



Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds eNewsletter

#22—November 26, 2013

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Were You at the Friends' Fundraiser??

If not, you missed a great event!! Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds, National Park Service employees, Soldiers and staff assigned to Fort Carson's Warrior Transition Battalion along with local and state politicians celebrated "A Night on the Rocks" September 20th at the Norris-Penrose Event Center in Colorado Springs. Over 120 people attended the USfalcon-sponsored event, which featured live music, wine and beer tasting and fund raising auctions in support of programs the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds help fund. Nearly \$8,000 was raised during the evening, all of which will fund multiple programs at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, including the "Post to Parks," "Junior Rangers" and paleontology research programs, all of which aid Colorado Springs' military and public schools populations.

Among the many items donated for auction were tickets and family passes to local attractions such as Cave of the Winds, the COG Railway to the top of Pikes Peak and museums located in historic Cripple Creek. Room and Dinner packages to area restaurants and hotels were popular items that generated lively bidding. Members of the Friends' "Rocks" Committee helped auction everything from 34 million year old shale from the ancient Florissant Lake, to the Broadmoor luxury hotel founded by the early Florissant pioneer rancher, Count James Pourtales of Bavaria.

The Board of Directors' thanks the Rocks Committee members for the many hours of preparation that went into planning and preparing for the event, USfalcon Inc for sponsoring the evening, and the many generous donors who gave items for the auctions. Finally, Sovereignty Wines, Summit Catering, Dan Hardee Entertainment and Dan Carlisle's One Eleven Band made the evening a memorable success!!



Families of Fallen Soldier Retreat 28-29 Sep 2013

Scott Harper Park Ranger/Post to Parks Coordinator Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

On the weekend of September 28/29, the Post to Parks team, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, and Sanborn Western Camp hosted a retreat for the Families of the Fallen Soldiers from Ft Carson. The families met Saturday morning at the monument and decided to hike the 3.2 mile Boulder Creek Trail in search of the resident elk herd. The group saw plenty of elk sign but no elk.



However, they did get a chance to view other wildlife including a coyote stalking his lunch. After a picnic, the group headed to Sanborn Western Camp. Once everyone was settled in to the cabins, the camp counselors took the moms and kids on a grand adventure that included outdoor games, digging for crystals, and fort building. After a short break, everyone headed to the archery range. The day concluded with a campfire cookout, stories, and the mandatory s'mores.

Since we were unable to locate the elk at Florissant Fossil Beds, it was decided to have a sunrise elk hike at the camp. Everyone got up and headed out to the south end



of the property where elk were seen every morning. After about a half mile walk the elk started bugling and were soon spotted. One of the most thrilling and magnificent sights in the Rocky Mountains during the fall is the elk rut and the families were not disappointed. After watching and listening to the elk, it was time for breakfast. Following breakfast, the kids wanted to head back to the archery range and practice what they learned the day before. The group then hiked over to the tree house complex and got a chance to climb. Finally, it was time to head back for fried chicken, biscuits and mashed potatoes. Everyone walked back to the lodge in total silence trying to immerse themselves in the sounds of nature; aspens quaking, squirrels chattering, Steller's Jays squawking! After lunch, it was time for the much anticipated fishing excursion.



Jeff Brandt, Jeff and Robyn Proper (board members of the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds) hosted the families at Ute Lakes Fishing and Recreation Club for an afternoon of trout fishing. With poles rigged and hooks baited, it was time to get down to fishing. It didn't take long before the fish started biting, and biting, and biting!!!! It wasn't unusual to have 3-4 kids with fish on their lines at the same time. Smiles were as plentiful as the fish. Everyone was allowed to keep some of the fish they caught for dinner that night. After thanking us for a wonderful weekend, the families headed home with freshly caught rainbow trout and memories of a great weekend in the mountains. Actually, it was our team that was most thankful. We were able to give back to families whose

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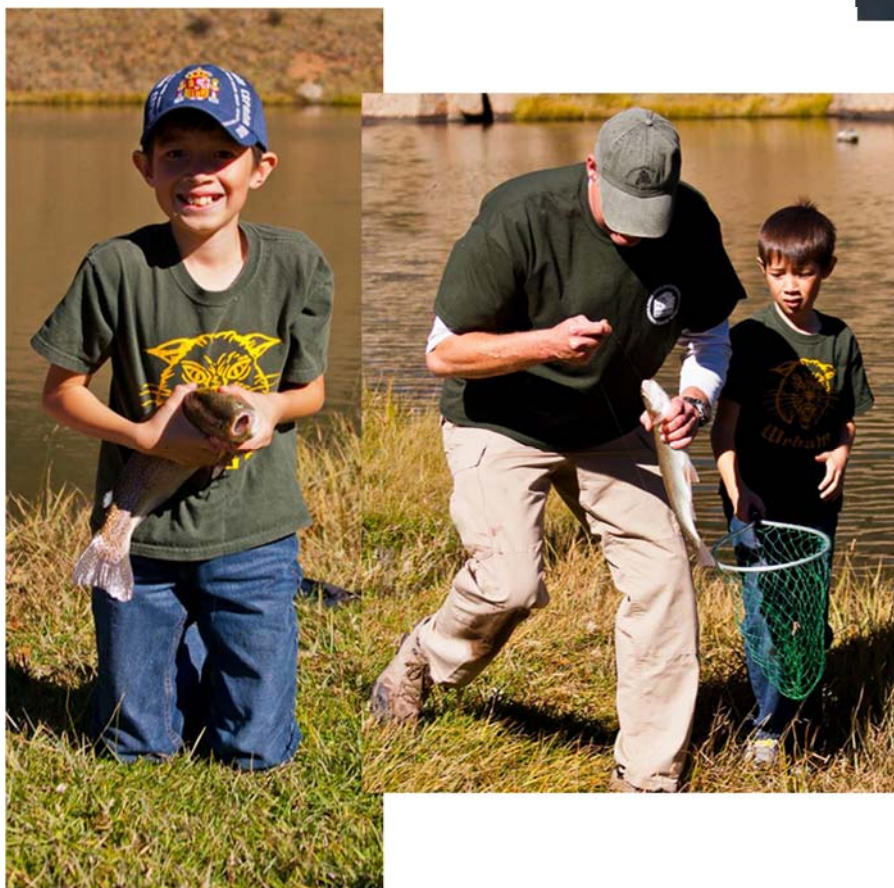
loved ones gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

The retreat was made possible through the Americas Best Idea from the National Park Foundation, and the generosity of The Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds and a non-profit camp, the Sanborn Western Camp. The grant has provided trips to the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve and Bents Old Fort National Historical Site, a camping and fishing expedition, and the September retreat for the Families of the Fallen Soldiers. In addition, a week long youth mentorship program with teens from Ft Carson and Peterson Air Force Base was held in July along with A Backpack Journalism camp.

The Post to Parks Program is an outreach initiative of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument which aims to engage and connect veterans, active duty, and military families with our national parks through fun, healthy, and educational experiences and to foster a sense of stewardship for our public lands.



Trout for Dinner



Ranger Scott and Jesse with the biggest catch of the day!!!

All photos courtesy of Matthew Quiroz



Press Release

***Songs for Junior Rangers* Earns a Silver Award from NAPPA**

FORT WASHINGTON, PA, October 25, 2013, 12:00PM EST: The *Songs for Junior Rangers* CD, produced by the National Park Service, has been named a 2013 National Parenting Publications Award (NAPPA) Silver winner, for quality, innovation, entertainment and educational value.

For more than 20 years, the National Parenting Publications Awards (NAPPA) has been the go-to resource for the best products for families. NAPPA's team of independent, expert judges, along with family and child testers, select the most innovative and enduring products to be NAPPA Gold, Silver and Honors winners in two annual competitions—Children's Products and Parenting Resources.

This year, 50 products were selected to receive the coveted Gold Award from the Children's Products competition, which identifies and awards the best toys, books, games, music, DVDs and virtual products. An additional 75 received Silver and Honors awards.

"Parents look to NAPPA to recommend the best products for their children, which is why our judges meticulously test and evaluate each submission to make sure they deliver only the best of the best," says Julie Kertes, NAPPA General Manager. A complete list of all 2013 NAPPA Children's Products winners will be available at www.NAPPAawards.com on November 1, 2013.

"We're thrilled that the *Songs for Junior Rangers* CD has been recognized for this prestigious award," said Mark Vineburg, Operations Support Manager for Eastern National. "It is our hope this award will help generate even more interest in the CD, which in turn could spark in children a lifelong love of the Great Outdoors and America's national parks."

The *Songs for Junior Rangers* CD is available now for \$9.95 at eParks.com. For more information about this product and other Eastern National books and merchandise, visit eParks.com or call 1-877-NAT-PARK (877-628-7275). Wholesale opportunities are available.

Eastern National is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) cooperating association, whose mission is to promote the public's understanding and appreciation of America's national parks and other public trusts. Operating educational and interpretive bookstores in over 150 national parks in the eastern part of the United States, Eastern National donates its profits from these operations to aid the interpretive, scientific, and historical mission of the National Park Service and other public trust partners. Since Eastern National's founding in 1947, it has donated over \$105 million to the National Park Service. Visit www.EasternNational.org for more information on Eastern National's products and services.

Just in Time for Christmas

Dr. Elisabeth Wheeler, the paleobotanist associated with the wood exhibit in the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument's new Visitor Center, recently alerted the Friends organization to a 2014 calendar titled "2014 Plants With A Past". Featured on the cover is a photo she took of the Big Stump here at the Florissant Fossil Beds. Each month features a different locality or plant group. Dates for Arbor Days around the world are provided to ensure you never miss an opportunity to celebrate trees and their insides (wood). The calendar has other important dates such as International Penguin Day, International Chocolate Day, when National Parks and Monuments with significant paleontological resources were established, and many more.



Preview of the 2014 calendar is at:

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/elisabeth-wheeler/2014-plants-with-a-past-inside-fossil-woods/calendar/product-21250241.html>

Profits from the sale of this calendar go to support fossil wood research and curating the InsideWood web site.

<http://insidewood.lib.ncsu.edu>

