



MRNPA News

A publication of Mount Rainier National Park Associates

June 2003

Annual Meeting Tuesday July 8, 2003

Olive Garden Restaurant
35030 Enchanted Park Way
Federal Way, WA. 98003

6:00 PM Social Hour
6:45 PM Dinner
8:00 PM Meeting

We will order from a menu
that has five choices for
\$15.50 + tax + gratuity,
with wine and beer extra.

3 chicken selections
1 seafood selection
1 vegetarian selection
ice cream for dessert

RSVP email or phone to
Jane Titland
jandjt@mindspring.com
(425) 747-1698

WEB BASED NEWSLETTER PROPOSED

Recent increases in cost of
mailing and paper has encour-
aged the MRNPA Board to ex-
plore the potential for a Web
based publication to keep its
membership informed. If you
would be interested in reading
the MRNPA News on your
computer in Web Page format,
please send your e-mail ad-
dress and name to edi-
tor@mount-rainier.org

Your help will be appreciated.

2003 Volunteer Work Parties

Every year Mount Rainier
National Park Associates
volunteers make a substantial
contribution to Mount Rainer
National Park by working with
the trail crew to maintain trails
and by assisting the resource
staff in planting of meadows
that are being "recovered".

The work is done as a group
during a work party scheduled
approximately once a month.
It is hard work, but it is done
with a super group of
committed volunteers. It is
always fun and rewarding. If
you are interested in
becoming a MRNPA
volunteer, send me your e-
mail address at
volunteer@mount-rainier.org
or leave me a message at

Privatization of National Park Service Jobs

The Issue

The public has long admired the staff and work of the National Park Service. Yet, the administration's Office of Management & Budget (OMB) and Department of the Interior are moving to hand over to low-bidding private contractors up to 70 percent of all jobs in the already understaffed, financially strapped National Park Service, including archaeologists, biologists, museum curators, and maintenance workers. Privatization would adversely impact our national parks and the experiences of millions of park visitors, and would further limit the ethnic diversity of the Park Service workforce.

Instead, the Park Service should be exempt from the requirements of the privatization policy. The protection of our national parks must be acknowledged as an inherent responsibility of government and Park Service employees recognized

GATEWAY COMMUNITIES EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES

The National Park Service has extended to the Communities near Mount Rainier that provide services to visitors to explore opportunities and concerns to determine if it is possible to develop a consensus on needs and issues for the future. A issue of interest to the Park Planning Staff is alternative transportation systems and traffic congestion relief. The General Development Plan recently adopted for Mount Rainier National Park does not project additional visitor services or parking inside the park. It is based in a belief that more people will use the park, but arrive there in ways not presently in use.

Officers of MRNPA

President

Howard Selmer
425-481-8139

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425-747-1698

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206-527-4492

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Rob Stoker
425-226-1853

The MRNPA News is published periodically by the Mount Rainier National Park Associates of Seattle, WA. in furtherance of the goals of MRNPA.

Trail Work (cont.)

425-747-1698.

Here are the scheduled dates for the Mount Rainier National Park Associates work parties at Mount Rainier during 2003. These dates are firm but the locations where the work party will take place will be determined just prior to the work parties. I will contact you with the details as the dates approach.

Saturday, Aug 9 trail work,
followed by a potluck dinner and campout at the Park, and a group hike on Sunday. Saturday, Sept 6 Meadow Revegetation Saturday, Oct 4 trail work

John Titland

Mount Rainier National Park
Associates

Work Parties Coordinator

as key to the preservation of our national heritage for present and future generations.

Privatization in the Parks

The National Park Service already provides significant opportunities to the private sector where appropriate. The concessions program, which generates annual revenues of \$800 million, has long been a private undertaking. More recently, architectural, design, and printing work throughout the National Park System has been and continues to be contracted out. In individual parks, both large and small, superintendents currently make decisions as to what jobs can, and should, be outsourced. Thus, without intervention from political appointees in Washington, D.C., the Park Service has already outsourced positions, when appropriate, while retaining the positions and functions that are key contributors to its core mission to protect the national parks and connect the American public to their history and cultures.

Working in America's national parks is for many park staff more than just a job—it is a calling. Unlike nine-to-five contract workers, park staff possess an extraordinary sense of commitment to their jobs that provides an extra experience of the Park for the visitor.

Action

Contact Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior, U S Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Washington DC 20240 if you feel this policy needs further study before implementation.

How should we view Lewis and Clark?

The Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition is approaching. Many people will celebrate in many different ways. How should we approach our personal observation of this event?

1) As Hero Worship.

With Undaunted Courage! There is much to admire in the leadership of Captains Lewis and Clark, and the sacrifice and discipline of their men. Although the Pacific Northwest had been explored by ship, and Thompson had crossed Canada, there was no reliable information beyond Mandan Camp (Bismarck, North Dakota) to guide them. Thomas Jefferson believed Mastodons still roamed the prairies.

1) National Pride.

While the courage of the "Corps of Discovery" is admirable, this was a defining moment in the United States experience. Forgotten soon after they returned, their reputation grew to epic proportions as the American Experience embraced the manifest destiny of western expansion. This is not just about outstanding accomplishment, this is the first strategic move from a united cluster of ex-colonies to a nation "from sea to shining sea".

1) As a Tourist.

If your idea of adventure is inside a Ford Explorer, opportunity abounds. They are waiting for you with open cash registers from Missouri to Oregon. You can raft the rivers, drive over the passes, camp in the forests, visit the Native American Sites, and enjoy an entire summer of adventure that will have a theme for the kids "What I did this summer" essays.

1) Or as History.

Let's all think seriously about the time of Lewis and Clark and the last 200 years. Who gained, and who lost? What has been the scale and type of change? What is to be learned from the Legacy and the Land of Lewis and Clark?

First, this was a Corp of Exploration, not a Corp of Discovery. This was an occupied land. Lewis and Clark were led by and followed the trading paths of Native Americans. They traded at every opportunity. The Nez Pierce saved their lives by feeding them when they were sick and near starvation. This is ironic because according to Nez Pierce oral tradition women massacred in Chief Joseph's march to Canada were children in the camp that helped Lewis and Clark. Read "Lewis and Clark among the Indians" by James Rondo. They were visitors in another culture's landscape. Native Americans have no word for wilderness. It all was Mother Nature.

Pause and reflect on the scale and type of change observed over the past 200 years. The free flowing rivers lost, more than half of the Northwest converted to private ownership, a concept unknown to the Native Americans. Where are the Grizzly Bears and the Salmon? The Ancient Forests? What changes do we regret? Is it time to join a Corps of Recovery? What is the best way to honor the heritage of Lewis and Clark? What will the next 200 years bring to the Pacific Northwest?

Bob Aegerter

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