

# YOUR AMERICAN WEST

## PARKS

The Long Run  
Kirby Nature Trail

## EVENTS

National Park Week  
Chamizal National Memorial

## PRODUCTS

Cactus Eraser  
Geodiscs





Bighorn Canyon (courtesy of Jeffrey M. Frank, Shutterstock).

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## Letter from the Executive Director

Our national parks belong to all of us. However, we recognize that some communities may not feel as welcome or included in the national park narrative. At Western National Parks Association (WNPA), one of our key goals is to work with our national park partners to ensure all Americans, including Native communities and other communities of color, are aware of our parks and feel welcome—and that they see themselves in the national park experience.

National parks are in lands traditionally occupied by American Indians, and many of those lands are sacred to them. Yet in many cases the Native perspective has been underrepresented or not represented at all. In 1991 Custer Battlefield National Monument’s name was changed to **Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument**. This simple but important act of Congress helped ensure all perspectives of this seminal battle are represented at this monument. By including pertinent stories in parks, parks become more inclusive and relevant to all Americans.

February was Black History Month, a time reserved to honor and celebrate the contributions of African Americans and also acknowledge their stories, often of struggle, activism, and prevailing against adversity. These stories can be sobering and, at times, hard to hear. But their importance must not be overlooked, nor their content diminished. Fortunately, more national historic sites representing African American stories are being included in the national park system. As a result, more stories from all Americans’ perspectives are being told in national parks.

June is Pride Month, celebrating the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ\*) community. LGBTQ history is American history; LGBTQ stories are American stories.

As you visit parks this spring, please think about your park stories. What memories have you created? What experiences do you cherish? Share your stories—with friends, with families, with the world, and with us via our social media and other channels!—and please continue to love and honor our national parks.

With sincerest thanks,

**James E. Cook**  
Executive Director

*\*Like our partners at NPS, we include the Q not as a pejorative, but to include the queer Americans who have reclaimed this term as part of their identity*

**James E. Cook**  
Executive Director

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### Details

Western National Parks Association (WNPA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit partner of the National Park Service, serving more than 70 national parks in the western United States.

The Home Office and The National Parks Store are located at 12880 N Vistoso Village Drive, Tucson, AZ 85755. Learn more by contacting [info@wnpa.org](mailto:info@wnpa.org) or visiting [www.wnpa.org](http://www.wnpa.org).



# Special Recognition & Community Partners

## Special Recognition: Bon Voyage Travel

Bon Voyage Travel, a premier travel agency serving Arizona residents for more than 40 years, is the place to go for an unforgettable travel experience. Their team of more than 75 travel advisers specializes in personalized vacations, including cruises, family trips, adventure travel, and luxury travel. They've planned more than 100,000 vacations to some of Earth's most gorgeous locations, including our national parks. WNPA is pleased to recognize Bon Voyage Travel as a Community Partner. They help make the national park experience possible for everyone.

For information regarding partnership opportunities, please contact Amy Reichgott at 520-789-7406 or amy.reichgott@wnpa.org.

## Meet Your Team

Valerie Schafer, senior field operations manager for nine WNPA parks in Texas, Wyoming, and Montana, recently celebrated 30 years at WNPA, making her the longest-standing WNPA employee. She has a deep love for the parks and WNPA and said, "I love the parks, I love the stories they tell, and I love retail. Connecting individuals to something that they care about at the park and having the chance to share the stories is joy-giving for me. It is much like watching a child when the light bulb goes on when they first learn to read."

Schafer got her start working for WNPA (then Southwest Parks and Monuments Association) at the **Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical**

## Community Partners



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**Park**, and that park holds a special place in her heart to this day. She met Lady Bird Johnson several times and said, "She was gracious and hard driven at the same time. She made you feel important. That is what I try to do with others." The love of national parks runs in Schafer's family: her husband, whom she met at Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, is a chief of interpretation and education there, and one of her daughters is a seasonal park ranger for the National Park Service (NPS). Thank you, Valerie, for all the hard work you do for our parks!



Valerie Schafer (right) with Carol Ditmanson, operations manager, New Mexico region, at the WNPA board meeting in fall 2017.

## Arizona Gives Day

Join WNPA on Tuesday, April 3 for 24 hours of giving to benefit Arizona nonprofits and strengthen our local community.

"Arizona Gives Day proves that anyone can be a philanthropist, no matter what amount they give," says Laurie Liles, president and CEO of Arizona Grantmakers Forum.

Arizona Gives Day helps raise awareness about nonprofits and the critical role they play in serving communities where our parks are located. This one-day online event is designed to

inspire people to give generously to nonprofits and help make Arizona and our partner parks' communities stronger. To learn more about this statewide online effort visit [www.azgives.org](http://www.azgives.org).



Your Arizona Gives Day donations will help us provide youth education programs in partner parks across the state. In celebration of WNPA's 80th anniversary and as part of our "\$80,000 for 80,000 Junior Rangers" campaign, our Arizona Gives Day goal is to raise \$8,000. Each dollar you give will provide one child with the opportunity to become a Junior Ranger. Please consider giving on April 3 or scheduling your gift in advance at [www.azgives.org/WesternNationalParksAssociation](http://www.azgives.org/WesternNationalParksAssociation).

## WNPA Receives Public Lands Hero Award



Courtesy of Public Lands Alliance.

On February 27, the Public Lands Alliance (PLA), an organization dedicated to supporting public lands and their nonprofit partners, awarded WNPA and 10 other

## Timeline

WNPA was founded in 1938 as Southwest Monuments Association (SWMA) and has continued to grow and support parks for 80 years. Learn when partner parks joined WNPA and other important dates by following the timeline along the bottom of each page.

July 22, 1938: SWMA is formed at Casa Grande Ruins National Monument; it supports 18 partner parks, all national monuments

1942: SWMA moves its offices to Santa Fe, New Mexico

1943: SWMA receives its Certificate of Incorporation in the state of New Mexico



nonprofit organizations the Public Lands Hero Award. This award was established to recognize individuals and organizations that helped public lands recover after the past year's wildfires, floods, and hurricanes. "Moments of crisis remind us of the critical importance and value of strong partnerships between land managers and nonprofit partners," said PLA executive director Dan Puskar. "Hurricanes and wildfires unexpectedly impact many of our public lands, and it is strong partnerships that provide the resiliency needed to bounce back from their destructive impacts."

In late August 2017, Hurricane Harvey devastated parts of Texas, and several WNPAs in the state were affected. WNPAs' Home Office in Tucson, Arizona worked with local nonprofit organization World Care to collect relief supplies and send them to Texas.

## Dark Sky Parks

You may have heard "half the park is after dark," a slogan from a line of posters created by astronomer and educator Tyler Nordgren. Now the saying rings true as the unofficial motto of the NPS "Night Skies" program.

Many of our national parks are protected from the light pollution of bustling cities by their relative isolation, giving visitors unprecedented views of the night sky. The International Dark-Sky Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting dark skies and keeping light pollution at bay so present and future generations can enjoy the stars. The association recognizes lands across the world that possess exceptional night sky views and "a nocturnal environment that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural heritage, and/or public enjoyment." In order to be designated as International Dark Sky Parks, these lands must use approved outdoor lighting that does not contribute to light pollution and also offer dark sky viewing programs for visitors.

NPS takes the protection of dark night skies seriously, recognizing that these nightscapes represent another facet of preserving nature untouched by

man. Twenty-three NPS units have earned the honor of being recognized as Dark Sky Parks, including **Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Great Basin National Park, Capulin Volcano National Monument, Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, and Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.** These parks and many others offer night sky programming for visitors, such as stargazing, night hikes, and ranger-led interpretive programs about the wonders of the night sky. There is also a [Junior Ranger Night Explorer](#) program where children between the ages of five and 12 learn about astronomy, nocturnal wildlife, and light pollution.

Dark Sky Week was created in 2003 by Jennifer Barlow, a high school student. It has grown to be a worldwide event. Every April during the week of the new moon, people around the world turn off unnecessary lighting to temporarily reduce light pollution. This year, Dark Sky Week is April 15–21, 2018. During Dark Sky Week (or any time of the year), a visit to a Dark Sky Park is a very special experience.



*Great Basin National Park is one of 23 NPS sites designated as Dark Sky Parks (courtesy of NPS Photo).*

1943: Aztec Ruins National Monument, Bandelier National Monument, Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Casa Grande Ruins National Monument, Chaco Canyon National Monument, Chiricahua National Monument, Montezuma Castle National Monument, Saguaro National Monument, Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, Tonto National Monument, Tumacácori National Monument, Tuzigoot National Monument, and White Sands National Monument

# New & Notable Releases

## Geodisc Mugs

Want to remember a specific place at your favorite park? Now you can mark it with a Geodisc mug! Geodiscs are modeled after geodetic marks, also called survey marks, which are permanent markers labeling key points on Earth's surface. These marks are stamped on hand-thrown Deneen Pottery mugs. Check them out at [store.wnpa.org](http://store.wnpa.org).



## Saguaro Cactus Erasers

Make your school supplies the envy of all your desert-loving friends with this saguaro eraser. Cute, cool, fun, and not at all spiny (unlike a real saguaro), this eraser will make mistakes disappear. Get one today at [store.wnpa.org](http://store.wnpa.org).



## Collectible Lapel Pins

Get one, get them all! These stylish enamel pins, featuring artwork by Impact Photographics, will be a great addition to your collection. Each pin depicts an iconic scene or image from a national park. Beautifully rendered and brightly colored, these pins will catch anyone's eye. Get yours today in the Park Stores section at [store.wnpa.org](http://store.wnpa.org).



## Shaker Keychains

Love the imagery of the southwest? These **Saguaro National Park** Shaker Keychains, available in [saguaro](#) and [javelina](#) designs, are moving puzzles. Line them up to see! Available at Saguaro National Park and [store.wnpa.org](http://store.wnpa.org).

1945: Walnut Canyon National Monument

1946: Navajo National Monument and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument

1947: Wupatki National Monument and Sunset Crater National Monument



# Featured Events & Activities

## Ranger-led Coronado Cave Tours

**Wednesday, April 4, 11, 18, 25 and Saturday, April 7, 14, 21, 28, 10 AM–12:30 PM**

Coronado National Memorial  
4101 E Montezuma Canyon Rd.  
Hereford, AZ 85615

Learn about the history of this large limestone cavern at **Coronado National Memorial** from a park ranger! Guided by flashlight, participants will see speleothems (cave formations) such as stalactites, stalagmites, flowstones, and columns. For more information, please click [here](#).

## Nuevo Siglo Drama Festival

**Saturday, April 7–Saturday, April 14, various times**

Chamizal National Memorial  
800 S San Marcial St.  
El Paso, TX 79905

The City of El Paso has hosted the International Siglo de Oro Drama Festival at Chamizal National Memorial for more than 40 years. This year the festival is expanding to include the El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso Museum of History, and other organizations. **Chamizal National Memorial** will be hosting Spanish-language performances including contemporary Mexican plays. For more information, please click [here](#).

## Mexican Art Show and Sale

**Friday, April 13–Sunday, April 15, 9 AM–4 PM each day**

Mission San José at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park  
6701 San José Dr.  
San Antonio, TX 78210

Browse and shop a wonderful array of Mata Ortiz pottery, Oaxacan woodcarvings, and Zapotec rugs at the **San Antonio Missions National Historical Park** Mexican Art Show and Sale, featuring artists Jorge Quintana and Jacobo Ángeles. Pottery firing demonstrations on Saturday and Sunday at 11 AM. A guided park ranger program will take place on Saturday and Sunday at 10 AM and 2 PM (in English) and at 1 PM and 3 PM (en español). Park archaeologist Dr. Susan Snow will also lead pottery demonstrations on Saturday and Sunday, displaying pottery artifacts found at the park. For more information, please click [here](#).

## Entrance to all parks is FREE in celebration of the first day of National Park Week!

**Saturday, April 21**

National Park Week: April 21–29

- April 21: National Junior Ranger Day
- April 22: Earth Day
- April 29: Park Rx Day

## Junior Ranger Day

**Saturday, April 21, 9 AM–1 PM**

Big Thicket National Preserve  
6102 FM 420  
Kountze, TX 77625

Join us at **Big Thicket National Preserve** for National Junior Ranger Day! Kids of all ages can participate in fun activities while exploring Big Thicket and earn a Junior Ranger badge. Call the visitor center at 409-951-6700 for more information.

## Junior Ranger Day

**Saturday, April 21, 10 AM–1:30 PM**

Chamizal National Memorial  
800 S San Marcial St.  
El Paso, TX 79905

Meet the mascots! Join Chami the spotted ground squirrel and friends to learn about **Chamizal National Memorial** and other nearby parks, including **Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Fort Davis National Historic Site, White Sands National Monument, and Carlsbad Caverns National Park**. For more information, call 915-532-7273 or click [here](#).

## Junior Ranger Day

**Saturday, April 21, 10 AM–1 PM**

Tumacácori National Historical Park  
1891 East Frontage Rd.  
Tumacácori, AZ 85640

Families and kids of all ages are invited to play at **Tumacácori National Historical Park**’s Junior Ranger Day! Leave with a Junior Ranger badge and other prizes. For more information, please click [here](#).

## Park-to-Park Hike

**Sunday, April 29, 8 AM–12 PM**

Tumacácori National Historical Park  
1891 East Frontage Rd.  
Tumacácori, AZ 85640

Hike a four-mile stretch of the **Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail** between **Tumacácori National Historic Park** and Tubac Presidio State Historic Park to celebrate Park Rx Day. Start at either park, hike the trail, and earn your free “I Hike for Health” pin, then enjoy the free shuttle back to your starting location. For more information, please click [here](#).

### SPOTLIGHT

**National Park Rx Day celebrates nature and all of the health benefits it can provide! Park Rx Day falls on the last Sunday of National Park Week and will be celebrated on April 29 this year. The Park Rx movement encourages individuals and communities to use public lands to improve their health and wellness. Get outside, go for a hike, have a picnic, and celebrate the beauty of the outdoors.**





## Cave Photography Workshop

Thursday, May 3–Sunday, May 5,  
8 AM–5 PM each day

Carlsbad Caverns National Park  
727 Carlsbad Cavern Hwy.  
Carlsbad, NM 88220

Join professional cave photographer Peter Jones for this three-day workshop all about how best to photograph those natural wonders—caves! \$400 per person. Photography experience and personal camera equipment required. For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

## Big Sandy Trail Hike

Sunday, May 6, 11:30 AM

Big Thicket National Preserve  
6102 FM 420  
Kountze, TX 77625

The Big Thicket Association is sponsoring a hike of the Big Sandy Trail at **Big Thicket National Preserve**. The trail is nine miles long (one way); this guided hike will explore the first 2.5 to 3 miles. Meet at the visitor center. For more information, please click [here](#).

## Kids to Parks Day

Saturday, May 19

The third Saturday of May is Kids to Parks Day! Many parks are hosting events; check for a park near you by clicking [here](#).

## Hickory Creek Savannah Hike

Sunday, June 3, 12:30 PM

Big Thicket National Preserve  
6102 FM 420  
Kountze, TX 77625

Explore the wetland pine savannah of **Big Thicket National Preserve**, home to carnivorous plants and longleaf pines, on this walk on the Sundew Trail and adjacent fire lanes. Meet at the Sundew Trailhead on DR 1910. For more information, please click [here](#).

## Full Moon Walk

Thursday, June 28

Aztec Ruins National Monument

Tour **Aztec Ruins National Monument** after dark with a ranger-led Full Moon Walk. Watch the full moon rise at a national park. Photography is permitted. Jackets are suggested. This event is weather permitting. For more information, please call 505-334-6174.

# People & Happenings



## Tucson Festival of Books

*Tucson Festival of Books is a weekend of all things books!*

Tucson Festival of Books (TFOB) on March 10 and 11 was a great success! TFOB is a weekend of all things books and literature, and this was WNPA’s eighth year participating. WNPA and 20 of our parks and partners welcomed festivalgoers of all ages in The National Park Experience Pavilion with educational activities and the opportunity to talk with NPS park rangers. 1,246 kids took part in our Junior Ranger Jamboree, and dozens of fourth graders received information about how to earn a free annual park pass as part of the U.S. Department

of the Interior’s [Every Kid in a Park](#) program. **The National Parks Store** and **Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site** set up pop-up shops with plenty of books, jewelry, crafts, and gifts for purchase. WNPA-featured authors, including Charles “Butch” Farabee (*Big Walls, Swift Waters*), Dana Fritz (*Terraria Gigantica*), Frank Lee Ruggles (*Chasing Light*), and Florence Williams (*The Nature Fix*), participated in author panel discussions throughout the weekend.



# In the Parks

## Along the Kirby Nature Trail

**Big Thicket National Preserve** recently completed upgrades to signage along the Kirby Nature Trail. This trail, comprising the 1.5-mile Inner Loop, 2.4-mile Outer Loop, and 0.3-mile Cypress Loop, is located near the Big Thicket Visitor Center. It offers trail walkers a look at some of the many diverse ecosystems preserved at Big Thicket, including a slope forest and cypress slough. In addition to new signage, the park also released a new interpretive trail guide which highlights many key features of the biodiverse environment. The updated trail guide is available for purchase in the visitor center and was completed with support from WNPA.

*The Kirby Nature Trail at Big Thicket National Preserve has updated signage and a new trail guide (courtesy of NPS Photo).*



*Edison Eskeets will retrace the path of the Long Walk of the Navajo.*

## The Run

In 1864 life for the Navajo was changed forever. It was then “the Long Walk of the Navajo” began, with thousands of Navajo forced to walk more than 300 miles from their traditional lands to an internment camp called Bosque Redondo near Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Kept in squalid conditions, thousands died of diseases, starvation, and exposure to the elements. In June of 1868 the Navajo Treaty was signed, and the Navajo were allowed to return to their tribal lands. Now Edison Eskeets, Navajo trader at **Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site**, the longest continuously operating trading post in the American Southwest, will retrace the path of the Long Walk. Beginning at Spider Rock Overlook at **Canyon de Chelly National Monument** in Arizona, Eskeets will run more than 300 miles, ending his trek on the steps of the New Mexico state capitol in Santa Fe. Eskeets is undertaking this journey to honor and acknowledge those who were forced to walk 150 years ago. “The time is now to show our respects and in doing so honor our great-grandfathers, grandmothers, parents, and children,” said Eskeets. “Navajo is a part of the mainstream society today, tomorrow, and the journey continues.”



## Mikah Meyer Speaks at WNPA

Special guest speaker Mikah Meyer delivered a talk about his record-setting journey to visit every national park to a full house at **The National Parks Store** on February 5. Meyer describes himself as “a new type of LGBT role model” who is “on a mission to invite people to the outdoors” by sharing national parks with the world. Now more than two-thirds of the way through his goal to visit every NPS unit in one continuous road trip, Meyer shared what he’s learned on his trip so far. Because he undertook this endeavor to honor his late father, who died from cancer at the age of 58, Meyer stressed the importance of appreciating every day. “Tomorrow is not guaranteed,” he said repeatedly. “None of us knows which day will be our last, so we should appreciate time, and time with people we care about, while we have both.” As a gay man who initially tried to hide his sexual orientation, Meyer also emphasized how vital it is to be true to yourself. He takes pictures of himself holding a rainbow flag at stops along his way to spread the message that the LGBTQ community is safe and welcome at national parks.

Mikah Meyer is spreading a message of inclusion on his trip to all 417 NPS units (courtesy of Mikah Meyer).



Hatchling releases occur between May and August each year (courtesy of NPS Photo).

## Forty Years of Turtles

The Kemp’s ridley sea turtle is the world’s most endangered species of sea turtle, and **Padre Island National Seashore** (Padre Island NS) has been working hard for 40 years to provide a safeguard from extinction for the species. In 1947 an estimated forty-seven thousand Kemp’s ridley sea turtles were seen in one day in Rancho Nuevo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, the primary nesting beach of the Kemp’s ridleys. Since then their numbers have declined. The Kemp’s Ridley Sea Turtle Restoration and Enhancement Program, a binational cooperation between the United States and Mexico, was established at Padre Island NS in 1978 in an effort to set up a secondary nesting beach for the Kemp’s ridleys. From 1978 to 1988, the program translocated 22,507 Kemp’s ridley eggs from Rancho

Nuevo to Padre Island NS. The eggs were incubated and imprinted, and hatchlings were reared for nine to 11 months before being released into the Gulf of Mexico. Every nesting season North Padre Island is patrolled daily by Padre Island NS biologists as well as hundreds of volunteers working to locate and protect nesting turtles and their eggs. Efforts are paying off, and more Kemp’s ridley nests have been found at Padre Island NS than at any other single location in the US. The public is invited to attend hatchling releases, held from May to August, free of charge. Details can be found here and by calling the Hatchling Hotline at 361-949-7163. To celebrate 40 years of sea turtle conservation, Padre Island NS released a new commemorative Junior Ranger badge that children can earn at the park.



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February is Black History Month, a month to celebrate “the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history,” as President Gerald Ford said in 1976. Black History Month was recognized across the country that year as part of the United States Bicentennial. Today Black History Month continues to celebrate and honor the accomplishments of black Americans and also recognize important events in black history. Several NPS sites preserve areas and buildings that are sites of importance to black history.



*Fort Davis National Historic Site served as regimental headquarters for all four regiments of the Buffalo Soldiers (courtesy of Jeffrey M. Frank, Shutterstock).*

## Fort Davis

During the Civil War, more than 180,000 African Americans were volunteers in cavalry, artillery, and infantry units of the Union army, but they were not allowed to enlist as soldiers. After the war, Congress passed the Army Reorganization Act of 1866 to create six new regiments composed entirely of African American soldiers: the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 38th, 39th, 40th, and 41st Infantry. The 38th and 39th Infantry were later consolidated and renamed the 24th Infantry, and the 40th and 41st Infantry later became the 25th Infantry. These regiments came to be known as “Buffalo Soldiers.” It’s unknown exactly how or why the soldiers earned this moniker, but one theory is that the Plains Indians who came into contact with the African American soldiers gave them the nickname because of the similarity between the dark, curly hair of the soldiers and that of buffalo.

Fort Davis, located in West Texas, has the distinction of serving as regimental headquarters for all four regiments of the Buffalo Soldiers. Beginning in 1867 with the 9th Cavalry, Buffalo Soldiers were stationed at Fort Davis for almost 20 years until the 10th Cavalry left in 1885. The Buffalo Soldiers played an important part during the years of the American Indian Wars, protecting the area from attacks and escorting US mail deliveries. They also laid roads, mapped vast swaths of land in the US Southwest, and constructed hundreds of miles of telegraph lines.

The US Army was officially desegregated in 1951, nearly one hundred years after the first Buffalo Soldiers served. Today, their legacy and importance in the history of the armed forces is preserved at **Fort Davis National Historic Site**.



# Nicodemus

**Nicodemus National Historic Site** in Nicodemus, Kansas preserves the only remaining town established by African Americans during Reconstruction. The town of Nicodemus was established in 1877, one of many small agrarian communities founded in the latter half of the 1800s. Nicodemus was intended to be a black community in the Midwest, a free city away from the tension of Reconstruction in the South. When 350 black settlers from Lexington, Kentucky arrived in northern Kansas in September 1877, not all were pleased with the scene that awaited them. Instead

of the woods and mountains of their former home, they found only the emptiness of the Great Plains. Some immediately returned home, but over time Nicodemus grew, with four more waves of settlers coming after the initial group. Businesses were established, including a hotel and two stores, and three churches were built. Though life could be hard in the small town, residents of Nicodemus persisted. It was the promise of freedom that propelled them forward. Today, the site is preserved to honor the strength of character and determined perseverance of its settlers.

Descendants of Nicodemus settlers visiting the Nicodemus National Historic Site Visitor Center (courtesy of NPS Photo).



The Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site commemorates the landmark Supreme Court case of the same name (courtesy of Midwest National Parks, Flickr).

## Brown v. Board of Education

The famous *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case ended racial segregation in American public schools in 1954. Today, the legacy of the pivotal decision is preserved at **Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site** in Topeka, Kansas. Though many think of this court case as one little girl suing to attend an all-white school, in reality it was five different court cases from Kansas, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Virginia, and South Carolina. These cases combined into one case named *Oliver Brown et al. v. The Board of Education of Topeka* and involved dozens

of plaintiffs from multiple schools in the five locations. This case overturned the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case of 1896, which upheld the constitutionality of “separate but equal” public schools. In *Brown*, the Supreme Court justices unanimously ruled that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.” This ruling was a pivotal moment in the civil rights movement, which fought for equal rights for black Americans. Today, the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site remains one of the most crucial landmarks dedicated to protecting and preserving African American history.

1994: Saguaro National Monument is redesignated as Saguaro National Park

1999: Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument is redesignated as Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

2002: SPMA moves its offices to Oro Valley, Arizona and changes its name to Western National Parks Association (WNPA)

2004: Great Sand Dunes National Monument is redesignated as Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve



# Social Media Corner

Follow WNPA on   



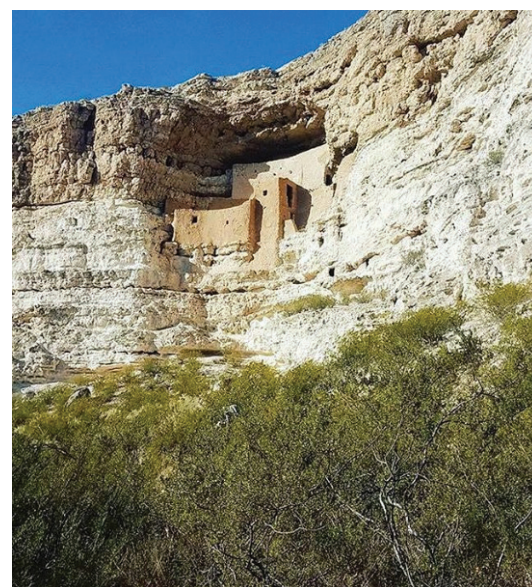
Bandelier National Monument (courtesy of [@pampowellphoto](#)).



Tonto National Monument (courtesy of [@fouronesevenadventures](#)).



Saguaro National Park (courtesy of [@lmtucson](#)).



Montezuma Castle National Monument (courtesy of [@karakristin87](#)).

# Membership Matters

Big things are happening at **Big Thicket National Preserve**. In addition to the new visitor experience along the Kirby Nature Trail (see [page 12](#)), the park has a new Junior Ranger activity book. The book is free to kids and was created to engage young visitors and invite them to connect with Big Thicket through hiking, paddling, and even writing poetry.

In the Junior Ranger program, kids complete a variety of park-specific activities. When they are finished, they are sworn in by NPS rangers and earn a Junior Ranger badge and certificate. Parks use funding from WNPA to purchase badges and certificates, provide activities, and design and print Junior Ranger booklets.

In celebration of our 80th anniversary, WNPA's goal is to raise \$80,000 to help 80,000 kids become Junior Rangers. As of March 1, 2018, we have raised \$21,450 toward this effort.

Your support of WNPA helps provide Junior Ranger and other youth education programs in our partner parks. For more information about membership and charitable giving, visit [wnpa.org](http://wnpa.org) or contact Amy Reichgott, development manager, at 520-789-7406 or [amy.reichgott@wnpa.org](mailto:amy.reichgott@wnpa.org).

*There is a new Junior Ranger activity book at Big Thicket National Preserve (courtesy of NPS Photo).*





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**Western National Parks  
Association is a nonprofit  
education partner of the  
National Park Service.**

**We support parks across  
the West, developing  
products, services, and  
programs that enrich  
the visitor experience.**

”

**Your purchases support parks.**

[www.wnpa.org](http://www.wnpa.org)

**Western  
National Parks  
Association**

