

YELLOWSTONE



News

April 12, 1996

NPS Employee Newsletter

Next Deadline: April 24

March For Parks

Don't forget! The first Yellowstone March for the Parks event will be held on April 20. The march is designed to get park employees and neighbors involved in making something positive happen--namely a wayside exhibit at the Roosevelt Arch. The march will begin at Albright Visitor Center and follow the Old Gardiner Road to the arch. A picnic (free to marchers) will be held at "gateway park" in Gardiner. Prizes will be awarded for most enthusiastic marcher, youngest marcher, most experienced marcher, largest team and other categories. Other prizes will be raffled off using the marcher's ticket stubs. If you'd like to know more, call Sandy Snell-Dobert, Matt Graves, Helene Greninger, or Lynne Mager (the prize guru). Join us for the fun! Call Helene for pledge forms now!

Rec. Office Opens

The Mammoth Yellowstone Concessioners Employee Recreation Office is now fully staffed and will be open full time, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. If you have any comments for the upcoming summer season, please feel free to stop by the office in Mammoth Recreation Hall or call 344-5225.

Wolf Encounter

by Tower Ranger Paul Anzalone

On October 10, 1995, Michael Keator and I were hiking down the Buffalo Plateau trail to the Hellroaring trailhead after four days on the boundary for poaching patrol. We had left the Buffalo Plateau cabin about 1300 with six inches of snow on the ground and still falling. We had a nice trip though there was little activity in the way of hunting or elk movement, especially as the weather worsened.

We walked across the snow covered meadow before crossing the last wooden bridge which opened into an expansive open hillside sloping down to the Hellroaring Creek and trail and we stopped to watch some bull elk battling each other. I took off my pack and got out Michael's binoculars to watch. A few cows were lying in the grass next to the bulls. At this point we were about 120 yards away. The cows got up when Michael said, "What was that?" I gave him the binoculars and looked myself to see a black and a gray wolf chasing a group of elk. Below the battling bulls and the cows was a herd of elk. Michael and I dropped to the ground and watched the wolves chase the elk for another five minutes. The herd would split up into small units of 20-30 animals, staying in tight groups as the wolves maneuvered and attempted to single out an animal to take down. Rather than run across the sweeping hillside, the small groups of elk chose to stay in the immediate area in front of the wooden bridge in their attempts at evading the pack of wolves.

At one point, what appeared to be a cow was separated from a small group of elk and ran off in the opposite direction, followed by one of the gray wolves. We thought for sure that this elk would be the victim today, however, the other wolves did not follow. A few minutes later, the wolves were in hot pursuit of a group of 30 or so elk. They chased this group in a circle, with the elk eventually crossing the small creek spanned by the wooden bridge, actually damaging the toe railing on the bridge in their frenzied retreat. This group of elk stampeded out across the meadow and headed in our direction passing 30 yards from where we lay witnessing this spectacle. We looked in vain for the wolves giving chase; not wanting to lift our heads too high and alarm any of the participants.

Seconds later a gray wolf could be seen loping after the retreating herd. We intently watched this wolf in anticipation of a kill as it followed this herd diagonally across and down the meadow when out of the corner of my eye I saw the other gray wolf running perpendicular across the meadow straight for our position. I whispered to Michael, "Another one is headed straight for

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Cards and Letters

Appreciated

Curtis Anderson, NPS retired Budget Officer was hospitalized last week with a serious illness. Curt would appreciate your cards and letters which can be sent to Constant Care Unit, Room 409, Billings, Montana 59107. Contributions for flowers can be sent to Georgia Amundson in Procurement, or Montana Lindstrom/Kathy Hoak in the Yellowstone Finance Office.

A.R. Sumner, NPS retired blacksmith, is having health problems and he and his wife Georgia would appreciate hearing from their friends in Yellowstone. Their mailing address is: 12383 Antelope Valley Road, Three Forks, Montana 59752.

Dear Yellowstone

Park: (Edited for length only)

I'm writing to you because your roads at Yellowstone are too hard to drive on. They're all over the place, they zigzag the whole time you drive on them. It's beautiful there I know I've been there. People from other countries know about your park. I know a person's motorhome tipped over while driving on a turn. That is a common known fact. If your roads weren't so hard to drive on, those innocent people wouldn't be killed. Plus, it's hard to see animals crossing the road when you come around a corner. As you see the situation is now bad for animals. It's very bad for plantlife because when the motorhomes fall on them. If the plant is small enough, it will get smashed. If you fall off the side of the road I mean. As you see it's effecting plantlife also. At night when you are driving and your not sure where the street is you could tip on a turn. Second, you could go toward an innocent person standing on the side of the street. Then, your car will roll down a hill and you'll die. So now it's effecting you too. So I hope you heard what I said about people, plants, and animals dying at your park. Sincerely, Bruce Hinton Mt. Airy, MD

Continued from page 1

us." and he looked ahead at the fast approaching canine. We both froze in position not daring to even blink as a beautiful gray wolf ran right past us only fourteen feet away. This animal was so close we could see into its eyes. It was obvious that this animal was intent on the hunt and had not yet any inkling of our presence. We both turned to watch this wolf as he passed our position, about 10 yards beyond where we lay, the wolf suddenly became aware of our movement and jumped to a halting stop, pivoting to face us. Not completely relishing the idea of being surrounded by wolves, we turned back to the south side of the meadow to survey what situation had developed. We saw a majestic black wolf with piercing yellow eyes not more than 20 yards away standing and trying to make sense of us. By now the elk had left the meadow and these two wolves had learned of our intrusion into their hunt and decided to quickly exit into the forest north of us.

We rose from our position on the ground and looked at each other trying to believe what had just happened. After about five minutes we noticed that the entire pack of five wolves had reconvened on the hillside leading down to the original meadow where the whole incident had started. For the next 30-40 minutes we watched as this group played with one another, occasionally digging in the snow and soil. The elk no longer seemed interested in the fact that the wolves were nearby as it was somewhat obvious that the wolves had abandoned the hunt, at least for now. At one point, a big bull even walked within 15 yards of the wolves, actually walking between three of them. Neither the wolves or the elk paid much attention to the other. Eventually a wolf started howling on top of the ridge crowning the meadow, and the remaining wolves slowly worked their way in that direction. In our attempt to gain a better position to view the wolves, we no doubt gave away our presence and pushed the animals higher on to the hillside and out of our sight. Unfortunately, I did not get out my camera and could not take any pictures of the wolves, only the huge tracks left in the snow by one of the black wolves. I was afraid to move too much and alert them of my presence and did not attempt to retrieve my camera. That was too bad, as I could have taken some unbelievable photographs. After some thought and consulting, it was determined that this was the Soda Butte pack we had observed. For myself, this was the first sighting of a wolf in Yellowstone, and even though Michael was an integral part of the reintroduction and had seen the wolves many times, this was a very special experience for us both.

Support Little People's Learning Center

Little People's Learning Center (LPLC) will be selling environmental t-shirts as a center fundraiser on April 20, 1996, at the March for Park's picnic in Gardiner. Shirt designs and an order form can be found at the Visitor Services Office in Mammoth with Betsy Mitchell or come and see the shirts personally where they will be displayed at the picnic at the Gateway Park by the arch. The designs are all silk-screened on 100% heavy weight cotton. Organic cotton is also available. Proceeds will go to LPLC and to various environmental groups. The costs will be \$10 for children, \$12 for adults, and \$14 for XXL and organic cotton.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

☼ **Vet Visit** Veterinarian, Dr. Jim Murray, will be at the Gardiner Exxon on Friday, April 12 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. No appointment necessary. Housecalls available upon request. Next visit: April 26.

☼ **Ducks Unlimited Banquet** Join the festivities at the 6th Annual Ducks Unlimited Banquet, on Saturday, April 13 at the Gardiner Eagles Hall. There will be a silent auction, raffles, door prizes, live auction, a great dinner, and lots of fun! Get your tickets today, from Eric Robinson at 848-9410 or Tom Totland at 344-9254.

☼ **Electric Peak Classic** April 12, 13, 14. This has been the biggest fundraiser for the scholarship fund so attend and give your support. Cat Country Allstars from Billings and Bozeman will play beginning at 7:00 p.m. on April 12th. They will be giving away concert tickets and someone will have a chance to shoot for \$103. The first tournament game will start at 9:00 p.m. Friday with the games beginning at 10:00 a.m. Saturday and 8:00 a.m. Sunday. The championship game will be played at 2:15 p.m. Sunday.

☼ **Recycle Day** Saturday, April 20, have your newspapers, cardboard, aluminum cans, and magazines on the curb by 9 a.m. and the BOY SCOUTS will do the rest. Thanks for recycling!!

CLASSIFIED ADS

Wanted to Buy: The staff in Office Services is seeking a used working microwave at a reasonable price. Please call Judy at 344-2031.

For Sale: Beautiful antique oak dressing table with mirror. \$550, or best offer. Nancy Glazier limited edition print "Youngblood" (first in her series of horses) \$600, OBO. Nordictrak, \$200, OBO. Free weights \$50/set. Older, (not quite antique) sewing machine, wooden cabinet. \$50. Call Renee at 344-2204 or 344-7471, eves, leave message.

For Sale: Healthrider exercise machine, \$450. In excellent condition. Not recommended for short-legged folks. Please call Grace at 344-7722.

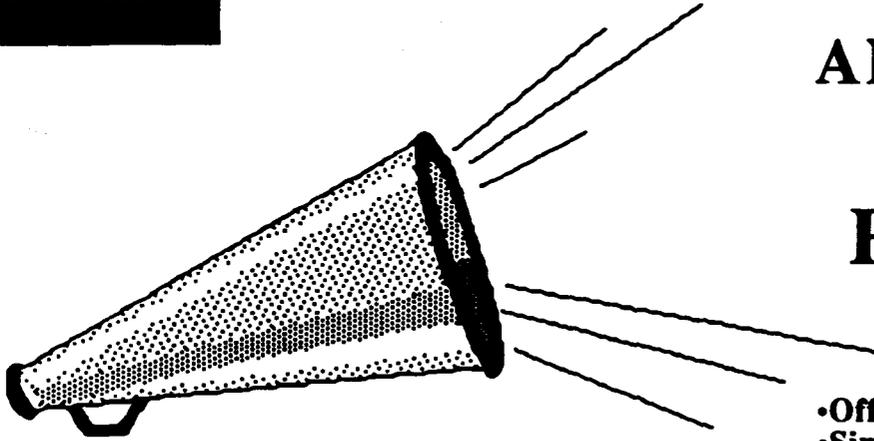
For Sale: Pine bunk bed set, w/quality mattress set, \$200. (101 Dalmatian comforter set available, too. 19" color TV, \$15. (needs "sound" work). Portable dishwasher, \$15. Carpet, beige (approx. 8' x 12') \$40. Mountain bike, Specialized Rockhopper. Good shape, older model, \$125. Kayak, fiberglass, Dick Held brand, w/spray skirt, paddle, and flotation bags, \$350. Call Tammy or Steve at 344-7433 or 344-2110.

For Sale: Cabin Fever and Spring Fever have BOTH set in! We must redecorate! Sofa with matching loveseat, small oak dinette, and open oak room divider-type shelves, all for sale at very reasonable prices. Call 344-7414 after 5 p.m.

Lost: A handknit beret style hat, maroon and blue heather. Lost in or near the Canteen on March 17. This hat is special and I would really like to have it back. Please call Anita 344-7408 at home or 344-2160.

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WEIGHT WATCHERS COMMUNITY MEETING



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THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

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Gardiner

For more information call:1-800-391-3130

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