



VIP2VIP



Season 12, Volume 2

Big Bend National Park's Volunteer Newsletter

November 1, 2012

Current Volunteers

Castolon

- Bill & Patti Marvin—Camphosts (3rd)
- Dave Conway—Camphost (2nd)
- Bob Douat—Visitor Center (7th)
- Larry & Martha Head—Visitor Center (2nd)
- Steve & Tina Ehrman—Backcountry (7th)

Chisos Basin

- Ed Davis—Camphost (8th)
- Doug & Kay Combs-Camphosts (8th)
- Lew & Susan McCool—Visitor Center (2nd)
- Ann Wildermuth—Visitor Center (1st)

Panther Junction

- Elaine & John Jonker—River Rangers (6th)
- Alexander Brachman (SCA)
- Henry Ring (SCA)
- Price Rumbelow - ScRM
- Genna Mason-SCA (ScRM)
- Riley & Karen Caton—Fire (2nd)
- Skip Jiru —Maintenance (2nd)

Persimmon Gap

- Mark Kirtley—Visitor Center (17th)
- Gary Karasick-Visitor Center (1st)

Rio Grande Village

- Gary & Diane Frable—Backcountry (6th)
- Steve Blythe—Maintenance (1st)
- Royann & Royce Brockett-Camphosts (14th)
- Bill & Jane Berry-Camphosts (3rd)
- Daisy Welch—Visitor Center (2nd)
- Terry Brackeen—Visitor Center (2nd)

Resident and remote volunteers

- Reine Wonite— Park Videographer (11th)
- Stacy Duckett—ScRM
- Jim Bishop-BBNHA
- Bob Wirt-ScRM (11th)

* Number in () indicates years of service

The Pros and Cons of Continuity



Wikipedia tells us that in fiction, **continuity** is consistency of the characteristics of persons, plot, objects, and places seen by the reader or viewer over some period of time. Continuity is particularly a concern in the production of film and television due to the difficulty of rectifying an error in continuity after shooting has wrapped up.

Most productions have a script supervisor on hand whose job is to pay attention to and attempt to maintain continuity across the chaotic and typically non-linear production shoot. This takes the form of a large amount of paperwork, photographs, and attention to and memory of large quantities of detail, some of which is sometimes assembled into the “story bible” for the production. All of this is done so that ideally all related shots can match, despite perhaps parts being shot thousands of miles and several months apart. It is a less conspicuous job, though, because if done perfectly, **no one will ever notice.**

Here at Big Bend there are times when our volunteers provide a type of continuity from one season to the next. Our rate of returning volunteers is 90% this fall, which says many things about our park. We all know that Big Bend is a great place to spend the winter. Perhaps it says that we appreciate the work that our volunteers do (which is true) and they return repeatedly because of this sense of fulfillment. I would like to think that our park employees, and especially the volunteer supervisors, are doing such an outstanding job that the volunteers are motivated to return.

However, a number of our park employees are new to Big Bend this season. Will we be able to provide a sense of continuity within our organization, retaining the best procedures from the past experience while taking advantage of ideas that new employees bring? Flexibility remains an important element this season as we cope with an unusual work environment at Panther Junction, a new superintendent, new supervisors in the Law Enforcement division, and the best and biggest change of the year, water! Perhaps we too can seamlessly incorporate the best of the past while moving towards the future to provide continuity for our visitors, our organization and our resource.

New faces New places

Steve Blythe is volunteering at Rio Grande Village with the Maintenance Division. He retired from a career in accounting in St. Louis about 9 years ago and became a full-timer. Most of his volunteering has been with Habitat for Humanity, however, he spent last winter at Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. This summer he and Daisy Welch volunteered at Happy Jack, Arizona for U.S. Forest Service and it is safe to say that Daisy had a hand in convincing him to winter over at Big Bend!



We are going to call **Lewis and Susan McCool** “new volunteers” for the sake of simplicity. However, they were here in 2005 as Chisos Basin camphosts. That same year they migrated over to Castolon to help out at the Visitor Center for a month. Lew is a retired newspaper journalist who now works seasonally for NPS at Mesa Verde. Susan is an artist whose medium is clay; but she has dabbled in a variety of occupations including videography and administrative work. They live in southwest Colorado and will be working at the Chisos Basin Visitor Center through January. I am glad that we finally got them back to Big Bend. We have been trying for a long time!

Gary Karasick joins us this fall at the Persimmon Gap Visitor Center and this is his first NPS volunteer experience. He is currently on his second career as a special ed and substitute teacher, his first being in the insurance industry. Gary lives in Liberty Hill, Texas where he volunteers with the Austin Symphony Orchestra at the Long Center for the Performing Arts. He enjoys travelling and recently returned from a trip to Europe.



Henry Ring is a native of Bozeman, Montana and comes to us as an intern with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) until the middle of January. He attended Columbia University in New York, NY where he studied creative writing. Henry was an intern with the SCA program at Denali National Park in Alaska where he worked with the exotic plant management team. His hobbies include hiking, reading writing and is an amateur swing dancer.

Alexander Brachman is an intern with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) this fall and will be working with the Interpretive Division and ScRM. A native of Atlanta, Georgia, he went to school in North Carolina at Guilford College where he studied Environmental Psychology. For the uninitiated (myself included), that is the study of the effects of the outdoors and the environment on mental health.. Alex enjoys the outdoors, camping, hiking, writing, drawing and playing the guitar. He was an intern with the SCA program previously with the U.S. Forest Service at Tongass National Forest in Alaska.



These volunteers are coming back for more after

Takin' a Break



Bill and Jane Berry have volunteered at Big Bend for two seasons, both times as camphosts at Rio Grande Village, where they are returning this fall. Since their last volunteer stint in spring of 2011, the Berrys have established a RV home base in Burnsville, North Carolina, a beautiful little place northeast of Asheville.

Terry Brackeen volunteered at Rio Grande Village Visitor Center two years ago in fall of 2010. Since that time, she spent a year travelling around the United States visiting many national and state parks. Some of you might have kept up with her travels on her blogsite. We are glad to have her back in the fold!



After an absence of two years, Skip Jiru is back as a volunteer for Maintenance Division this time. He will be assisting electrician Oscar Gonzales and living at Panther Junction. Many of you might remember Skip's brother, Mike Jiru who volunteered at Rio Grande Village with the Maintenance Division last year. Skip has volunteered at several other locations, most notably at Lake Tahoe's Tallac State Historic Site.

Ann Wildermuth has been manning the Chisos Basin Visitor Center since August 1 and will be staying on until January 15. She comes to us from Austin, Texas where she has over 20 years experience as a Spanish teacher, translator and teacher of English as a Second Language. Ann enjoys the out-of-doors and hiking and is residing at Panther Junction.



Just Saw Something Cool?

Help Get It Into BIBE's Video Archives!

Thanks to the Friends of Big Bend National Park, BIBE has some great professional-quality high-definition video equipment. But much as she loves the park, VIP videographer Reine Wonite is NOT omniscient. Too many times, she doesn't find out about flowers in bloom, foliage in fall colors, animals hanging out, etc., etc., etc., until waaay after the fact! She needs YOUR help. If you see something cool, try to get a message to her ASAP. First step is to leave a message on her home phone machine (477-2595). Then try contacting her via David (477-2800) and Jane (477-2803).



Where have you been since your last volunteer experience in Big Bend.....

Royce and Royann Brockett are back at Rio Grande Village campground this year for their fourteenth season. Since their departure last February, they mostly enjoyed life in Kerrville. They made a trip with the granddaughter to the Grand Canyon where they visited with the VanInwagens, Mike and Nancy Coe and Kenn and Linda Sutton. They continued onto Mesa Verde and several state parks. The year was also highlighted with the arrival of their eleventh grandchild.

Gary and Diane Frable have done some serious travelling since they left Big Bend last April. After a short stay in Benson, AZ, they went north to Montana checking out the parks along the way. Then they went east all the way to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with stops in Minnesota, Thunder Bay and Quebec. Next it was south through New England, Pennsylvania, the Skyline and Blue Ridge Parkway, and South Carolina. Then back west through the Gulf states arriving at Big Bend on Oct. 16th! Now that is the grand tour!

John and Elaine Jonker appeared on October 1st, ready to get to work in the river district. They spent a rigorous vacation hiking in the Swiss Alps (Tour de Mont Blanc) at the end of August followed up by a cruise on the Rhine River. In preparation for this hike, they spent 2 months in the Smokey Mountains, hiking the Bartram and Appalachian trails, which turned out to be a good thing. On the Mont Blanc hike, they averaged 3,000 feet of elevation gain and 3,000 feet of elevation loss every day for two weeks. !!

Ed Davis is back at Chisos Basin campground after a pleasant spring and summer at his home in Missouri. He said that he really enjoyed working on his place this year. I suppose due to the lack of rain in the Mississippi valley, it was a bit like the desert in west Texas this year!

Bill and Patti Marvin have returned to Big Bend for their third volunteer season and their second year as Cottonwood Campground hosts. They spent their summer not doing any home improvement project at their home in Bend, Oregon. Rather they rediscovered tent camping and canoeing and had a wonderful time!

Most of you did not meet **Larry and Martha Head** last year, since they volunteered in the February-April session, but they are back at **Castolon Visitor Center**, this time in the fall. Since their departure last spring they have been busy volunteering in their hometown at the Shelburne Museum in Vermont. This museum is famous for its Americana collection, including dolls and duck decoys and has an extensive holding of fine art, with an emphasis on French Impressionism. Martha made a "girls trip" to Paris with her daughter and three granddaughters in June and had a grand time! Martha has a Master Degree in teaching English as a Second Language and spent time in Japan, Thailand, Mexico and New York City working in that field. She says that actually teaching ESL in New York was probably the most interesting because there were people from all over the world needing to learn English. Larry grew up the Aleutian Islands of Alaska and attended college in Fairbanks. He joined the Army after college and they sent him back to Alaska. He is a bush pilot, has flown commercial flights and air taxis in Alaska and has also taught flying. They have been full-timers for 5 years and have volunteered at many locations. The list includes Button Bay State Park in Vermont, 3 state parks in Washington State, Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge and LBJ National Historic Park in Texas, J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge in Florida, and Acadia National Park.

All,

I would like to extend an invitation once again for all employees and volunteers to tag along with me during one of my routine patrol flights of the park. Over the past year I have been able to accommodate the vast majority of the over-flight requests that I've received, and it is time once again to extend the offer to those that are interested. My ability to take passengers is of course mission, time, and space dependant, but much of my patrol flying is done solo, which is an awful waste of airplane seats. The company and extra set of eyes would be much welcomed, and in the end, having more than one person in the airplane benefits the park, the employees, and in turn the visitors.

Leave a message at the phone numbers listed below with your contact information and I will get in touch with you to pencil you in for a patrol flight as space becomes available.

If you would like the flight to happen during your normally scheduled work time, then make sure you have approval from your supervisor to be away from your normal duty station. Also remember only park employees and **current/active** volunteers are allowed aboard DOI aircraft. If you fly in the park airplane more than a couple times per year, then you are considered a "frequent" aviation user and you need to attend a B3 basic aviation safety training session.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Scott H. Taylor
U.S.Park Ranger/Pilot
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Scott Taylor with former volunteer Jan Allen

Hiking Club reconvenes on Tuesday, November 20! If you are new to Big Bend, the hiking club is a chance for volunteers (and anyone else who wants to come!) to get together for a short hike, visit with one another and see something that you might not see on your own. These hikes are not Olympic events, but rather moderate exercise with time to "smell the flowers" along the way. We will be taking a radio with us.

Tuesday, November 20 The volunteer hike for November will be in the Glenn Springs area. Meet at the rear parking lot of PJ Headquarters at 9:00 am if you want to catch a ride with me. (please call and tell me you are coming - 477-2803). If you are coming from RGV, we will meet at the little parking area about a 1/4 of a mile down Glenn Springs Road at 9:20 am. We will be reimbursing for mileage for getting to and from these hikes at 14 cents a mile. I will send out an email to remind everyone of the date.

Around December 5 or 6—Holiday Auction— Casa Grande is the employee organization that sponsors social event in the park. Every year they have a holiday auction which is the principal fund-raising event, and is always a lot of fun. Make a donation! Ideas: jewelry, quilts, bread, dinners, photos, babysitting, dog sitting, shuttles, knife sharpening, yard work, car washing, paintings, town trips. Start sewing, baking, painting, thinking. If you can't get to the Interp Office to sign up, call Claudia [477-2802] or email, (Claudia_Arnberger@nps.gov and she will put you on the list.

Events in the Area

November 2—Day of the Dead, Terlingua-held in the Terlingua Ghostown Cemetery around 6-7 pm.

November 2-4—Chili Cookoff—46th Annual Terlingua International Chili Championship Cookoff; for more information go to www.chili.org/terlingua or call 210-877-8827.

Sunday, November 4—Don't forget to "fall back"!

Monday, November 5—Breakfast Burritos \$2.00—San Vicente 8th grade fundraiser. Can be picked up at HQ, Maintenance and ScRM.

Friday, November 9-Veteran's Day BBQ 6:30 pm (1830 hours) at the PJ Ramada— sponsored by BBNHA and Forever Resorts. No speeches, BYOB and a toast will be made to the men and women who gave their all.

November 10-Rio Grande River Cleanup sponsored by Big Bend National Park and Big Bend Ranch State Park. Volunteer opportunities at both parks. Contact Jane Brown 477-2803 or Jane_Brown@nps.gov for more information.

November 10-Joe Barnes Scholarship BBQ-Terlingua,

Thursday, November 15— VIP Potluck Brunch— Dugout Wells Picnic Area, 10 am; Enjoy a relaxing few hours visiting with one another in the daylight! Volunteers bring the biscuits, bread and jelly, fruit and yogurt! Jane and Natasha will bring the eggs, sausage, grits and Coleman stove plus coffee. If you have folding chairs, they would be a welcome addition.

November 16-17, 2012 Art Walk and Gallery Night, Alpine, Texas—art galleries will be open until late into the night and special events are scheduled. www.artwalkalpine.com

November 17 and 18th Guided hikes at Seminole Canyon State Park near Del Rio. Saturday is the Presa Canyon day hike (strenuous) and Sunday is the Upper Seminole Canyon Tour (8 am-12 noon). Reservations required (432-292-4464), both hikes venture into areas of the park that are normally off-limits. Of special interest to those interested pictographs and archaeology. Rideshare possibilities, call Jane.

Thursday, Nov. 22 (Thanksgiving Day) 4th Annual Turkey Trot 5K Walk/Run-8 am Panther Junction. Contact information: Allen Etheridge 477-2811

December 1—Big Bend's 2nd Annual Triathlon - Hot Springs/Rio Grande Village area. Start training for this canoeing, biking, and running event. Entry fee of \$12 for Casa Grande members, and \$15 for non-members. Prizes awarded. Open only to Big Bend residents and employees - not the public. Pre-registration is required and the deadline is Nov. 6. Call or email Claudia Arnberger 432-477-2802 Claudia_Arnberger@nps.gov to register. **Canoe:** *Hot Springs to Daniels Ranch (2.5 miles)* **Bike:** *Daniels Ranch to Boquillas Canyon and Return (11 miles)* **Run:** *Daniels Ranch to Hot Springs (3 miles)* **You can be part of a relay team . Race starts at 9:30 am at the Hot Springs.**

Every Saturday from 10am-2pm there is a Farmer's Market in the Terlingua Ghostown.