



(Address Correction Requested)

SUMMER, 1996

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Newsletter National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

John Day Office Moves ...

(by Jim Hammett) This spring, the monument Superintendent's office and our long-term fossil storage moved from the J.O. Plaza to the new federal building on Patterson Bridge Road in John Day. This building consolidates the offices of several federal land and resource managing agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, Animal Damage Control, and the National Park Service.

The new location has substantial benefits for us and we are delighted with the move. We now have quick access to training rooms, conference facilities, and technologies and equipment that we could not afford to utilize by ourselves. In addition, having most of the local federal agencies under one roof allows closer communication and better coordination of our activities.

This move furthers our long-term strategy for the administration of the monument, which has gradually consolidated staff at the Sheep Rock Unit, while still keeping a presence in the community of John Day. Anyone needing to see the Superintendent or just wishing to see the new offices should come by. The office is located on the first floor, east wing of the new building and is adjacent to the Forest Supervisor's office.

Cyclic Prospecting Takes Off ...

(by Ted Fremd) This year, the paleontological staff received funds from a special account to pursue retrieval of fossils. To make the best use of these monies, it was decided to involve as many of the monument staff as practical in fieldwork, in addition to purchasing aerial photos and such. This is not only to augment the number of people available to find and salvage significant fossils, but also to increase the staffs' knowledge base for the future enhancement of resource management and interpretation.

Participating staff have been outfitted with prospecting "kits" and will continually be receiving training specific to the particular strata we are examining. We are going to be documenting a variety of localities scattered around the area, on both NPS lands and on lands administered by the BLM. The sites the team will explore include:

- Blue Basin
- Roundup Flat
- Rudio Creek localities
- "Fossil Horse Beds" on Cottonwood Creek
- new localities at Painted Hills
- Sutton Mountain
- Mascall sites at Ferris Creek
- Monument - Hamilton localities
- "Rotten Lake" (near Clarno)
- Bone Creek
- Sheep Rock peak area

In addition, our regular cyclic activities will be occurring as in previous years. Paleontologist Ted Fremd and Museum Technician Kelly Cahill will be working at the Foree beds, the Blue Basin amphitheater, and Sheep Rock peak, along with several other trained volunteers.

School-To-Work Can Work ...

1996 is the first year of a new program the monument has set up with the high schools of both Grant and Wheeler Counties. The initial idea was that the science teacher at each of the eight high schools would nominate a graduating senior who intended to go on to college and major in science. From these nominees the monument would select one who would be hired for the summer months as a GS-02 park ranger. The money earned would help with their tuition.

We are proud to announce that our first school-to-work ranger for the summer of 1996 is **Lisa Hatley** of Monument, Oregon. Congratulations Lisa and welcome on board!

Campfire Programs Offered ...

Again for 1996, the monument staff will be offering campfire programs at Clyde Holliday State Park, near Mt. Vernon. The National Park Service, along with other federal and local agencies, as well as, persons representing local attractions, have been invited to present a series of evening programs throughout the summer.

The monument staff will be offering these 45 minute programs once per month, starting in April, on Friday evenings. The remaining programs for 1996 are July 12, August 23, September 27, and October 4. All programs begin at 7:00 pm.

The programs will feature the available visitor facilities, scientific studies, and purpose of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, with the intent of piquing interest and encouraging Clyde Holiday campers to visit the monument. Local residents are very welcome to attend these programs. For further information on all the programs and times please contact the John Day, Oregon State Parks office at (541) 575-2773.

For a schedule of all the summer programs offered at the monument please stop in at the Sheep Rock Unit visitor center, or call (541) 987-2333.

Founders Day Approaches ...

Each year on August 25, the National Park Service celebrates its birthday. On August 25, 1916, Congressional legislation created the service "... **to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.**"

Should you be in the area that Sunday, stop in at the Sheep Rock Unit visitor center for refreshments and conversation about the monument and National Parks system.

New Festival to Feature "Time" ...

September 21 through 29 will see the initiation of the first annual "Journey Through Time Tour Route Festival." Festival activities are planned for the entire course of this new state tour route. This route runs from Interstate 84, Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Baker City, along Route 7 through Sumpter to Route 26, west to Prairie City and John Day to the Sheep Rock Unit of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, north on Route 19 to the towns of Spray and Fossil, then west on Route 218 to the Clarno Unit of the monument and Shaniko, then north on Route 97 to Biggs Junction on Interstate 84, and ending at the Maryhill Museum in Washington.

Each town and visitor attraction along the route is planning some sort of activity unique to their location focusing on the theme of "time." Many activities will be repeated so visitors traveling the

entire route can travel in either direction and not miss key events. Final plans for the events, and schedules are being drawn up now and should be available in mid to late August. We think our favorite activity may be the one planned at the Service Creek restaurant. The owners plan on having a 50's car display and dress up like Lucy & Ricky Ricardo!

New Education Program Launched ...

Last April the monument interpretive staff presented a new education program featuring a popular animal in these parts, the horse. Actually the program, "The Horse Family Tree," featured the ancestors of our modern horse and how they have changed over the last 55 million years. The program was designed for school groups from 9th to 12th grade. Many of the Oregon Department of Education science curriculum goals can be met by participating in the program.

Spring participants came from high schools throughout eastern Oregon. Even an Oregon State University class participated. As many of the OSU students departed they said "This was a wonderful lab!" They recommended that the program be offered to undergraduate students also, which it will.

Participants learned about the evolution of the horse by studying fossil replicas of horses through the ages, measuring actual bodily changes, and forming hypotheses on how these changes occurred. The concluding discussions focused on what the fossil evidence leads us to think about horse evolution.

For a new program "The Horse Family Tree" proved very successful with very few "bugs" to work out. The next time it will be offered will be this fall, at the start of the new school year.

Painted Hills Festival a First ...

This Labor Day weekend the town of Mitchell, in Wheeler County, Oregon, is preparing for the 1st annual "Painted Hills Festival." Footraces from ½ marathon to 5k in length, barbecue, street dancing, country gospel music, craft and bake sales, and games for all will be featured in town.

The monument plans to be actively involved. Ranger Wayne Holm will present a slide program on the Painted Hills, at the town park, on Friday evening, August 30. Also, at the Painted Hills Unit of the monument, extra park staff will be present on Saturday and Sunday to assist visitors and present programs on the Painted Hills geologic and paleontologic story.

For further information on town festival events please call Mary Fitzgerald at (541)462-3682 evenings, or Christy Hudspeth at (541)462-3585.

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