 42-year history: Pre-sales-tax sales in 2006 were \$208,732, marking the first time the CNMA has ever exceeded \$200,000. This amount also reflects a five percent sales increase over 2005. This happened even though the number of visitors to the visitor center was down from the year before. The number of customers was down as well, but sales per customer were up over a dollar from \$9.38 in 2005 to \$10.42 in 2006.

There were 452 paid CNMA memberships in 2006. This is a two percent increase over 2005. Like the sales figures, this is the highest year ever. Of the 452 paid memberships, 75 were new and 377 were renewals.



Local musician Paul Jensen, who sings about the monument and its founding caretaker, John Otto, drew the largest crowd of the fall program series.

The CNMA sponsored 15 programs in the spring with an attendance of 608. These programs included a number of hikes throughout the monument, as well as PowerPoint presentations on geology, insects, and

landscape photography. Spring highlights included a concert at the monument by the Grand Junction Centennial Band, with 200 in attendance, and the CNMA Annual General Meeting and Art & Photography Exhibit, with 120 in attendance. The art and photography all featured Colorado National Monument, and the exhibit was held at Dinosaur Journey, a local museum featuring life-like dinosaur replicas.



Ranger Michelle Wheatley and resident VIP Sharon O'Connor promote the monument and the CNMA at the Grand Junction Farmers' Market.

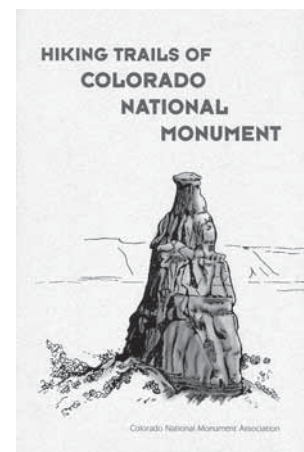
The CNMA sponsored five programs in the fall (two additional hikes were cancelled due to bad weather) with 138 in attendance. The most popular program in the fall was a concert given by local musician Paul Jensen, with 80 in attendance.

The CNMA donated over \$54,000 in goods and services to the Colorado National Monument in 2006. In addition to the spring and fall programs described above, projects financed in 2006 included printing costs for several publications, including site bulletins, brochures, the interagency newspaper given to monument visitors, and

a rack card given to motorists and bicyclists in the monument.

Other projects financed by the CNMA in 2006 included several roadside and trailhead signs, food and housing costs for a resident volunteer, exhibit area improvements, landscaping costs for the historic Stone House grounds, and a canopy to use for promotional events such as the Grand Junction Farmers' Market.

The CNMA completed several publications in 2006. In addition to several free publications, the CNMA produced the 2007 Colorado National Monument calendar featuring monument images taken by local photographers. The CNMA also produced and published a brand new publication, a 32-page booklet, *Hiking Trails of Colorado National Monument*.



Like a Cactus Tree...

Message from the CNMA President

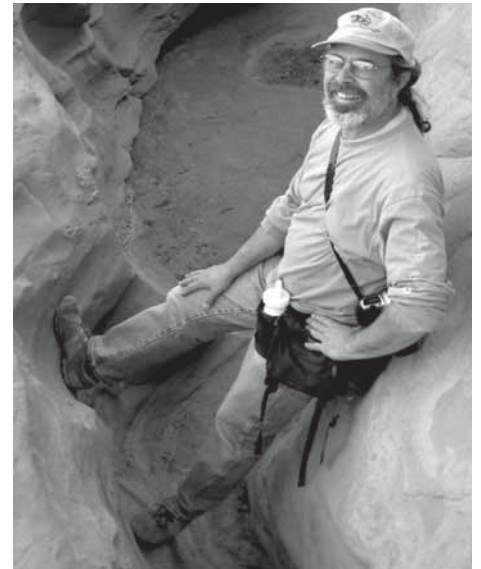
By Greg Gnesios

Yellowstone, the world's first national park, was established in 1872 but it wasn't until 1916 that President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act that created a National Park Service. Many of the system's "crown jewels" such as Yosemite, Rocky Mountain, Grand Canyon and Mesa Verde had already been established but had no "rangers" watching over them. Since that time the system has grown more than tenfold to include nearly 400 areas from the classic jewels to places like Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Manzanar National Historic Site, Wolf Trap Farm for the Performing Arts, and Martin Luther King's Birthplace. The diversity of today's National Park System mirrors the diversity of the nation, its triumphs and tragedies, its heroes and villains.

As a spate of recent articles have pointed out, however, the system is in trouble and has been for many years. When I joined the Park Service in 1971, not only was the system changing to accommodate new "urban parks" like Gateway National Recreation Area in New York City and Cuyahoga Valley in Ohio but we were already being told to "do more with less". With the exception of a slight bicentennial budgetary windfall in 1976, the "do more with less" litaney raised its unwelcome head every single year until it finally metamorphosed into "doing less with less". And this is the unfortunate status of today's National Park Service.

Much like the mighty saguaro cactus, protected in Saguaro National Park near Tucson, Arizona, the system is on shaky ground. Many saguaros seem healthy to the untrained eye but, in fact, are slowly dying from the inside out from "necrosis" caused by environmental and climatic changes. Many Park Service areas suffer from their own type of necrosis. Park roads are crumbling. Campgrounds have closed. Buildings are falling apart. Witness the recent closure of the popular Quarry Visitor Center at Dinosaur National Monument as a prime example.

Casual visitors to Colorado National Monument may not notice some of these rough edges. The park's historic Rim Rock Drive is getting a much-needed resurfacing. The campground and visitor center remain open year round. New roadside exhibits can be found at the major overlooks. The park staff has done an admirable job of ensuring visitors' comfort and safety as they discover the beauty of this national treasure. Much of the credit also goes to the volunteers and staff of the Colorado National Monument Association (CNMA) who work tirelessly to provide visitors with current information, excellent interpretive materials, and some good, old-fashioned one-on-one human contact. Last year alone, CNMA provided over \$50,000 in donations to support the monument's interpretive and research programs.



Your membership in CNMA is a key component in sustaining the health and vibrancy of Colorado National Monument.

While much has been accomplished, much more work lies ahead. The monument visitor center is beginning to show its 40+ years. Some interpretive programs have been curtailed. And the two significant future events will draw more attention to the monument. In 2011, Colorado National Monument will celebrate its 100th birthday with special events and programs. Five years later, in 2016, the entire nation will be honoring the centennial of the National Park Service itself. Hopefully, with the help of partners, volunteers, and other passionate supporters the mission of the National Park Service will continue to be effective and relevant. Like the saguaro cactus in the Sonoran Desert, may Colorado National Monument continue to provide inspiration and beauty to future generations.

Thank You CNMA Members!

There are over 450 paid memberships in the Colorado National Monument Association. Your membership supports educational programs at Colorado National Monument. In 2006 the CNMA donated \$54,000 to the Monument. We couldn't do it without your support!

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Art & Photography Exhibition and 2007 Annual Meeting a Great Success

Thank you to the following exhibitors:

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A big thank you goes to Aspen Street Coffee Company in Fruita for donating the coffee for the event!

Thank you to the following businesses that donated items for our door prizes:

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