



The Capulin Chronicle

Park to Host Youth with Assistance from Rocky Mountain Youth Corps

Capulin Volcano National Monument is teaming up with Rocky Mountain Youth Corps (RMYC) for the summer 2012 to revitalize the park's visitor resources. Two crews of eight corpsmembers each are slated for the work at Capulin. One group will focus on rehabilitating the Lava Flow Trail between the Visitor Center and picnic area. The other crew will work to

“Rocky Mountain Youth Corps inspires young adults to make a difference in themselves and their communities.”

remove invasive plant species and reinstate native grasses as well as address the park's fire hazards by removing woody debris and downed fuel. The completion of these projects will meet the needs of more people by creating a safer, more accessible and educational experience for visitors of all ages.

“This is one small step to take Capulin Volcano to a full service park,” stated park superintendent Peter Armato.

According to the organization's mission statement, “Rocky Mountain Youth Corps inspires young adults to make a difference in themselves and their communities. Through training and team service, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps is a stepping stone to new opportunities.” Last year, RMYC employed over 100 young people across the state of New Mexico. For many, this was their first job and first time going



Rocky Mountain Youth Corps crew members hard at work on a trails project in the summer of 2011.

through the interview process. RMYC interviews each applicant to ensure that he or she gets that real world experience they will need when they join the work force after graduating.

RMYC seeks applicants who are “willing to learn, take direction, and work with others as part of a team,” said Field Program Director Ben Thomas. They look to recruit a diverse group for each crew because, “there is strength in diversity,” Thomas said.

The tasks these crews take on must have a long-term impact, be educational in nature, and/or meet a high priority need. This leads to a wide range of possible projects. In 2011, some crews worked to

rehabilitate areas recently affected by wildfires and renovate trails while others assisted with afterschool and healthcare programs.

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RMYC will begin recruiting for the Capulin crews in May with work starting in June. Positions are open to New Mexico residents ages 16-25 years old. All those interested in applying should contact Ben Thomas. He can be reached by calling (575) 751-1420 ext. 27 or via e-mail at ben@youthcorps.org.

Teacher-Ranger-Teacher Selections Made for Summer 2012

Imagine spending your summer in the outdoors, surrounded by nature, given the rare chance to serve in the national park system. For many people, working for the National Park Service is the opportunity of a lifetime. This summer, four teachers will leave their classrooms to join the green and grey for 8 weeks. Teacher-rangers selected to work at Capulin Volcano National Monument this summer include Gary Smith from Tulsa, Oklahoma; Claudia Labeth from Wilson, Oklahoma; Kelly Jones from Des Moines, New Mexico; and Suzanne Garcia from Amarillo, Texas.

The Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program at Capulin has been in place since 2008 and strives to connect teachers from diverse schools to national parks. Priority is given to teachers whose students have little access to national parks, are underrepresented, or economically marginalized. Time spent in a national park helps teacher-rangers provide kids with a national park experience in their own classrooms. This, in turn,



Teacher-Ranger-Teacher Claudia Labeth swearing in Junior Rangers after an interpretive program at the volcano rim.

helps foster a sense of appreciation for our national parks in today's youth.

This summer at Capulin, teacher-rangers will lead interpretive programs, assist researchers in the field, and shadow park employees—all while wearing the national park uniform. They will develop lesson plans focusing upon the unique resources found at Capulin which they can then take back to their classrooms helping students to connect from afar. They will also be aiding the park in launching a new program called Students Teaching About Monumental Park Sites

(STAMPS) which endeavors to establish a nationwide peer-to-peer network of students learning and teaching others about national parks. Their work with the STAMPS program will fulfill the guidelines for the NPS new centennial initiative *A Call to Action* and will set precedent for parks across the nation.

For teachers who are interested in becoming a TRT or how their classroom can join the STAMPS program, more information can be found on Capulin Volcano's website.

Meet Virginia Tavarez, Maintenance Work Supervisor

Recently, Capulin Volcano hired a new Maintenance Work Supervisor, Virginia Tavarez. Virginia oversees the Capulin maintenance staff and is in charge of everything from janitorial duties to building renovation. Armed with lots of energy and enthusiasm, Virginia has promised "to do whatever it takes to maintain the park facilities for visitor use and satisfaction."



A 22 year veteran National Park Service employee, Virginia was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. She began her career as a custodial worker with Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Through hard work and dedication, she gained the necessary skills needed in the maintenance profession including carpentry, masonry, plumbing, and various methods of roofing.

Virginia came to Capulin Volcano from Carlsbad Caverns National Park where she was a Maintenance Supervisor.

Fee Free Days

America's Best Idea—the national parks—gets even better in 2012 with several fee-free days at Capulin Volcano and more than 100 national parks that usually charge entrance fees. Many of your 397 national parks NEVER charge an entrance fee. So start planning your visit!

- January 14-16
Martin Luther King Jr. weekend
- April 21-29
National Park Week
- June 9
Get Outdoors Day
- September 29
National Public Lands Day
- November 10-12
Veterans Day weekend

Park Aflutter About Monitoring Hummingbirds

Starting this spring, Interpretive and Resource Management staff at Capulin Volcano National Monument will be partnering with the New Mexico Dept. of Game and Fish and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a study of the monument's hummingbird population in cooperation with the Hummingbird Monitoring Network.

The Hummingbird Monitoring Network (HMN) is a non-profit conservation organization that supports projects to improve hummingbirds' ability to survive and reproduce. It works with public land agencies and private landowners, resource management teams and citizen scientists. The HMN has study sites from Canada to Mexico, but only one partially operational site in the state of New Mexico. At Capulin, the hope is to have a fully operational site that will capture, band, measure, identify, and release hummingbirds to gain usable data about hummingbird demographics in the area.

The species known to live around CAVO during the summer are the Rufous, Black-Chinned, Broad-Tailed and Calliope hummingbirds. None are threatened or endangered but more information is always useful in determining how to best protect and manage these species.

The information collected at Capulin will be combined with information from other locations and used to track migration and breeding patterns of the hummingbirds. Because of their size, food sources and metabolism, hummingbirds are especially sensitive to changing temperature and weather patterns. This makes them an excellent candidate to be used as an indicator species for climate change. Also, since most species of hummingbirds are highly specialized regarding habitat, food, and nest sites, they can be a gauge of healthy ecosystems.

Capulin employees are excited to help fill the information gap, not only for the HMN but for the monument as well. Hummingbirds are not counted in the general bird surveys at the site, due to the differences in size and habit. Because of this, CAVO resource management personnel only have a very general idea about the hummingbird population in the park. As the project progresses, volunteer opportunities may become available; the park encourages anyone interested in volunteering at the park to contact Lynn Cartmell at (575) 278-2201.

Viewing the Solar Eclipse

A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes between the Sun and Earth. The Moon's shadow, or umbra, sweeps across Earth's surface crossing an area roughly 10,000 miles long and 100 miles wide. Though this seems big; the shadow will only cover about 1% of the Earth's surface. The Moon often passes between the Earth and Sun, but because it is not within the right parameters the shadow does not strike the surface of Earth. There are two major types of solar eclipses: total and annular. A total eclipse occurs when the Moon is close enough to Earth that it completely blocks out the sun. During an annular eclipse, which will occur on May 20, 2012, the Moon is not able to completely block out the Sun leaving a bright ring around the Moon.

Capulin Volcano will hold a viewing of the Annular Solar Eclipse that will pass through the American Southwest on May 20, 2012. The park will reopen at 6:00 p.m. for visitors to view the eclipse. Capulin Volcano will also host a Star Party that evening after the sun has set. For more information please visit our website under Schedule of Events.



A Broad tailed hummingbird posing for the camera. Just one of the species of hummingbird that will be monitored at Capulin Volcano.

Capulin Volcano National Monument

Set aside in 1916, Capulin Volcano National Monument preserves a striking example of a recent extinct volcano.

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The Capulin Chronicle is the official newsletter of Capulin Volcano National Monument.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Superintendent's Corner

Almost without exception, areas that have been turned over to the National Park Service, as national parks, monuments and historic sites, are of superlative value with existing features so outstanding that if the NPS was able to merely retain the status quo, the job would be a success. That was how I felt about Capulin Volcano National Monument in October of 2010 when I interviewed for the position of superintendent. Now, having been on the job since April of 2011, my love of this land and monument has only grown deeper.



Each day as I travel the 33 miles from my home in Raton, NM, to the volcano I eagerly await the first views of the volcano. Some days the volcano is shrouded in clouds. More often the mountain stands boldly against a blue sky. To some the commute may seem long but when one develops a love for the land and its harsh volcanic landscape, the trip becomes one of reflecting on one's appreciation for the land and its resources.

Since my arrival, there have been many changes at Capulin Volcano. Perhaps the largest change is a much needed multi-million dollar road and hillslope stabilization project. Concerns about the stability of the outboard edge of the road leading to the volcano rim parking area and the marked erosion of the volcano's hillslope at culvert outfalls resulted in a collaborative project between Federal Highways and the National Park Service to reduce the rate of erosion on the volcano. Unfortunately, to perform this much needed work safely and efficiently we reduced public access to the volcano rim for a portion of each week. We appreciate your patience and understanding while we complete this project that will help ensure we are doing all we can to protect a national treasure for future generations of park visitors and future park stewards.