



A Newsletter of
Mammoth Cave
National Park

Superintendent's Message -

Training + Experience = A Field Training Park

By Ronald R. Switzer

Training and experience. Both are essential for expertise in a professional occupation, especially those dealing with law enforcement. Training provides foundational knowledge; experience comes from putting that training to use. To best prepare it ranger force, the National Park Service has combined training with experience in Field Training Parks.

This is a new program that places recent Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) graduates under the tutelage of experienced officers at 19 parks across the Service, Mammoth Cave being one of them. FLETC, located in Glynco, Ga., trains federal law enforcement officers for NPS, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Marshall Service, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Border Patrol and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



To improve officer safety and liability protection, the FLETC basic course for NPS rangers has grown over the years: in 1980, it was nine weeks; in 1992, it was lengthened to 11 weeks; now it is 18½ weeks, plus 9-12 weeks on assignment in a park. Prior to the Field Training concept, officers could graduate one week and arrest someone, without assistance, the next.



The new NPS law enforcement badge.

Four Mammoth Cave rangers - Rich Caldwell, Eddie Wells, David Alexander and Larry Johnson - will participate in the program as Field Training Officers. They each graduated from the FLETC and have several years experience, and returned to FLETC this past year for an additional 48 hour course for field trainers.

February brings Mammoth Cave its first ranger-trainee, ready to receive on-the-job law enforcement training from our seasoned veterans. FLETC's Tom Cherry, who coordinates the program, traveled to the park in January to evaluate our preparedness. I'm very pleased to announce that he found Mammoth Cave to be a model.

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Construction Update

Stormwater runoff filters that are being installed at each of the park's major parking lots will be substantially completed in January. They will be fully functional and in service. The filters remove oil, grit, antifreeze, exhaust residue, and heavy metals from the parking lot runoff. The final site rehab work, including grading and seeding and construction of headwalls, will be completed in the spring. Construction fencing will remain in place until all work is complete.

In the **Headquarters Campground Loop A**, the sites are now defined with timbers, and they have been leveled and graveled. Each has an accessible picnic table, lantern stand and stove shelf. Some have been converted to group sites, or are joined by a path and called buddy sites. A new recycling area is centrally located for the entire campground.

RCI, of Louisville, completed preservation work on the three **church buildings** in the park, Good Springs, Mammoth Cave Baptist and Joppa Church. Good Springs was painted, Mammoth Cave Baptist Church's foundation was stabilized, and all three were reroofed.



This "buddy" pad links two campsites.

On January 7, Ceres Environmental, of Brooklyn, MN, began work on the **Mammoth Dome Tower**, sandblasting, repainting, and replacing the concrete steps at the top of the tower with grated-metal steps. Ceres subbed fabrication of the new steps to Madison-Smith of Glasgow. The project is scheduled to be completed by late February.

Cave trail construction on the Historic route is underway, installing concrete paving stones over the existing dirt trails. It's a very slow process. Madison-Smith is transporting the pavers and base material into the cave via the old air shaft using a crane, then an electric cart carries pallets to the desired location. Cave tours have already shifted to the other end of the cave - Frozen Niagara and Grand Avenue - during trail construction. Working with Crew Leader Jesse Craine are Ted Diamond, Ken Neagle, Brad McCubbin, Scott Green, Duwayne Townsend, Ben Bowles, Brandon Groce, Mike Tabor, Joe Cottrell, Jonathan Glass, Jason Shirley, and James Christy. The project is scheduled to be completed by the time the spring cave tour schedule begins March 13, but Interpretation/Fees have a contingency date of March 20 in case extra time is needed.

The prep-work has taken several years, but the **water system replacement** will officially begin this spring once FY04 funding is released. Evidence can already be seen in the Engine #4 field where Caveland Environmental Authority (CEA) installed lines to get ahead of the coming road project. The new system is designed as two components, one for drinking water and one for fire suppression. The replacement lines will not follow the old route through the woods, instead the new lines will be placed within the existing road corridors to the park headquarters and Mammoth Cave Hotel; scheduled as an 18-month project, it will have minimal effect on park traffic during the summer season in 2004 and 2005. There will be some planned service outages when connections are being switched at individual buildings. It appears inevitable that there will also be some service disruptions as a result of accidental rupturing of the old lines. CEA has been asked to maintain a supply of repair parts on-site to minimize the time any accidents would interrupt water service.

The Federal Highway Administration manages construction of roadways within the park and advertised a **Mammoth Cave NP road project** on its website. The bidding period closed January 15, 2004. The project consists of rehabilitation of south entrance road from the Chaumont intersection through the Visitor Center parking areas. The work includes pavement overlay, roadway reconstruction, new roadway, intersection reconfigurations, geogrid reinforced fill, drainage, and other work. A new bus loading area and a new road entrance to Mammoth Cave Hotel will improve visitor safety and traffic flow. The Hotel and visitor center parking lots will both be paved, too.

Shanna Smith is EE Teacher of the Year

Shanna Teodorski Smith is the 2003 recipient of the Mammoth Cave Environmental Education Teacher of the Year. This annual award honors a local teacher who teaches and/or exhibits environmental stewardship throughout the school year. Mrs. Smith is such a teacher; she teaches at Cub Run Elementary in Hart County, and has worked as a seasonal guide at Mammoth Cave. She uses the environment as a primary focus in all aspects of her lesson plans, and encourages her co-workers to do the same. She shows her students the cause and effect of daily decisions to their lives, their community, and their planet. Students learned the value of recycling, studied the economic value of local parks, and became aware of unique aspects of their local area. Mrs. Smith uses local resource personnel, such as Mammoth Cave park rangers, to demonstrate concepts and present information relevant to her topics. By using the environment as a central focal point, Mrs. Smith has been able to tie together her math, English, science, social studies and health/physical education under one topical umbrella that has proven exciting to her students.



*If you have a
modem...*

...then you have access to a wealth of information about Mammoth Cave National Park. Set your World Wide Web browser to:

<http://www.nps.gov/maca>

Reservations!

For cave tour, campground, and picnic shelter reservations online: reservations.nps.gov

Park News

Un-Construction of Chaumont

On December 15, the demolition, and eventual reuse, of the old Wondering Woods building at Chaumont began. The park received clearance from the General Services Administration (GSA) to dispose of the building, and requested the services of the Fort Knox Morale, Welfare and Recreation Fund (the post recycling program) to tear it down and recycle the materials. Fort Knox subcontracted Action Auctioneers to sell the building at public auction; Marty Higdon and Sons Construction of Clarkson, Ky., purchased it. Under the Fort Knox recycling program, old buildings are sold and the materials remaining must be reused. And - because this has been done under a recycling program, the park is allowed to retain the funds from the sale of the building, \$3,200. Use of the funds is restricted to enhance Mammoth Cave's recycling program.



Peggy Poynter

A bobcat clears the second floor at Chaumont.

Web Cam has New Address

The National Park Service completed a redesign of the Nature Net web site, <http://www.nature.nps.gov>, in December. The web site redesign necessitated web address changes for all NPS web cams. The direct link to the Mammoth Cave National Park web camera is now: <http://www2.nature.nps.gov/air/webcams/parks/macacam/macacam.htm>.

All of the NPS web cameras can be found within the Nature Net web site by clicking on a map located at <http://www2.nature.nps.gov/air/WebCams/index.htm>

Soil Climate Analysis Network

Mammoth Cave NP has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Dept. of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to install and operate a Soil Climate Analysis Network monitoring station at Mammoth Cave National Park. The system is now operational and data can be viewed and downloaded at www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/scan/. The station measures soil temperature, soil moisture, and salinity at 2", 4", 8", 20", and 40" depths. In addition, surface measurements are made for temperature, relative humidity, rainfall, wind direction, wind speed, solar radiation, and barometric pressure. Data is transmitted via microburst technology and powered by solar panels. The station is located about 20 feet from the ozone bio-garden on the east boundary of the park.

Chestnuts Here and Coming Here

Science and Resource Management arranged for Mark Vance of Tennessee Tech to survey the Big Woods area of the park looking for signs of American chestnut trees during the 2003 growing season. Chestnuts were common in the eastern United States until a blight struck in the 1930s, all but eliminating the species. Roots of the old trees are known to sprout, which eventually succumb to the disease. Vance found 1,050 root sprouts, averaging 1" diameter at breast height (dbh); the two largest specimens are 7" dbh, one 25' tall and the other 40' tall. Park staff continue to plant seedlings provided by the American Chestnut Cooperators Foundation (these are 100% American chestnut; they have not been crossed with other varieties.) Brice Leech traveled to West Virginia in December to bring back 1,500 seedlings which will be planted at Mammoth Cave and Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHS.

McKay is on Cutting Edge

Former MACA employee John McKay is the recipient of the prestigious Denny Galvin Cutting Edge Award. The presentation was for his work in preparing and publishing a new children's book on diversity. John received the award while stationed at New Orleans Jazz NHP; he recently transferred to Stones River NB.

The Flashlight is produced by the Division of External Programs and Communications. Our Web Page address is www.nps.gov/maca/home.htm. Please contact us if you need further information. - Jim Carroll, Vickie Carson, Tres Seymour, and Mary Anne Davis, Mammoth Cave National Park, P.O. Box 7, Mammoth Cave, KY 42259; by telephone at (270)758-2254, or (270)773-2111; by e-mail at Vickie_Carson@nps.gov.

People

Transfer: Matt Roland, park ranger, to Mammoth Cave NP from C&O Canal NHP.

Cave trail project: Brad McCubbin, Scott Green, Duwayne Townsend, Ben Bowles, Brandon Groce, Jonathan Glass, Mike Tabor, Joe Cottrell, and Jason Shirley.

Retirement: Long-time cave guide Donald Lindsey retired January 3, 2004. E. Lee Davis, with regional concessions management, retired January 3, 2004.

Calendar

January 28	Biosphere Council meeting
February 12	Kentucky League of Cities Environmental Safety/Health Conference at MACA Hotel
March 1	Houchins Ferry, HQ Campground, and picnic area open for the season
March 1	CUGA Fire Use Module at MACA to prep for prescribed fires
March 13	Spring cave tour schedule begins
March 14-18	Association of Partners for Public Lands conference, St. Louis
March 20-23	STS Spring board meeting, Memphis
April 11	Easter
April 17	Wildflower Day
May 25, 1926	Congress authorized Mammoth Cave NP



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Environmental Leadership Quote:

“Our ideals, laws and customs should be based on the proposition that each generation, in turn, becomes the custodian rather than the absolute owner of our resources and each generation has the obligation to pass this inheritance on to the future.”

– Charles A. Lindbergh