

## Current Volunteers

### Castolon

Ted & Maryann Rowan –Visitor Center (4th)  
Ron & Jane Payne—Visitor Center (2nd)  
Phil & Margaret Hodgens—Camphosts (new)

### Chisos Basin

Jerry Turner —Camphost (new)  
Bob & Ruthine Hennessy—Camphosts (4th)  
Linda Richardson- Camphost (2nd)  
Jim & Ginny Herrick—Visitor Center (11th)

### Persimmon Gap

Bob & Kay Foster—Visitor Center (new)  
Mark Kirtley—Visitor Center (14th)

### Panther Junction

Elaine & John Jonker—River Rangers (3rd)  
Howard Benham—Pilot Assistant (4th)  
Christine Harris—Interp SCA  
Debbie Ambrose—Interp SCA  
Elton & Esther Homan—Special projects (new)

### Rio Grande Village

Roy, Aletha and Kenny Ellis –Camphosts (4th)  
Mike & Nancy Coe—Camphosts (new)  
Marshall & Pat McCall—Visitor Center (3rd)  
Don & Carol O'Brien—Visitor Center—(new)  
Linda & Kenn Sutton—Backcountry (4th)

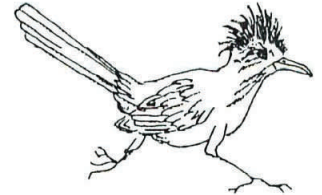
### Part-time

Steve Wick- Resource Management  
Reine Wonite- Interpretation  
Robert Trautner—Fire Management  
Steve Harper- Resource Management

\*Number in ( ) indicates years of service at BBNP



## Be Kind To Your Knees



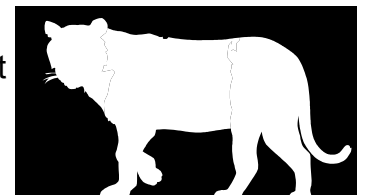
By Jane Brown

No doubt about it, the trails at Big Bend punish your knees. Unyielding rocks, steep descents, and thudding drops over boulders combine to create excessive compression on your precious knees. Aftershocks of soreness, stiffness, and downright pain can linger for days.

These features are a fact of life in our backcountry landscape, but there are things you can do to reduce their effects. Your knees act as natural shock absorbers. With age, everyone's knees slowly lose some of their spring, a process accelerated by regular compressive abuse (ie. hiking in Big Bend). Here are techniques can help protect the cartilage in your knees for a lifetime of hiking.

Conditioning your leg muscles is a good start. Making the muscles that support your knees stronger will help reduce the stress on the knee joints. Use weight exercises to strengthen your hamstrings, quads, and calves and stretch before you take off hiking. Warm up your muscles before you charge up the first hill.

When going downhill, walk like you are on hot coals or thin ice, putting your foot down very gently. No galloping downhill! When putting your foot down during downhill portions of the trail, use a gentle “heel-to-toe” motion. This spreads out the jolt that the knee receives from the heel strike, as opposed to putting the foot down flat, and having all of the jolt hit the knee at the same time.



This might seem obvious, but don't lift your foot off the ground any higher than necessary. The rocky terrain here makes lifting your foot high a necessity much of the time!

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Use 2 hiking poles, and I mean *really* use them when going downhill. Hiking poles are like having extra knees. On long, steep, downhill sections of the hike, lengthen the poles, getting them out in front

Take small steps, and try to make sure that your feet are not extended past the point where the pole tips impact the trail. Two hiking poles will decrease the weight load on the knees by over 20%. Yes, you will wear out hiking poles on a regular basis, but your knees will enjoy the benefits. Hiking poles can be used as brakes on downhill sections of trail, and they can be used for traction on uphill sections.

Try to avoid placing weight on the knee when it is bent. Common sense tells us that something straight will bear more weight than something bent. However, we normally don't think of this in relation to our knees.

Use a high quality set of footbeds in whatever footwear you are hiking in. Suggested brands include Spenco and Superfeet.

Try to control your body and pack weight. The way I figure it, the less weight I have coming down on my knees, the longer I'm going to be able to hike, which is really what it is all about. Happy trails!

Information gathered from "Rainmaker's Hiking Mechanics", AMC Outdoors and personal experience. jb

There once was the preacher, Ron Payne

Who knowledge of adobe did gain

One day he got mucky

While mixing his pucky

But it didn't throw him off his game.



(I'm not so sure that Ron is being kind to his knees in this photo....he might look into getting a pad to kneel on!)

## Where in the world are you headed next?



**Mike and Nancy Coe** will be taking off for the U.S. Virgin Islands the month of June. They will be working twenty hours a week, five hours every day at Maho Bay, an eco-tourism resort with tent cottages. It sounds like they will have enough time off to enjoy themselves. Very cool! They will be back at Big Bend in September and October to serve as camphosts at the Chisos Basin Campground.

**Mark Kirtley** plans to return to cave tours and bristlecone pine hikes at Great Basin for the summer.

**Bob and Kay Foster** report: "When we leave here we will be going back to the "Ranch" to bale hay, put in a new septic system and possibly a deck on the front of the house. We will go to see my 90 year old mother, our son, daughter-in-law, grandkids and great grand -daughter. I'm sure we will be busy with the airplane, my wood shop and coffee with the boys. We will also go to fly-ins and other activities. We will miss our friends here in the Big Bend and Persimmon Gap visitor center. We will be busy as usual."

**Roy, Aletha and Kenny Ellis** have several irons in the fire for the summer, but haven't settled on exactly where they are headed.

**Marshall & Pat McCall**: "We will be leaving BBNP on April 22 heading back to Wisconsin with a short stop in Indiana on the way. Our summer will be spent as "Babysitters of Choice" for our three grandchildren! Can't wait, they grow so fast--the oldest is 11 going on 40! We will also take some short trips around Wisconsin in the "new" old Class C motor home I (Pat) purchased before we left Wisconsin. This is my "going to Alaska" transportation, but we have to make sure everything functions and that Marshall is sure it will make it all the way to Alaska (which will be another summer--next year perhaps). Also, I have jury duty and need to be back in May for that. In 30 years of living in Wisconsin, I was never called to jury duty until this winter when I have been "picked" twice! Too bad, it would have been an interesting diversion from work."

**Ted & Maryann Rowan** will be headed to the Grand Canyon first, then on to the Navajo National Monument, Arches National Park, Santa Fe, Taos, Great Sand Dune NP before they travel to Cape Cod. By then the Bike Shop will beckon as tourists return to Cape Cod for Memorial Day Weekend.

**Jane & Ron Payne** report: "Our new home, the 31' Dutchmen trailer, to which we stepped up from the cramped space of the 17' Casita, has proved to be the delight we had planned. Shucks, we might even rent out a bed! Our most immediate concerns as our season winds down here at Castolon, is getting absentee ballots for Ohio's May election, in which Ron is a candidate for the Union County Democratic Central Committee. He's running unopposed but still he wants to get at least one vote, his own.

Next, when we are back in Ohio in early mid-May, we'll be putting in our tomatoes, bell peppers, Swiss chard and maybe harvesting some of the asparagus we planted last year. Probably though, our 'yardman' may have already enjoyed the asparagus harvest.

Over the Mothers Day weekend, we'll probably take our trailer to Lake Erie for the spectacular display of Spring migrant warblers at Magee Marsh along the south shore. Later in the Summer, we'll spend some time in Shenandoah NP as visitors in order to be near one of our son's family for an extended visit. We'd like to visit Maine in the early Fall with friends who can now stay with us in this portable bowling alley. By Thanksgiving, we'll be day-dreaming about returning to BIBE and Castolon for the next Spring Break season. That day-dream means that we have again found Big Bend to be a most welcoming community and a natural treasure."

**Don & Carol O'Brien's** summer plans are up in the air.



## Where in the world are you headed next?

..... continued

**Tina & Steve Ehrman** are headed home to New Mexico where they volunteer every summer near their home at the edge of the Santa Fe National Forest, once again patrolling the backcountry and cleaning up fire rings.

**Phil & Margaret Hodgens** will be returning to volunteer for another summer at Beartree Campground near Damascus, Virginia.

**Kenn & Linda Sutton** are planning a trip to Alaska this summer; details are in the works.

**Barney Ghim and Paula Jampsa** think that they will be heading back to Montana this summer where they will help out at a marina on Flathead Lake, near Kalispell.

**Jerry Turner**, the March and April camphost at Chisos Basin plans a tour of the Continental Divide Trail via mountain bike with friends. I will be anxious to hear more about this adventure !

**Skip Jiru and Judy McLeod** took off at the end of February to catch up on business at home in San Antonio before heading off for Tallac Historic Site at Lake Tahoe for the summer where they will be volunteering.

**Jim & Ginny Herrick** report, "Shortly after leaving Big Bend, we'll be traveling east for Ginny's college class reunion followed by visits to family and friends. Most of the summer will be spent at home in Las Cruces with community commitments, construction projects for us and our son, and expanding the garden. September will bring a barge/bicycling Elderhostel in Holland and Belgium followed by connecting with friends and distant relatives in Germany."

**Bob and Ruthine Hennessy** are moving to the Chisos Basin Campground for the months of April and May, then they will take off in an easterly direction to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with the family. They will be volunteering as camphosts at Curecanti National Recreation Area near Gunnison, Colorado for the summer.

**SCA Christine Harris** returns to Cape Cod National Seashore to continue her work there as an interpreter. She will also start grad school in the fall.

**SCA Debbie Ambrose** secured an internship in Laramie, Wyoming as a Herpetology Field Tech. She will be working for 3 months with a grad student from the University of Wyoming. Following that internship, she hopes to hear back from one of the jobs that she has applied to since she has been at Big Bend.

**Michelle Cason** says, "I'll be leaving the 27th of March to travel around the Southwest for a couple of weeks, and then flying back to Alaska for some sort of summer field work that has yet to be determined."

**John & Elaine Jonker** report, "We have no set plans for the summer. We will head north and plan as we go."

**Patricia Wheeless** has certainly been most helpful around headquarters these past 5 months and we are missing her. She is working at the front desk at the Basin Lodge briefly, then will be heading to California where she has accepted a seasonal position with Yosemite National Park as a Visitor Use Assistant.

# Sierra Club Arrives for 15th Annual Volunteer Pilgrimage

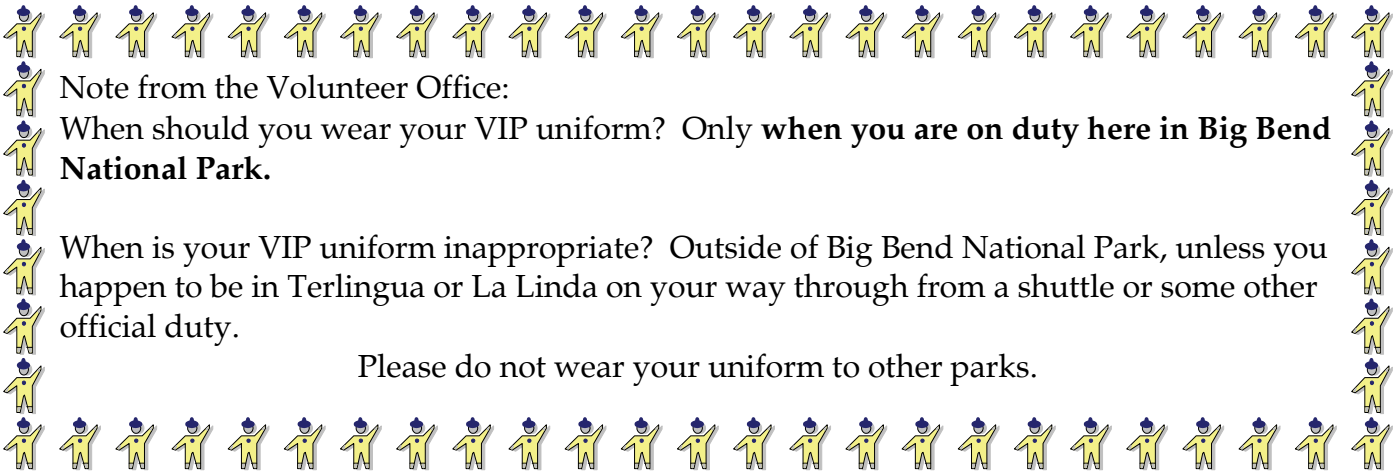
James Moody, group leader of the Sierra Club that worked here at Big Bend from February 24 to March 6 provided the following information concerning their voluntour. He writes: “The trip was definitely a success on all fronts and the usual superb assistance we received from so many in the parks department was a big reason for that success. Our thanks to you all.

Twenty-four people were actually part of the work project plus a very valuable cook who kept it all together by providing meals for all of us each day. Our projects included cutting cottonwood branches for re-planting; re-planting cottonwood trees from those branches (in VERY deep holes) on two locations along the Rio Grande; continuation of re-vegetation work in the North Rosillos; tamarisk removal along the Rio Grande; gathering of ocotillo branches for roof construction of Luna Jacal on the Maverick Road; and marking flood levels on the Rio Grande near Hot Springs.”



Sierra Club volunteers Dan Markham and Mary Perez digging out tamarisk along the Rio Grande.

Thank you, Sierra Club for making your annual pilgrimage to Big Bend. Thanks also go out to Science and Resource Management for organizing the work projects and to Wendy Weckesser for volunteering her time as supervisor. All totaled the Sierra Club contributed around 650 hours of volunteer time.



Note from the Volunteer Office:

When should you wear your VIP uniform? Only **when you are on duty here in Big Bend National Park.**

When is your VIP uniform inappropriate? Outside of Big Bend National Park, unless you happen to be in Terlingua or La Linda on your way through from a shuttle or some other official duty.

Please do not wear your uniform to other parks.



My Desk...is a mess!!

Ok, so I admit it! I do not have the neatest desk in the park. As a result of this situation, I cannot find all the recipes from the February 24th potluck. I am missing the following: Bean Salad, Marty's Edible Chili, Mexicali Franks, Scaloped Potatoes and Guacamole. If one of these recipes was your contribution to the potluck, send it on to me in any form available (possibly for the second time) and I will try to do better in the future! Thanks!

## Events in the Area

**VIP Awards Dinner—Monday, April 5**, Panther Junction Community Room, Social hour 6:00 pm, dinner 6:30 pm. Make your plans to be here for the Spring Awards Ceremony! Volunteers, supervisors and anyone else who would like to show their appreciation for all the hard work that the volunteers do here at Big Bend are welcome. This event is sponsored by Big Bend Natural History Association.

**April 10–13, 14–17, 2010 — Big Bend Ranch State Park — *Spring Digital Photography Workshops*** — Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine chief photographer Earl Nottingham will join with a top Canon representative to host these workshops. For beginners to intermediate level photographers who want to understand and work with basic digital techniques, including composition, lighting (artificial and natural). Call for times; fee \$450 per person, includes park entry fees, meals and lodging; reservations required. Call (432) 358-4444.

**April 10**—Terlingua Green Scene. Arts, Crafts, Music, Films, Food, Storytelling, Performance, and Hands-On Demos. There will be something going on from 11 a.m. until the wee hours of the night. This is a Family Friendly Celebration of Living Green, Terlingua Style! [www.terlinguagreenscene.com/](http://www.terlinguagreenscene.com/)

**April 24** - 25th Annual Native Plant Sale at the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute in Ft. Davis. Native plants are drought-resistant, easy to maintain, and beautiful. Many trees, shrubs, vines, perennials, cacti, and succulents will be available for purchase. <http://www.cdri.org>

We are looking for a few good stories!

There is now a blog on the Volunteer Page of the BIBE website and we are looking for stories, reminiscences and personal narratives about your volunteer experience at Big Bend. Email any contributions to me at [Jane\\_Brown@nps.gov](mailto:Jane_Brown@nps.gov) and I will post your musings and a photo.

Next fall I want to write an article complete with photos called “The Volunteer Vehicles of Big Bend”. There are many stories about “the Chili Pepper”, the “blue goose” and other vehicles that the volunteers have been stuck with over the years. Send me an email about your adventures with a park vehicle and include any photos that you might have. Should be fun!

### ***Hiking for Smokey***

*Do you like to hike in your free time at Big Bend? Here is a new opportunity to have fun, get some exercise, and make yourself even more useful than you already are! Plus you can earn a very cool T-shirt! After your hike, you would need to write up a short report describing what you did. I can provide you with an example of a Fire Prevention Report upon request.*

If you are interested in getting involved in the “Hiking for Smokey” program, email or see me at the Volunteer Office.

**SUGGESTION:** To save time, please submit your paperwork for reimbursement to Jane at least two weeks before you plan to leave the park. Once your paperwork has been submitted, please wait a week, then call Christiann Tillman at 477-1103 to see if your check is ready. You will need to see Christiann in person, in the Administration Office, Mon.-Friday., 8-4:30 to sign for your check. If you wait to submit on the day you leave or until after you leave, you may be waiting awhile for your reimbursement to catch up with you.