



## What is WNPA?



*The Western National Parks Association (WNPA) is a non-profit cooperating association of the National Park Service. It operates bookstores at over 60 locations. It develops products and publications to support the educational and research programs for the parks. Since 1938, this association has worked with the NPS to connect new generations to parks in meaningful ways with one clear goal: create advocates who will preserve and protect these special places for everyone.*

The idea for a non-government entity to help support the NPS started in 1934. Dale King, a junior park naturalist for the NPS at Casa Grande AZ proposed that this type of entity be created to help solve NPS staff and funding shortages resulting from the Great Depression. His vision was to publish and offer free and reasonably priced interpretive and educational items for the park visitors so they could enhance their NPS experience and take home a physical reminder of their visit.

On July 22, 1938, the Secretary of the Interior gave permission to the Southwest Monuments Association (SWMA) to commence activities as "... a non-profit organization pledged to aid the preservation and interpretation of Southwestern features of outstanding national interest." Since the beginning, SWMA, renamed WNPA in 2002, has been guided by a board of directors dedicated to help the NPS

spread its mission and appreciation for America's treasures.

This association began with 18 parks in two states and has grown to 66 parks in 12 western states. WNPA has provided more than \$68,000,000 in cumulative assistance to the NPS since 1938. Current financial and in-kind assistance totals more than \$4,000,000 annually. The WNPA product catalog has expanded to contain more than 700 association-produced interpretive items that help tell the story of each specific park. These products include historical replicas, foods, movies, site guides, logo items, and printed material. The first WNPA publication, *The Guide to Southwestern National Monuments*, is still in print today and remains a best seller.

The bookstore at White Sands helps the monument in a big way. A percentage of each purchase you make from the WNPA bookstore

directly supports the development of products, ongoing research, programs, and the interpretive mission here at White Sands National Monument. We thank you for your support!



Jill Franzen, WNPA Sales Associate