

The

YELLOWSTONE

FILE



News

February 2, 1996

NPS Employee Newsletter

Next Deadline: February 14

Heartfelt Thanks

Now that things have returned to "semi-normal", the Public Affairs Office wanted to take this opportunity to pass on our thanks and praise to so many of the Yellowstone Park staff. Throughout the year, it's necessary for us to call on other Divisions for their assistance and expertise. In the past few months we've had a number of special events we were involved with. The visit by the World Heritage Committee, the Christmas Tree Lighting and Open House, and the wolf restoration program are just a few that come to mind. What also comes to mind is the hard work everyone puts into making each of these events a great success! It's always heart warming to us how responsive and supportive our park staff is. Even with their own busy schedules, they take time to assist us with the myriad of requests we receive from media, the public, and commercial interests. We sincerely appreciate everyone's support. Thanks for going that extra mile.

Farewell

Congratulations to Christy Sankey who recently accepted a job with Grand Teton National Park and the Bridger-Teton National Forest as the Assistant Dispatch Supervisor. Christy, who has been in Yellowstone since 1983, and her husband Matt since 1987, will move to the Tetons at the end of March. Our best wishes for a great new life goes with them.

A Boy's Final Wish Gives Meaning to National Parks

by Todd Wilkinson (reprinted with permission)

Randy Neil Caulder isn't a name that President Clinton or members of the 104th Congress are likely to recognize. But during the latest government shutdown, this teenager from Lumberton, North Carolina demonstrated the kind of courage and character that is a rarity these days on Capitol Hill. By venturing recently into the unknown and pursuing his final wish, Caulder reaffirmed the purpose of national parks, and why we need to keep them open.

When you're sixteen, there isn't supposed to be a reason for contemplating priorities at the end of your life. There are too many places to go, people to see. This was Caulder's approach to living until several months ago when fate through him a curve ball. While being examined for a baseball injury, doctors discovered a malignant tumor in his leg. Specialists at Duke University said he would have to lose his limb but even more cruelly the cancer inside his body was terminal and rapidly spreading.

Caulder, like most other kids his age, had plenty of ambition. Aside from the usual adolescent distractions of girls, learning to drive a car, and hopes of one day earning a baseball scholarship to college, he had another dream that he shared with only close friends, his parents, and his little brother Kenneth. Before he got old, Randy prayed that, just once, he could witness the eruption of Old Faithful Geyser. Knowing of his desire to see the famous natural wonder in Yellowstone, Caulder's neighbors Ron and Lynda Nye, invited the boy on a winter ski trip to the Rockies. Although his condition was deteriorating, Caulder rallied to make the journey.

Unfortunately, petty political bickering in Washington had resulted in the public being locked out of our national parks. "We came to the West and arrived in Denver on the pure faith that somehow we would be able to visit Yellowstone," Ron Nye said. "I don't know what your religious affiliation is, but what happened next went beyond the power of any human realm." As the partisan squabbling continued, Nye made a desperate telephone call to Yellowstone spokeswoman Marsha Karle: "Can you help make a miracle happen?" he asked. "Randy just doesn't have a lot of time left."

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Thrift Savings Changes

The Open Season Thrift Savings Elections that were to become effective on January 7, 1996, will be made effective January 21, 1996. No automatic retroactive deductions for pay period 9003 will be made. If you wish an adjustment for pay period 9603, or if you have further questions, please call Pat Adams, Benefits Specialist at (303) 969-7487.

Detail Offered

The Maintenance Management Office is looking for someone to fill in as Secretary; GS-318-06 (Temporary Promotion/Detail) or a Secretary, GS-318-05 (Temporary Promotion/Detail). Based on applications received it will be determined whether this is filled as a Temporary promotion or a detail. It is expected to last a full 120 calendar days and will begin immediately.

Registration Time

Girl Scout Brownie Troop #187 is taking registrations for 1st and 2nd grade girls from the Gardiner and Mammoth areas for the remainder of the school year. For more information contact Deb Bahr 344-7378 or Janet Lewis 344-7712 (eves). If anyone has girl scout/brownie uniforms, handbooks, etc. they wish to donate back to the troop it would be greatly appreciated.

Employee Association

Now that we're finally back to work and somewhat on schedule, those interested in trying to form an employee association should regroup and discuss which direction we should go. After the All-Employee Meeting on Wednesday, February 7, everyone interested should stay a few extra minutes to decide upon a time and date for our next meeting. See you then!

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Theoretically, fulfilling his wish was problematic because it meant park staff would have to break the law. Federal employees, particularly those who caretake public lands, were under strict orders to refrain from volunteering their services or opening facilities to outside visitors. "Two things can happen to a person who violates this law," an internal memorandum sent from Washington warned. "First is prosecution resulting in a fine of up to \$5,000, or two years in prison, or both. Secondly, the Secretary [of Interior] is obligated to report immediately any such violation to the President and the Congress." Karle said there was never any real choice. Park workers agreed that if the President and the Congress wanted to fire its civil servants for assisting Caulder, then that was the government's prerogative but in the meantime, travel arrangements had to be made fast. Karle organized lunches, recruited a park interpreter, and told the Nyes that Caulder would be given a special escort. Hearing the circumstances, Steve Tedder at park concessionaire TW Recreational Services donated the use of a snow coach even though the government shutdown was costing his company a hundred thousand dollars a day in lost revenue. "All of us wanted to do what was right," Karle said. "National parks exist for the people and here was a young man who rallied his last strength just to see the inside of Yellowstone. His visit was an inspiration to everyone he met." Still, the three-hour ride from Mammoth to Old Faithful Visitor Center left Caulder seriously fatigued but he arrived at the vacant Old Faithful Visitor Center two minutes before the geyser spouted its hot plume and sent an ethereal mist floating across the Upper Geyser Basin. Caulder was momentarily rejuvenated as rangers Dan Hand and Joe Bueter helped him predict Old Faithful's next eruption. Then, after watching elk and bison in the snow, he was ready to go home.

"Randy and I had a heart to heart talk during the trip to Yellowstone. He was the type of kid who would not give up and his courage gave other people strength," Nye said. "But he was preparing himself for the inevitable. He asked me, 'If I should die, what is it going to be like on the other side?' Once the boy left the park, Yellowstone Maintenance Worker Rod Robey was so touched by Caulder's spirit that he dispatched this note to his supervisors. "I was extremely moved by [his visit] because rather than going to Disneyland, this young person came here and to think we can't even keep the place open!" Robey wrote. "In making Caulder's wish come true, a very important statement was made about values, Yellowstone, and the national parks. At a time when morale was an issue, mine was lifted. At a time when our leaders—politician's refer to our children's future, men close the parks, this is the reason they should be open. To know that a child's last wish would be to come to Yellowstone, maybe there is hope." Until the end, his parents said, the boy continued to marvel about Yellowstone and the Mystery of Old Faithful Geyser. Randy Neil Caulder passed away at five in the morning on January 11, a little more than a week after his adventure to the Rockies was complete.

Editor's note: From a card received from the Caulder's on February 2—"To the Yellowstone National Park staff and employees: Our hearts are bursting with the utmost joy to know that people like you exist. We can never be able to thank-you for the kindness and happiness you all gave our son in his last days. He was thrilled to know people like you and to see one of the natural wonders of the world. We pray God's blessings upon you all. Thanks so much for the beautiful flowers. We will cherish what you gave Randy for a lifetime." Vernon, Phyllis, and Kenneth Caulder

COMMUNITY EVENTS

* **Yellowstone Flyfishers to Meet** Note: change in Meeting Date. Wednesday, February 7, 1996. Fly tying at 7 p.m. with John Cates. Guest speaker will be Dan Mahoney with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Dan will discuss Park Regulation Changes and Lake Trout. There will be door prizes and everyone is invited.

* **All-Employee Meeting** On Wednesday, February 7, 1995, there will be an NPS All-Employee Meeting at the Mammoth Recreation Hall behind the hotel. The meeting will start at 1 p.m. See you there!

* **Vet Visit** Veterinarian, Dr. Jim Murray, will be at the Gardiner Exxon on Friday, February 9 from 2-5 p.m. No appointment necessary. Housecalls available upon request. Next visit: February 23.

CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale: Nancy Glazier limited edition print, "Youngblood". First in her series of horses. Beautifully framed and matted. Call 344-2204 or 344-7471, eves.

Teacher Needed: The Yellowstone Park School Board is in need of a substitute teacher. This position will involve teaching third grade from about April 1 until June 1, 1996. If interested, please submit a letter of application to: Yellowstone National Park School Board, P.O. Box 448, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190, Attn: John Whitman.

For Sale: Macintosh LC II computer, 4 MB, CD Rom, Keyboard, monitor, lots of educational software. Excellent condition. \$750. Call 344-7936.

For Sale: Child's saddle with 12" seat. Big Horn brand. Call Mary at 848-7192.

For Sale: Soloflex with all attachments. Good condition, \$399. Call 344-7349 after 5 p.m.

For Sale: 4-13" studded tires. Great shape, \$100. 1982 Yamaha ET snowmobile, \$400. Call Cat at 344-7344.

Want to Share: Furnished one bedroom apt. in Bozeman. I use this apt. on my days off and am looking for someone in Yell who'd like to share it and has different lieu days. Great location, two blocks from Main St. \$140 a month plus heat. Call Cat at 344-7344.

Carpool Partner Wanted: I'm looking for someone to carpool with from Bozeman, and back, one to three times per week (I'm attending MSU). Willing to share driving and gas. If interested call 848-9841 (evening and weekends) or 344-2318 (weekdays).

Bozeman Symphony

Presents

The Kreutzer Trio

(Clarinet, Flute, and Guitar)

Performing at the

Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel

Map Room

Sunday, February 11th

3:00 P.M.

Everyone is Invited!

Free Admission

**Funded by the Bozeman Symphony, Montana Community
Foundation, US West Foundation and the Yellowstone
Park School.**

