Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) Newsletter Spring 2013

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sleeping Bear Dunes
National Lakeshore

Accomplishing NPS & Lakeshore goals through mutually beneficial volunteer experiences

Hello again from Glen Haven! It was a beautiful winter for those that like to get out there and enjoy the snow – especially on the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail, which was wonderfully groomed by the Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes. Now though, we're looking forward to a little spring and summer weather up here in the north.

As I'm sure you have heard, the National Park Service (NPS) and Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (SLBE) were subject to the automatic budget cuts of sequestration. Many facilities and services will be unavailable until Memorial Day weekend. This will directly affect our Glen Haven volunteer schedules while others, including beach and trail patrollers, are less influenced. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your role this summer or how you may be impacted, please contact me. By pulling together, we can successfully work through the setbacks of sequestration and keep SLBE the most beautiful place in America.

Remember, you are a Very Important Person and the National Park Service couldn't achieve its mission without you!

Thank You,
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Please Note: Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive & most restrooms only open 5/25 to 9/2

By the Numbers 2012

1,632 (a record!)
Total number of VIPs

44,741 (a record!)
Total number of VIP Hours

$955,668
Value of VIP Hours

21.5
Equivalent full-time employees

$1,620
Dune Dollars Awarded

Stay connected!

Thousands of people stay connected to Sleeping Bear Dunes through our social media. Are you one of them?

www.facebook.com/sbdnl
Share your experiences and learn about the Lakeshore.

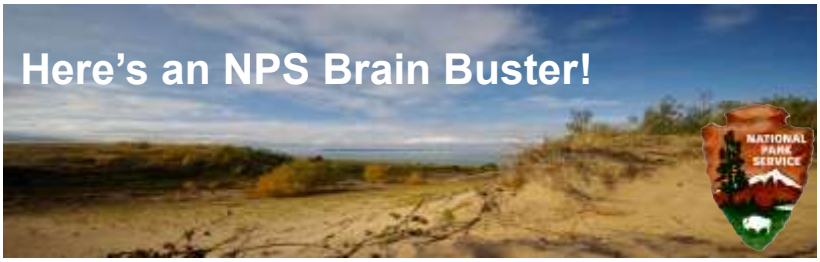
twitter.com/SleepingBearNPS
Follow us to know what's going on right now

flickr www.flickr.com/sleepingbearnps
Go to our flickr site and get public domain pics, constantly updated.

YouTube http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalParkService Visit our YouTube page to watch videos about the NPS

Impress your friends and our visitors with your SLBE knowledge!

- SLBE is home to one-third of the endangered piping plovers in the entire Great Lakes!
- We have 3 Lifesaving Stations in Sleeping Bear Dunes - the most of any park in the NPS. (Sleeping Bear Point, North and South Manitou Islands)
- SLBE is home to one of the two largest remaining populations of Pitcher's thistle. (The second location is the Manistee National Forest)
- Fulgurites are formed when lightning strikes a sand dune. The high temperature fuses quartz sand grains into interesting looking, glass-like structures.
- Michigan has nearly 150 lighthouses, the most of any state. Our lighthouse is on South Manitou Island and is open for tours from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
- There are 21 inland lakes entirely within the park boundary. How many can you name? Click here to find the entire list.
- Our perched dunes actually sit atop hundreds of feet of glacial moraine (which is a sediment of gravel and dirt).



...take your time now because this question was actually used on Jeopardy….

What is the name of the ***largest island*** on the ***largest lake*** on the ***largest island*** on the ***largest freshwater lake*** in the world**?**

Answer on page 3

Save the date…

April
20-28: National Park Week
20: Nat'l Jr. Ranger Day, events at Esch beach and the visitor center (VC)
27: VIP movie-night at the VC
27: Star Party w/ Grand Traverse Astronomical Society (GTAS)

May
3: Pruning Workshop
8: Port Oneida Fair committee meeting
11: "Sun" party w/ GTAS at the VC (starts at noon)
15: Adopt-a-Beach Kick-Off meeting
24-27: Valley Sierra Club on NMI
24-27: Scout Crew 311 on NMI
25: Scenic Drive & Glen Haven open
30: Greenagers project

June
1: National Trails Day, event on the SBHT
6-9: MIMS on SMI
8: M22 Challenge
8: Star Party w/ GTAS
18-22: Barn Workshop (Thoreson & Brunson)
28-7/14: Gwen & Friends on SMI

July
13: Star Party w/GTAS
19-27: MIMS on SMI
22-26: Crystal Air Sierra Club on SMI
TBD: VIP Appreciation Night

August
9-10: Port Oneida Fair
16-25: Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear on NMI (Katie Shepard)

September
7: Star Party w/ GTAS
28: National Public Lands Day

October
21: Star Party w/ GTAS

Reprinted with permission from the Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes:

The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail

This new trail provides a wonderful new recreational opportunity for families and individuals to experience the Park outside of their cars. We hope people will park their cars and either walk or safely ride bikes to many of the popular destinations in the Park.

Who is using the trail? Trail Use Survey:

During August, 2012, we conducted trail use counts and surveys of trail users. The results show that ***85% of the users are groups of family and friends.*** Since June 20, when the trail officially opened, about 36,000 people have used the trail, 92% of users rode bikes.

Signs and Grooming: The entire trail from the Dune Climb to Glen Arbor was groomed this winter for classical cross-country skiing and skate skiing/snow-shoeing. It saw great use over the winter!

Brain Buster Answer:

Ryan Island is the answer. It is found on Siskiwit Lake, which is the largest lake on Isle Royale, and Isle Royale is the largest island on Lake Superior.

Reprinted with permission from Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear:

Lookin' Good, Katie! Work to Begin on the Inside

The Katie Shepard Hotel is a wonderful structure on North Manitou Island that Preserve's volunteers have poured their heart and soul into over the past four years. Last summer, thanks to a special donor, Katie took another step in her "make-over."

Her very old paint was lead-based, so PHSB contracted with Traverse City's SEEDS and its trained workers to scrape and prime the exterior. Volunteers painted the finish coat, including detailed trim on the small panes of window glass. We thank the Rennie School road Sherwin Williams of Traverse City for their generous discount on high quality paint. Volunteers also cleared more vegetation. Now Katie can be clearly seen as your boat nears the island. She looks great!

The project continues in 2013 on August 16-25, 2013

VIP SPOTLIGHT

Lou Ricord is an officer on the Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes board. In addition to his board work, he volunteers on the Heritage Trail Crew. "I enjoyed helping keep the trail clear of debris this past summer and learned to groom the trail for skiing this winter. This new trail is getting quite a workout!"

VIP since: My family moved to Empire in 2007. My wife, Kathy, daughter, Bonnie, and I began our volunteer work that summer helping on the Adopt-a-Beach program. We enjoyed doing that so much, we volunteered to walk the beach between Esch Road and Empire for the Avian Botulism survey project.

Hometown: Columbus, OH (I'd say, "Go Bucks," but I've learned to keep that to myself)

Favorite place to hike in the park: Treat Farm trail. "Woods, open field, and a beautiful overlook of Lake Michigan all in a short hike. It's a great place to see spring wildflowers and birds."

Favorite place to sit in the park: The Glen Haven Lifesaving Station's front porch bench. On a sunny day, the lake colors are incredible.

Last good book you read: "Social Conquest of the Earth," by E.O.Wilson. A bit of a tough read, but his ideas are interesting.

"King/Queen for a Day" – What would you change in SLBE: Pretty great the way it is. The new interpretive signs being put up in the Glen Haven area are beautiful and helpful to visitors. I'd like to see similar signage at trail heads describing what wildflowers and birds visitors are likely to see on their hike.

Thank you Lou, for being a good sport and for all that you do at Sleeping Bear Dunes!

Let's have a great 2013 season, contact me anytime!

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Links to your favorite websites:

SLBE Web Page

Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear

Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes

Manitou Islands Memorial Society

National Parks Traveler

How can you help protect Piping Plovers?

* If you see anyone harassing Piping Plovers, please report it to Sleeping Bear Dunes Headquarters at (231)-326-5134 or contact a Ranger.

* Volunteer to join the Piping Plover Patrol. Call Matt Mohrman or Ethan Scott for more info.