



# Flowering of Nicodemus

The official newsletter of Nicodemus National Historic Site

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## From the Superintendent

Congratulations to the Homecoming Committee on a very successful 129<sup>th</sup> Homecoming Celebration! We were pleased to be able to sponsor Debra Dandridge from the University of Kansas, Spencer Research Library, as the speaker at the July 28 afternoon program. Debra spoke about the need to continue documenting the significant history of the town. Angela Bates, Executive Director of the local Nicodemus Historical Society, followed Ms. Dandridge and spoke about the family tree project of the Society. As the town celebrates its 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary, what better message than to preserve the pictures, documents, artifacts, and memory of your past and educate the younger generation about their heritage! I hope you were able to be in Nicodemus with family and friends during this past Homecoming.

From our Washington Office, there has been good news about the Fiscal Year 2008 budget request. The President's \$2.4 billion National Park Service budget for Fiscal Year 2008 calls for the largest increase in park operations funding ever proposed and leveraged public-private investments that could generate as much as \$3 billion to help the parks prepare for their 100th birthday in 2016. The proposed budget includes 3,000 new seasonal employees, continues increases for park maintenance, and targets specific cultural and natural resource improvements. If passed by Congress, this increase should result in an addition of some seasonal positions at Nicodemus National Historic Site.

"All of this is possible because the President recommends a \$230.0 million increase in park operations funding over his Fiscal Year 2007 budget request," said Mary Bomar, Director of the National Park Service. "That is the largest increase ever for park operations and programs that directly benefit national parks." The FY2008 budget proposal is the first financial infusion for the President's Initiative to ready America's parks for the 2016 Centennial of the National Park Service – the "National Parks Centennial Initiative." Bomar said the Centennial Initiative emphasizes three key goals:

- Engage all Americans in preserving our heritage, history, and natural resources through philanthropy and partnerships.
- Reconnect people with their parks.
- Build capacity for critical park operations and facilities, and sustain them through the next century.

As the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park Service approaches in 2016, this Centennial Initiative will help us better serve the public as we help preserve and interpret the significant American history told here in Nicodemus, Kansas.

## Moving On and Upward

Nicodemus National Historic Site bade a fond farewell to Administrative Officer Sharyl Cyphers. She has accepted the position of Budget Analyst at Crater Lake National Park. We would like to say "thank you" to Sharyl for all her hard work, help, and services over the years. She worked as a volunteer and a seasonal Park Ranger at Fort Larned Historic Site. She worked as Administrative Clerk for Nicodemus NHS with her duty station at Fort Larned.

Leaving with his wife is Park Ranger Tony Cyphers at Fort Larned NHS. He has been a great help to us here at Nicodemus NHS by working with our staff on graphics for the displays as well as the website, library cataloging, bookstore area, and staffing. He has been very generous with his knowledge of computers.

Our appreciation goes out to both Sharyl and Tony for all of their help, hard work, and services through the years. We would like to wish them both the best in their new adventure. They both will be greatly missed.

Crater Lake National Park is located in Southern Oregon on the crest of the Cascade Mountain range, 100 miles (160 km) east of the Pacific Ocean. It lies inside a caldera, or volcanic basin, created when the 12,000 foot (3,660 meter) high Mount Mazama collapsed 7,700 years ago following a large eruption.

Crater Lake has inspired people for hundreds of years. No place else on earth combines a deep, pure lake, so blue in color; sheer surrounding cliffs, almost two thousand feet high; two picturesque islands; and a violent volcanic past. It is a place of immeasurable beauty, and an outstanding outdoor laboratory and classroom. To learn more about Crater Lake National Park visit their website at <http://www.nps.gov/crla>.



Photo: NPS

*Below: Sharyl Cyphers in the visitor center at Nicodemus NHS*



*Above: Debra Dandridge the speaker afternoon program during Homecoming*

Our Co-op members, Veryl Switzer, Edgar Hicks, Gil Alexander and Wilburt Howard are always there and available for miscellaneous duties. It's a big job; but a labor of love.

## **Youth Corps Helps Paint the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church**

Members of a Colorado Range Rider Youth Corps crew painted the exposed wood surfaces on the Nicodemus African Methodist Episcopal Church during the week of July 30. Six crew members and two crew leaders worked through high humidity and hot temperatures to help the National Historic Site preserve the historic Church structure. The A.M.E. Church is the only property owned by the National Park Service. It was donated to the park by the Trust for Public Lands and is now stabilized. This painting project will help maintain the water-tight surfaces and prevent deterioration.

The Youth Corps members included Larissa Rosty, Crew Leader; Tara Kissel, Crew Mentor; Amanda Rogers, Team Captain; Kirby Crownover; Austin McDaniel; Daniel Lira; Brock Vaughn; and David Lyons. Everyone was from eastern Colorado, except Larissa who is from Iowa (a Masters student from Brazil). The team members were 16-18 years old and the crew leaders were over 21. This "Smoky Hill Crew" of the Range Rider Corps worked four weeks at Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site doing adobe patching and replacing a corral. The crew then cleaned trees and brush from an abandoned fish pond at the Wray Fish Hatchery to restore it to use. They also worked at Mueller State Park and Wildlife Area, widening the Dome Rock and Twisted Pine Trails. Then they worked at Holly, Colorado, helping city maintenance crews clear tornado debris and providing regular city maintenance. The Smoky Hills Crew finished their summer here in Nicodemus. Their stay here was a little rough – their tents were damaged by storms and sleeping bags and clothes were soaked, not once, but twice! While here, park staff introduced them to the history of Nicodemus and they learned about National Park Service preservation and safety practices.

Youth Corps are independent non-profit organizations, which serve needs within their communities by taking on labor-intensive conservation and community development work while at the same time giving youth aged 16 to 25 job skills, work ethic, and educational opportunities. Colorado has 11 such regional Corps; they vary in structure based on the needs in their communities. The Range Rider Youth Corps is one of the newest Corps in Colorado, and also covers the most geography, serving all of eastern Colorado and now western Kansas. We appreciate their assistance with maintenance of the A.M.E. Church!

## **News From Our Park Partners**

### **Nicodemus Township Board**

The Township Board thanks all of you who attended our recent Homecoming celebration. We had a good crowd this year and the weather cooperated except for the rain late on Saturday night. The Board again thanks Sharyna Reece for providing and donating the birthday cake that was served after the program. The cakes were beautiful and delicious!! We are still trying to get the other playground pieces installed along with the necessary signs. The extended heat-wave has hindered most 'optional' outside activities.

### **Homecoming Committee**

The homecoming planning committee reported that all t-shirts were sold this year. There were some wristbands left over, however. So, some of you did not purchase your souvenir band for \$10. The committee will continue to explore ways to get all who attend to support the efforts by purchasing their wristband!! The committee recently sent out a questionnaire to some of the visitors who had signed the guest book. Please return these so we can respond to your feedback on homecoming activities and events. Those of you who did not receive questionnaires are encouraged to write to us with your comments, etc. at Nicodemus Homecoming - PO Box 190 – Nicodemus 67625. We added a couple of new items this year (the fireworks and basketball tournament) and would like to know your thoughts. We hope everyone had a good weekend of fellowship and visitation with friends and family.

### **Nicodemus Flour Co-op**

The pancake breakfast during homecoming was as popular as ever again this year. We estimate that we fed around 300 people! It just keeps growing each year. We appreciate the help we get each year from JohnElla Holmes, Johnine Powell, Tammy Counts, our friends from Nebraska who bring and man their grills and a new recruit this year – Juanita Robinson.



*Before*



All Photos: NPS



*The A.M. E. Church - After*



All Photos: NPS



*Members of the Youth Corps*

*Back Row (L-R): Daniel Lira, Austin McDaniel, David Lyons.  
Front row (L-R): Amanda Rogers, Kirby, Crownover (with a guest Harold Switzer's grandson), Larissa Rosty, Tara Kissel and Brock Vaughn.*



National Park Service  
U. S. Department of the Interior

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## EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

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

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Federal Job Announcements  
(USAJOBS)  
[www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov)

*The **Flowering of Nicodemus** is a quarterly publication of Nicodemus National Historic Site.*

## Program At Nicodemus National Historic Site

Park Guide Michelle Huff will be presenting a program on rag rug making in early Nicodemus on Saturday, August 25, 2007. The program will include the history and origins of rag rugs and a demonstration of how to make two types of rag rugs believed to have been used by Nicodemus settlers. The program will be approximately 30 minutes in length and will be repeated continuously from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM and from 1:30 PM to 4:00 PM. on August 25<sup>th</sup>.

For more information, please contact Park Guide Michelle Huff at 785-839-4233. Nicodemus is located on scenic Highway 24, 13 miles east of Hill City and 19 miles west of Stockton. The Visitor Center is located in the Nicodemus Township Hall, at 304 Washington Avenue, just south of the roadside park in Nicodemus. For additional information about Nicodemus National Historic Site, you can visit the site online at [www.nps.gov/nico](http://www.nps.gov/nico).