

The Interpretive

# Challenge

Kenneth Raithel Jr  
Assistant Director for  
Interpretation

A visit to a National Park breaks the routine of life; it gives life context, value, and meaning. Among these natural wonders and historic settings learning becomes fun. Interpretation can capitalize on that enthusiasm and promote learning and understanding. Interpretation can also lead people to draw their own conclusions and examine their own values.

To help meet these objectives a plan, called *The Interpretive Challenge*, has been developed to give direction to the revitalization of interpretation and to the rededication of the spirit of the National Park System idea. The goals and actions are based on a few simple guiding principles:

RESPECT for what people bring to the parks--their values, dignity, and unique desires to explore, learn, and experience.

BELIEF that quality is within each of us and needs and deserves to be expressed in all that we do.

AWARENESS that it is often enough simply to experience the wonder and awe stimulated by nature and the human ideals expressed in our culture that are implicit in our park system.

WILLINGNESS to create and share interpretive/educational programs with other individuals and organizations.

PRIDE in our work, which includes taking greater responsibility for the profession of interpretation.

It is with these goals and principles in mind that *Interpretation* is launched. It is my hope and expectation that this journal will become a forum for the exchange of ideas among interpreters. Through this exchange we may all become more proficient in our profession and better serve our public.



Kenneth Raithel Jr