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Making Art Rewarding

An Original Print Replaces Standard Award Placques

The staff at Lake Mead National Recreation Area wanted to make their annual award to an outstanding citizen who had contributed something special and different to the development and programs of the area.

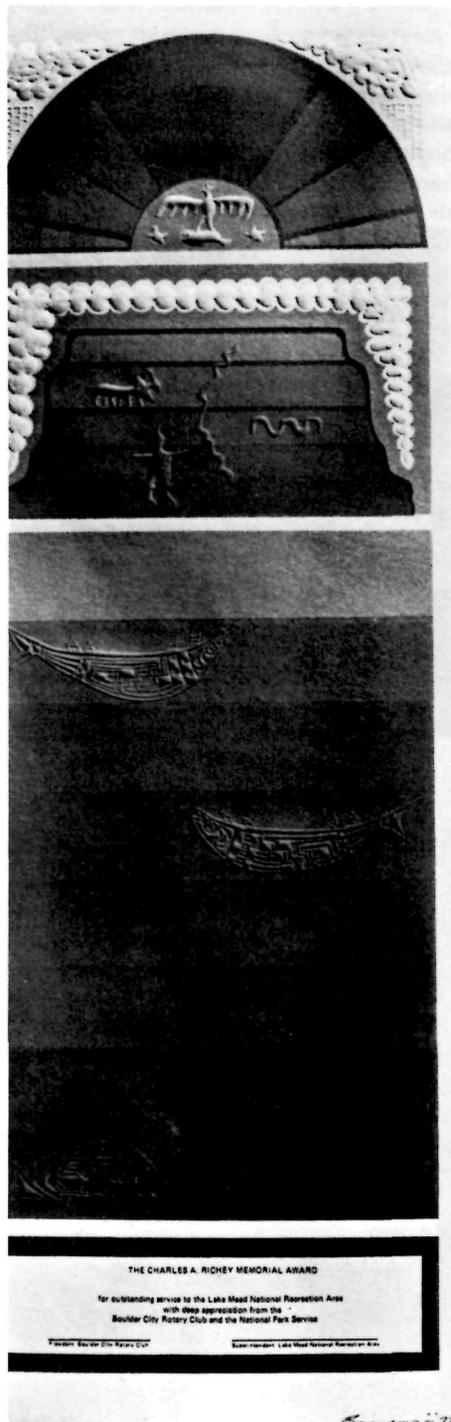
The group decided to make an investment in art, contacted a well-known artist, and commissioned a limited edition of 10 original silk-screened and embossed prints.

Each print is designed with space for the presentation copy, so for the next ten years, people near Lake Mead National Recreation Area who have made outstanding contributions to the area, will receive an outstanding artistic creation in return!

At the end of ten years, the staff plans to commission another work—either a print or sculpture, to continue this new innovative program.

Parks people are increasingly turning to local artists to enhance their awards programs, their publications, and their offices.

The Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, for example, contacted local college and university art departments to help them with a publications problem. The Park Service people submitted reference materials to illustration classes as a design problem. Each student made a set of illustrations from the material. The best set was selected for reproduction and the student's work was properly credited in a publication issued by the office.



The Park Service obtained good quality illustrations and made potentially long-lasting contact with several colleges and universities. The professor had a real design problem to present his students and the student whose work was selected had published illustrations to add to his or her portfolio.

The same office has contacted local artists and photographers to obtain quality art work for their offices on the theme of American history or nature. Artists submit their work for review and exhibits are frequently changed.

Interest has been so high that the office has shows booked six to eight months in advance.

With little expenditure of funds, the arts can easily become an important part of every aspect of park and recreation work.

Recycling

With a little effort and imagination, we can recycle all sorts of things we find around us. As a regular feature, *Grist* will present new ideas for recycling materials you find around you. Send your ideas to Jim Burnett, Editor, *Grist*, Division of Federal, State and Private Liaison, National Park Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Energy conservation and historic preservation go into this old timer. Cistern or well water is pumped using good old fashioned muscle power at Bonny Dam SRA, writes *Grist* contributor Ed Fahey.

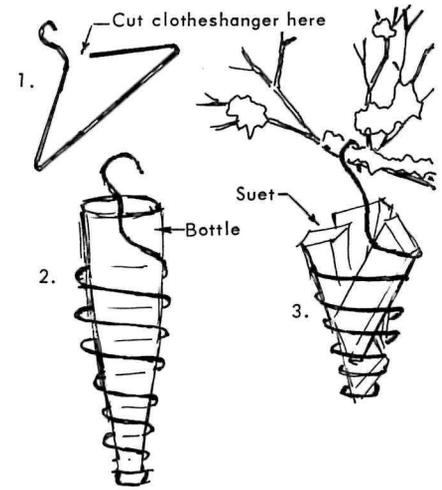
One of several hand pumps around the Dam, the pump pictured here, is painted bright red and is a good example of a recycled bit of history serving the same useful function it always has served!



Next time you throw away an old wire coat hanger, think twice—you may have a bird feeder! The sketch at right suggests that with a little ingenuity coat hangers can be handsomely recycled to give some hungry bird a good meal! Don Black of Joshua Tree National Monument sent us this clever idea.

Next time you have a cup of coffee, think twice about throwing away that can with the plastic lid. Partially used quart cans of motor oil left open in maintenance shops or small cans of mixed paint stand a chance of lasting if covered with the plastic lids from one-pound coffee cans.

Tom Trebell, Administrative Officer at Joshua Tree National Monument suggests that the cans can be more easily stacked to make a neat, non-greasy workroom.



GRIST

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Ingenuity

The following helpful hints will make your job a little simpler, a little more efficient. Send in your bits of ingenuity to us at *Grist!*

Bone Dry Fossil Exhibit

Before desiccant was used to keep this fossil exhibit dry, visitors at Natchez Trace Parkway in Tupelo, Mississippi could not even see through the plexiglass window until about high noon when the sun would dry the moisture from the inside of the box.

James T. Swindle, a painter at the park says a little bit of desiccant goes a long way.

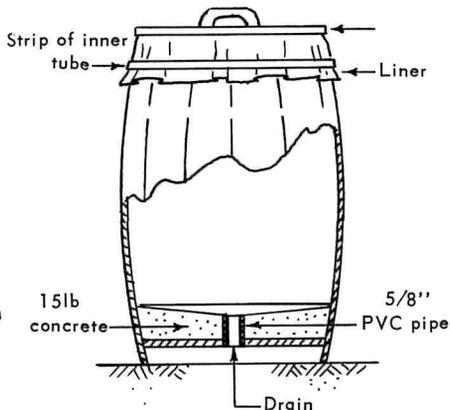
For five years the parkway exhibit has been dry as a bone. The bags need to be replaced only about twice a year, at a nominal cost of 20 cents per 8 unit bag.

Stable Trash Can

How many times have you seen garbage strewn over a roadside at a park? Maintenance Foreman Melvin C. Baker at Fort Sumter National Monument has solved the problem with a 15-pound concrete weight which he places at the bottom of the can.

With a weighted bottom, the can cannot be blown over and if pushed, automatically rights itself.

As the sketch indicates, Baker also suggests using a strip from an automobile inner tube to hold the plastic liner in place.



Scooter Lap Robe

Motor scooter riders will appreciate this idea from U.S. Park Policeman Clinton Mack.

Cold harsh winter on a scooter drove Mack to develop a quilted weatherproof lap robe. The robe keeps out wind and does not inhibit the scooter rider while on patrol. Mack maintains that his invention will save manpower by keeping scootermen out of the clinic and on the street as well as increasing production. After all, "the warmer and drier the men are the more work will be accomplished," says Mack.



Go Soak Your Bolts!

Floyd A. Synder a retired carpenter/welder from Brentwood Maintenance Yard of the National Capital Parks in Washington, D.C. advises you to go soak your bolts—the rusty ones, in a clear ammonia bath to loosen them. If the bolts are rusted in place on a machine, Synder advises that you flood them with ammonia dispensed from a small oil can. Just remember, those fumes are powerful!

A Sign Of The Times

How can you alert park visitors to hazards of nature they might not be prepared to face?

Tom Trebell at Joshua Tree National Monument in Twentynine Palms, California, decided to use eye-catching labels to warn visitors of the desert's rainy season. The bright yellow self-adhesive labels are slapped onto standard park brochures at the appropriate season of the year and read:

**"THIS IS THE DESERT'S
RAINY SEASON
Beware of Flash Floods
Do not camp or cache equipment
in desert washes."**

Signs

Save Manpower On Sign Switch

Signmaker Daniel C. Fitts at the Natchez Trace Parkway has figured out a way to switch suspended signs by using a lightweight sign-changing device.

The device is a simple aluminum pole—made of two 10-foot long sections joined by a sleeve and fitted with base plate and winch-and-pulley arrangement.

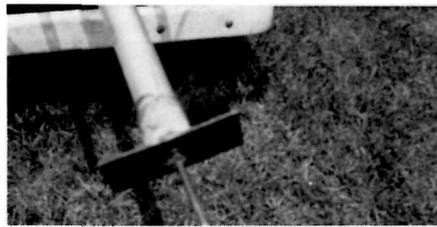
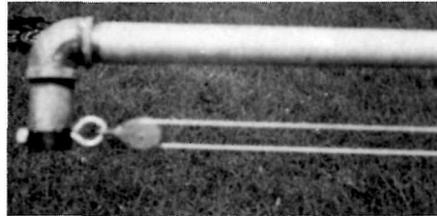


The sign-changer simply brings a ladder and the pole to the site on a pickup truck. One man winches the sign up to the other who waits to transfer it to hooks on the cross arm. The operation no longer takes four men and dangerous scaffolding with this new device.

How does it work? The 3 × 4 inch base plate of 1/4 inch flat iron is welded to a cuff on the base of the pole. A four-inch long, 1/2 inch bolt at the foot keeps the pole from skidding.



A heavy-duty boat winch, with a 1,000 pound capacity, is bolted to the pole about 4 feet from the bottom. A two-inch pulley is fastened to the nipple at top by an eye-bolt, and 60 feet of plastic-covered 1/8-inch steel cable is threaded through it and onto the winch.



The idea has saved the Parkway about \$860 in the first year alone and Fitts has won an incentive award for his ingenuity.

Use Recreation Symbols On Maps

How can you help people to understand the new Park Service recreation symbols? Try using them on maps of your area—it's often easier to understand the road symbols if they are reinforced by notations on the map suggests Robert M. Breazeale, Maintenance Supervisor at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park.

As a reminder, some of the key symbols are reproduced here:



Life Saving Safety Sign Post

Take a large post and paint it a bright color to attract attention near swimming areas. Attach a line for life saving to the post with an old empty bleach can on the end to help in throwing.

Use the post and the surface of the plastic can for a simple easy safety message.

Why Don't People Read Signs?

How many times have you seen people violating park regulations practically right in front of the signs listing the 'no nos' of the park?

At Anza Borrego in Borrego Springs, California, the staff decided to try a new approach to signs. First they examined the problems of the old signs—they were often too long to be easily read by a visitor in a moving vehicle, they were impersonal and negative in their basic approach, they didn't attempt to grab the reader's attention and, in general, they were largely ignored.

The new sign developed by the staff had only seven words—but powerful ones:

**YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR
KNOWING PARK LAWS
INFO HERE**

The philosophy behind the sign is that the visitor will stop because it implies a responsibility to do so. The signs contain holders for handouts containing important regulations which can be read at the visitor's leisure.

To continue to interest the reader, the handout has an explanation of why the regulations have been made from the point of view of the user. The handouts combine professional interpretive techniques with law enforcement to encourage attention to park regulations *without being punitive*.

The regulations on one side of the sheet are explained through answers to the

Signs

following questions on the reverse side: Why can't you take your vehicle off the roads? Why can't you have a ground fire? Why must your vehicle display a license or registration sticker? Why must all operators possess a license? Why is collecting not allowed? and Why must your dog be kept on a leash at all times?

In the first three months of the program visitors have taken more than 2500 handouts from six signs at crucial points in the park.

Safety Signs

Well-placed signs can save lives and prevent accidents.

David C. Webb, Instructor at Ocala-luttee Job Corps CCC at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park suggests that signs be used in prominent places near park streams and rivers. Webb suggests three signs—two with just lettering, one with a hand poking through the water to remind people of the danger and attract their attention. He suggests the following wording:

WARNING

This Beautiful Stream Can Be Dangerous
Flash Floods or Heavy Rains Make It
Hazardous for Swimming or Boating
KNOW THE WATER

Another sign with a list of rules suggested by Webb reads:

RIVER WATERS HAVE HIDDEN HAZARDS

For the Safety of
You and Your Loved
Ones Please Observe
The Rules

Sign Preserved From The Elements

Bird droppings on sign and mile posts cause untold problems in park and recreation areas throughout the country.

James O. Haley, Park Ranger at Natchez Trace Parkway suggests that the problem can be eliminated by driving number eight coated nails into the tops of the posts about one inch from each corner and each side of the posts and one in the center. The nails, extending about one and a half inch above the posts, discourage birds from roosting there.

Slippery Sign

Park Technician Richard E. Merryman has come up with a non-verbal way of communicating possible slippery conditions. Using a picture sign similar to the international symbol and sign series, Merryman found that American and foreign visitors alike had no problem understanding a wet, snowy or icy condition.



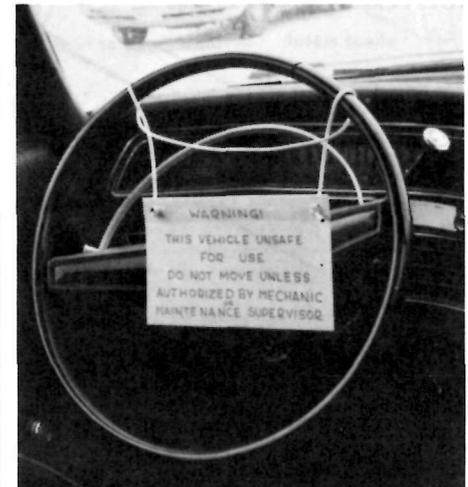
Unsafe Vehicles Protected

James E. Jones, Chief I & RM at Dinosaur National Monument has developed a way to make sure that unsafe vehicles are not accidentally taken out before they have been repaired.

Vehicles that are unsafe to operate are parked and marked with a sign attached to the steering wheel or handlebar of the vehicle. On seeing the signs, drivers check a vehicle log to see why the vehicle has been side-lined. He will not use it until it has been cleared for use by someone in authority.



Communications problems are cleared up by this simple device and accidents are prevented. Jones suggests that the sign be made of masonite or paper mounted in a plastic frame with a string around it to fit on the steering wheel.



Maintenance and Safety

Sand Truck Becomes Shoulder Spreader

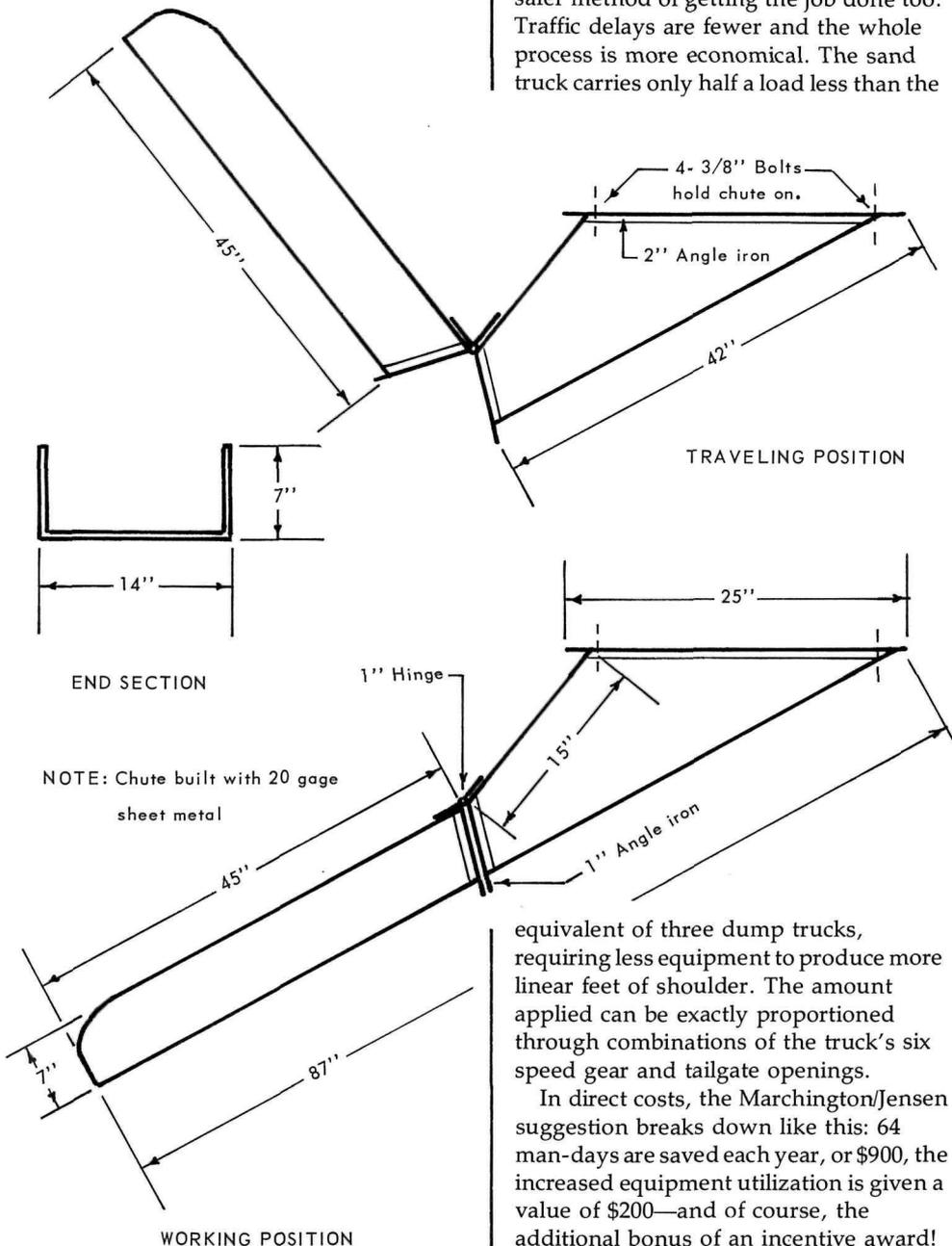
How can you make seasonal equipment work for you all year 'round? At Yellowstone, Park Road Foreman Roy B. Marchington and Engineering Equipment Operator Helmer Jensen have come up with a way to use a sand truck for building shoulders as well.

The cumbersome technique of tailgate dumping on the pavement edge, hand

spreading, blading to distribute the material and sweeping the pavement clear of excess material before compaction has now been simplified.

The men added an angled chute to a sanding dump truck, previously used only in the winter to sand icy roads. The truck and chute permits a reduced work crew to lay down new shoulder material in one pass, plus two passes of the grader for spreading and compaction. And the whole conversion takes about 45 minutes and about \$40!

The chute-equipped sand truck is a safer method of getting the job done too. Traffic delays are fewer and the whole process is more economical. The sand truck carries only half a load less than the



Sewage Lagoons Get Stirred Up

Maintenance men James W. Fullwood and Ethel Jeffreys at Shiloh National Military Park have come up with a way to stir up circulation in sewage lagoons thus preventing the accumulation of surface film which stops evaporation and causes odors.

The agitator, now in use at Shiloh is made of an old 5 gallon oil drum, transmission from an old tiller, a 1/2 horse power electric motor or similar gasoline motor, pillow block bearings, and an electric timer.

The device operates just like an old river boat—after the paddle wheel turns, for sometime, a complete circulation movement of the pond results. Normally, the place of the system should be about 15 to 20 feet from the edge of the lagoon.

How do you make this clever device? Weld a shaft through the center of the oil drum for mounting bearings and pulley. Mount the straps or paddle boards (see picture) by affixing them to a steel frame around the barrel. These paddles can be sheet metal strips or wood, the full length of the drum and 4 to 6 inches wide depending on the side of the motor and the amount of agitation desired.

When a lagoon has insufficient air current across the surface of the water to speed evaporation, this agitator churns up the surface simply and inexpensively.



equivalent of three dump trucks, requiring less equipment to produce more linear feet of shoulder. The amount applied can be exactly proportioned through combinations of the truck's six speed gear and tailgate openings.

In direct costs, the Marchington/Jensen suggestion breaks down like this: 64 man-days are saved each year, or \$900, the increased equipment utilization is given a value of \$200—and of course, the additional bonus of an incentive award!

Trash Enclosure

Darrell Winslow and his staff at Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority have come up with a new trash enclosure that is rodent and vermin resistant and easy for campers and park personnel to use.

The enclosure (see photo) is a simple raised platform, 10 feet by 10 feet, with a simple 6 foot by 3/4" brown-stained walls and a door. In place of messy, noisy dumpsters, the camp area in Fairfax, Va., is dotted with several of these enclosures.

Every visitor is given a heavy duty plastic trash bag, with a wire closing attached. They are asked to fill the bag, take it with them wherever they go, and dump the bag into any one of the convenient enclosures. Winslow maintains that the new solution to the ever present trash problem is cleaner, safer, and better looking.

A wire mesh at the top of the pickets keep out racoons, as does a door latch. Trash people don't need fancy equipment to pick up the trash and don't mind handling closed bags.

The total cost of the enclosure is estimated at about \$250.



hydraulic hoses which power the screw would reverse it, but these hoses are usually snow and ice covered. Once uncoupled, sand and grit can easily enter the lines, getting into the pump and motor and compounding the problem.

The more common solution is for the operator to clamber onto his loaded truck, shovel sand toward the front or over the side and somehow get to the auger, remove the offending object with a pry bar and move on, usually leaving great lumps of sand on the road and jamming up traffic in the bargain.

Automotive Mechanic Cletus H. Powell at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has come up with a better solution.

He returns to the first obvious solution, reversing the auger a turn or two with a simple, but effective technique. To the end of the auger's shaft, he welds a one and a half inch length of three-quarter inch rolled steel bar. To its end are welded two angles which, when joined, form a three-quarter inch square socket.

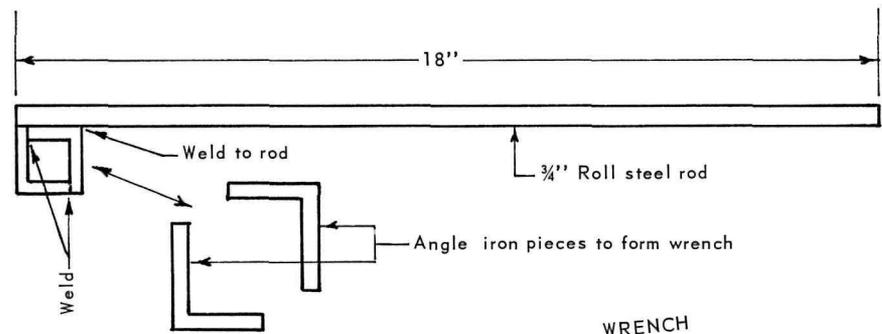
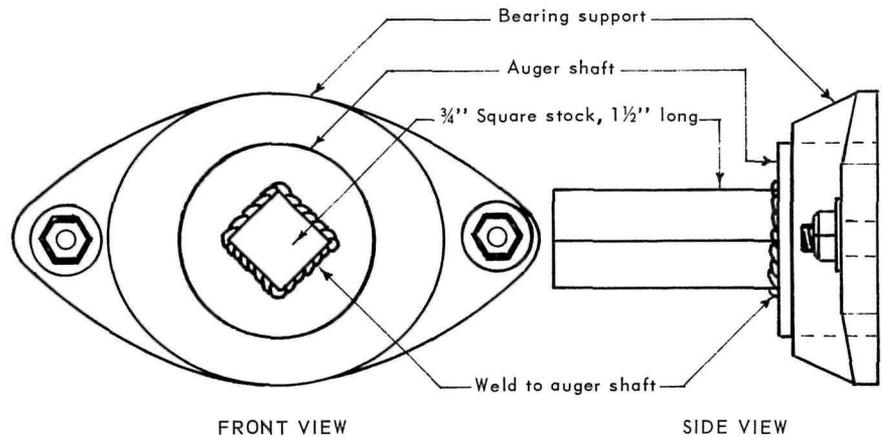
Now when the auger gets stuck, the operator simply slips the wrench over the auger shaft, tugs it backward a nudge or two and dislodges the object, moving that sand back onto the road in no time.

Park Practice 5-Year Index

A five-year index of all the publications of the Park Practice Program is now ready for subscribers. The index, extending from 1969-1973, is divided into functional and subject categories for easy reference.

If you want to know what has been written on interpretation, maintenance, visitor protection and service, safety, planning and a range of other key topics, the index will help you identify the publication in which articles on that topic appeared. The volume, issue number and page are listed. All you have to do is turn to your loose-leaf binders and presto, you have what you need!

Copies of the index are available free to Park Practice subscribers by writing to the National Recreation and Park Association, 1601 N. Kent St., Arlington, Va. 22209.



Keep That Sand Moving!

This winter a lot of park and recreation areas will be open to the public through a thick blanket of snow. Sanding trucks are essential to keep roads open and more often than not, trucks stop sanding because the auger is stuck. Unsticking a frozen or stone lodged auger can be pretty difficult on a cold windy road.

If you could reverse the auger a turn or two, the object causing the problem would be dislodged—but that's not as easy as it sounds. Unhooking and crossing the

Freeze-Up Prevention Light

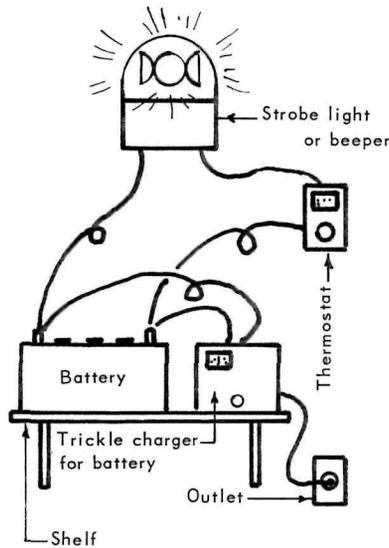
Equipment at Grand Teton National Park never suffers from the minus 35 degree winter days thanks to a device developed by Electrician Gene C. Baldock.

Baldock's early warning system, developed after "about four thousand dollars of replacement of boiler and frozen pipes" uses two different systems for warning of furnace failure or power outage both activated by thermostatic control detecting a drop in below-normal inside temperature. One system is intended as a permanent installation in larger buildings (such as a visitor's center), the other is a portable unit for set-up dwellings or other structures which will not be used more than three days.

The permanent warning system, which is installed in the Visitor's Center and Maintenance Building at Grand Teton, consists of a battery-powered strobe light mounted on the high point of the roof. When dropping temperature inside the structure indicates that the furnace is not functioning properly, the thermostat closes the circuit to the strobe light and its high intensity pulsating beacon alerts maintenance or patrol personnel to take action.

An automatic battery charger forms part of the system and constantly keeps the wet cell topped off, ready for action.

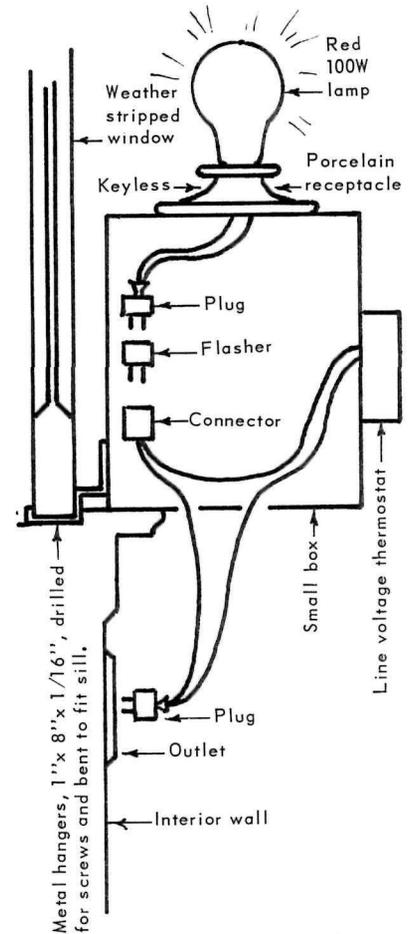
The strobe light system alerted park personnel that the boiler was malfunctioning last year. Apparently the problem transpired shortly after quitting time, but since the building maintains its temperature quite well, the strobe was not set off until about 1:00 a.m. The intensity of the light was so strong, it was immediately noticed by residents and maintenance people were on the scene by 1:30 as the outside temperature had



dropped to 35 degrees below zero and the inside temperature to 60 degrees above. Repairs were completed by 6:00 a.m., when the temperature had dropped inside to just 6 degrees above freezing. If the light had not been there, park personnel would have faced serious problems in terms of replacement costs and equipment damage the next morning.

Baldock notes that if a strobe light system is not applicable in your area, a system which activated a beeping signal over the park's radio system as part of an existing burglar and fire alarm system is equally handy.

The warning system devised by Baldock for temporarily occupied buildings consists of a box-like unit, about 6 inches high and 5 inches square in which a line voltage thermostat and a flasher are mounted. On top, a porcelain keyless receptacle is positioned into which a red 100 watt bulb is screwed. Two strips of 1/16th inch thick strap, 1" x 8" is mounted on the side of a box, extending to one side to form support legs for the unit (see sketch). In operation, the unit provides early warning of furnace failures or malfunctions in vacant buildings by being placed just inside a window facing another occupied house or towards a street where patrols or other residents pass. The support legs of the unit are slipped under the sash, the thermostat set a few degrees below normal and the unit plugged in.



Six units, made up of scrap and odd pieces, are kept in ready reserve at Grand Teton, saving park workers from making tedious rounds to see if furnaces are properly functioning.