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Jewel Cave National Monument News Release

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Jewel Cave National Monument Schedules Special Junior Ranger Days

Jewel Cave National Monument is excited to announce the summer dates for its annual Special Junior Ranger Days. The Monument is offering four programs for young park enthusiasts, ages 5-12. Each program provides participants with a hands-on educational activity that complements one of the significant resources within the Monument's boundaries.

Each program date is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. and will be offered on the following Saturdays. All participants are required to have a parent or adult guardian on site at all times. Each program will begin at the front patio of the visitor center. Reservations are not required; however, interested participants are encouraged to call the visitor center for additional details and to ensure that adequate program supplies are available.

June 11: Construct a Bat

July 9: How Do You Map a Cave?

August 13: Explore the Ponderosa Pines

September 10: Making Crystals above Ground

Superintendent Larry Johnson states, "The National Park Service has a vision to enhance youth stewardship through an assortment of hands-on learning experiences. Furthermore, park staff wish to engage youth with meaningful educational opportunities that get kids active in the outdoors. It is hoped that by providing these special weekend events, a more informed public will understand and appreciate the natural and cultural heritage of America." Youth participants will receive a special certificate and 2011 Junior Ranger Badge.

In addition to these special programs, Jewel Cave National Monument offers the opportunity for youngsters to become Junior Park Rangers or Pee Wee Rangers throughout the year. Children ages five to twelve qualify for the ever-popular Junior Ranger activity booklet. Kids ages three to four are offered the Pee Wee Ranger booklet. Both booklets can be obtained from a park ranger at the visitor center.

Jewel Cave National Monument is open throughout the summer season, seven days a week. The visitor center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Four different cave tours are available: Scenic Tour, Discovery Tour, Historic Lantern Tour, and Wild Caving Tour. The first cave tour departs at 9:20 a.m., and the last tour enters the cave at 6:05 p.m. Reservations are strongly recommended during the summer months, as tour times fill on a daily basis. Reservations can be made within seven days of the planned arrival date by calling the phone sales office at (605) 673-8300 – Option 1.

For youth that do not have the opportunity to visit the Monument, the National Park Service offers a WebRanger Program. Participants start their online journey by visiting www.nps.gov/webrangers and setting up a ranger station. Kids are then encouraged to visit sites online and take a digital vacation across the country. Help a baby sea turtle reach the sea, be a spy, drive a dog sled, or experience the life and death struggle of a puma; successful participants learn even more about the National Park System, as well as earn a WebRangers patch. Currently, there are well over 123,000 registered WebRangers.

For more information about the National Park Service, visit www.nps.gov. For specific information related to Jewel Cave National Monument, contact the visitor center at (605) 673-8300 – Option 2 or visit online at www.nps.gov/jeca.

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