

352/D-24

SUPERINTENDENT'S NARRATIVE

FY96

KENNESAW MOUNTAIN NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK

FY1996 held some interesting challenges for the park resources and staff at Kennesaw Mountain NBP.

A unified command system, jointly managed by SERO, KEMO, CHAT, and MALU, as well as two separate Incident Management Teams, allowed the park units to weather the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games without a single major incident.

Although all the events held in the Atlanta Metro area were outside Cobb County, these are major matters "after the fact," experienced at KEMO:

1. Crowds of people did not come to the parks.
2. International visitors came on busses not individual cars.
3. Event was over-rated in terms of the impacts to park resources.
4. Five seasonal Law Enforcement Officers assisted with park programs.
5. SERO personnel were trained and used in KEMO for support/interpretative programs.
6. The unified command system worked very well for us under the Incident Command System.
7. The information and intelligence gathered by the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG), was not good information, the crowds were just not what was predicted.

Kennesaw Mountain NBP was just within budget this fiscal year. Incident management funds, Olympics Special Law Enforcement funds helped cover gaps and provide needed resource protection.

All mandatory training was conducted.

Several pieces of used furniture were disposed of according to GSA guidelines during the FY.

The Historian position became vacant in FY96, and remained vacant through the year. Plans are to fill it Mid-FY97.

Moving the park administration and management to park quarters continues to show signs improving management response and effectiveness.

Cooperative activities that continue to produce excellent results are:

- Water quality monitoring, North Cobb High-Partner.
- Book sales and returns, Kennesaw Mountain Historical Association -Partner.
- Progress on the Visitor Center Addition, Friends of Kennesaw Mountain NBP-Partner.
- VIP Program- 531 volunteers donated 8,362 hours during the year.
- Parks as Classrooms, National Park Foundation-Partner.
- Related Lands Study, American Battlefield Protection Program and Kennesaw Mountain Historical Association-Partners.
- Johnson's River Line Study, Cobb Historical Preservation Commission-Partner.
- Restoration of Atlanta Campaign- Resaca, Georgia Civil War Commission-Partner.
- Rangers Against Drugs (RAD), Atlanta Public School, Marietta Public Schools-Partners.
- March for Parks- 172 people in 1996, National Parks Conservation Association-Partners.

The Growth in Cobb County and surrounding metro Atlanta Counties continues to cause the greatest concern for preserving park resources. Continued problems and issues compromising the integrity of Kennesaw Mountain include:

- Loss of historic scene due to development of residential, commercial and industrial property along and within park boundaries.
- Over use of some park roads and trails.
- Rush hour automobile traffic and related problems.
- Weekend parking overflow.

■Boundary degradation by neighbors buildings/structures placed on park (see Arwood and Simunons Case).

■Concerns over road widening continues as more cars use park roadways for commuting.

■Cases against pet owners continues to climb. Dogs in the park will be a major issue within a few years.