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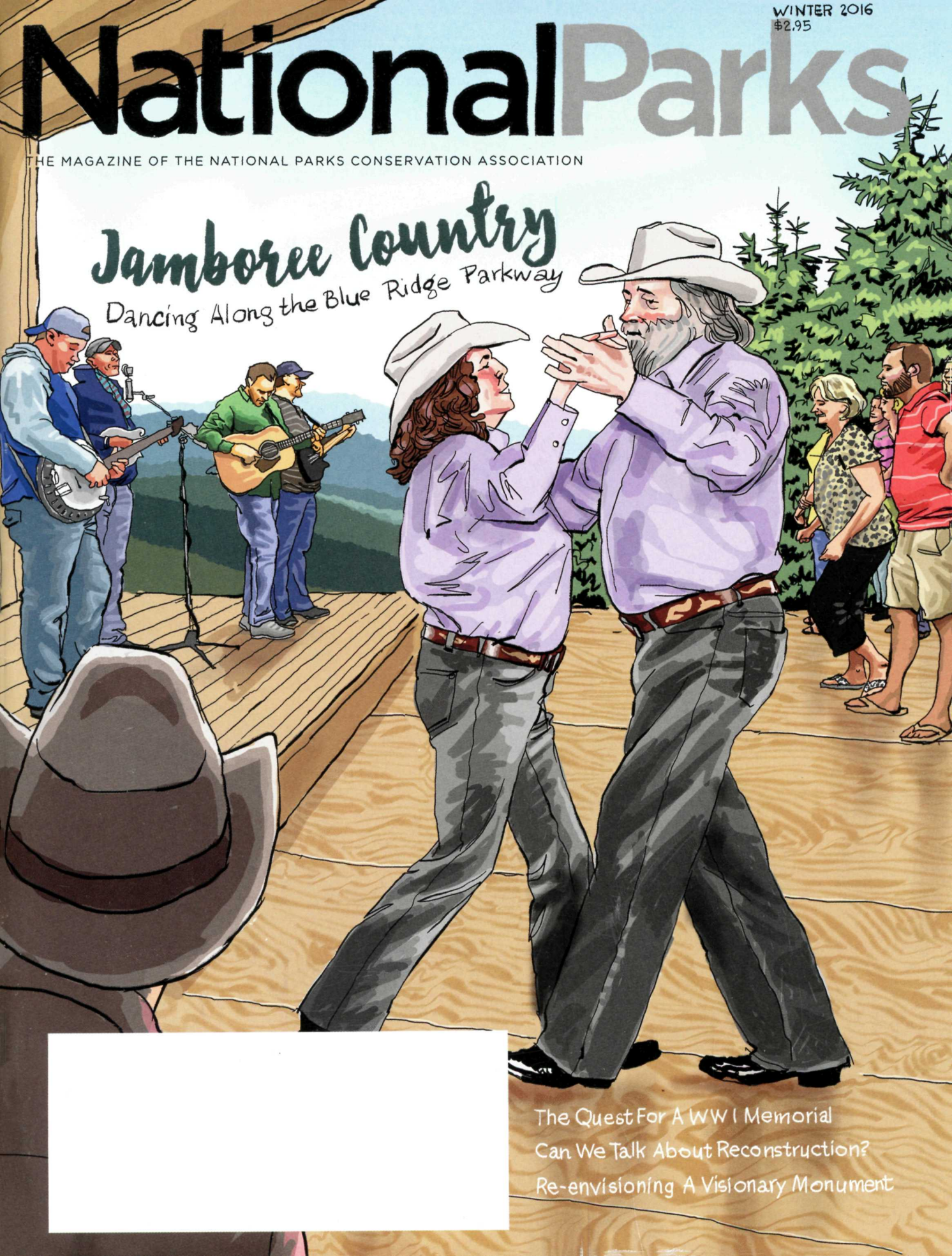
National Parks

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



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THE ENTRANCE TO The Alleghany Jubilee in Sparta, North Carolina.
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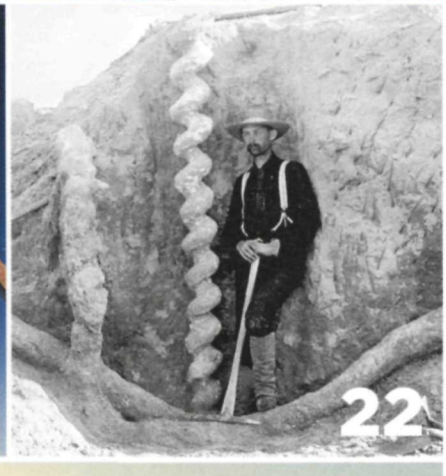

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DEPARTMENTS

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Speaking Up

When I was very young, growing up in New Jersey, my favorite spot to play was a small forest near our home. Of course, in the eyes of a 5 year old, it was huge. I spent hours playing there, looking for frogs and turtles. It was my sanctuary.

One day, my mother and I went back and the forest was gone. A housing development was being built where the trees once stood. You can imagine my devastation. The only trace of the woods I could find was a lone duckling that my mother and I took to a wildlife refuge. This experience has stayed with me my entire life.

Although I couldn't save that forest as a young girl, I have spent my career working to protect our great waters from pollution, our lands from overdevelopment, and our wildlife from extinction.

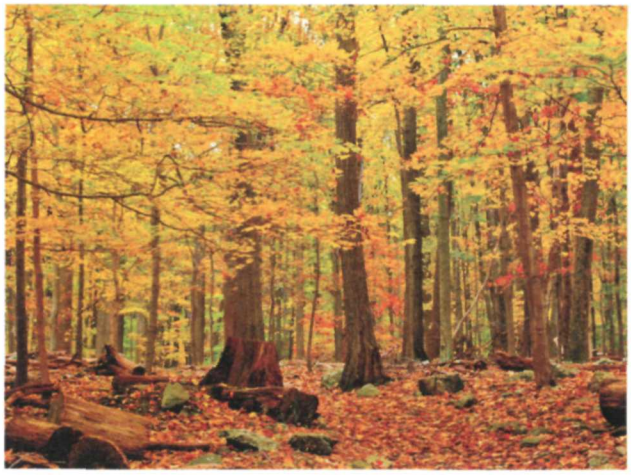
I am thrilled to continue this important work as NPCA's new president and CEO. It is a distinct honor, and I couldn't be prouder.

This is an especially pivotal time for national parks. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, an occasion that has sparked a renewed effort to invite people back to America's more than 400 national parks. Through NPCA's Find Your Voice initiative, we are encouraging people to speak up on behalf of these remarkable places. We will be holding events across the country this year and encourage you to join us, whether it's for a trail cleanup, an advocacy training workshop, or a float on a river.

The centennial presents a tremendous opportunity to inspire a diverse group of people to fall in love with our country's greatest places and instill in them the passion to defend these treasures.

I look forward to continuing NPCA's legacy of protecting parks for future generations. And I look forward to working alongside all of you to speak up for our national parks.

Theresa Pierno



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CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK, a national park site in Maryland.

National Park Math

For three years running, various illnesses and a government shutdown derailed my family's plans to go on a school camping trip to Catoctin Mountain Park. But finally, this year, the stars aligned, and we set out on a cold October morning. We drove under some menacing clouds, but by the time we arrived, the sky had cleared, and the yellow and orange leaves around us practically glowed in the sunlight.

Within minutes, my kids, ages 4 and 6, were running through the woods with their friends. Later, they donned way-too-big gloves to yank out invasive plants, played board games in the campsite's lodge, and roasted marshmallows at a roaring bonfire. The temperature dropped precipitously that night, but we hunkered down in our cabin, cozying into sleeping bags. My son announced, unprompted, that it had been a great day. The best day. Then they both immediately fell asleep.

Just one night. One park. Two very happy children.

I like to think about multiplying that by the 409 sites across the country and about all of the people out there on the same day stargazing or rafting or daydreaming.

And now that it's 2016, I can make another calculation: Multiplying all that by 100 years to get millions of joyful, profound, silly, or serious experiences. A century ago, on August 25, the National Park Service was created to protect America's lands and treasures. We are excited about covering this monumental birthday all year, starting with an illustrated timeline on page 10. I hope you also have a chance to mark the centennial in 2016, whether that means volunteering or advocating for a beloved park or snuggling into your own sleeping bag somewhere beautiful.

Let the celebration begin....

Rona Marech
NPMAG@NPCA.ORG

NationalParks

EDITOR IN CHIEF: Rona Marech
CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Annie Riker
ART AND PHOTO EDITOR: Nicole Yin
FEATURES DESIGN CONSULTANT: Jessie Despard/Despard Design

NATIONAL PARKS
777 6th Street NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20001-3723
202.223.6722; npmag@npca.org

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WHO WE ARE
Established in 1919, the National Parks Conservation Association is America's only private, nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated solely to protecting, preserving, and enhancing the U.S. National Park System.

WHAT WE DO
NPCA protects and enhances America's national parks for present and future generations by identifying problems and generating support to resolve them.

EDITORIAL MISSION
National Parks magazine fosters an appreciation of the natural and historic treasures found in the parks, educates readers about the need to preserve those resources, and illustrates how member contributions drive our organization's park-protection efforts. The magazine uses the power of imagery and language to forge a lasting bond between NPCA and its members, while inspiring new readers to join the cause. *National Parks* magazine is among a member's chief benefits. Of the $25 membership dues, $6 covers a one-year subscription to the magazine.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE
Members can help defend America's natural and cultural heritage. Activists alert Congress and the administration to park threats; comment on park planning and adjacent land-use decisions; assist NPCA in developing partnerships; and educate the public and the media. Please sign up to receive Park Notes, *our monthly e-mail newsletter. Go* to npca.org to sign up.

HOW TO DONATE
To donate, please visit npca.org or call 800.628.7275. For information about bequests, planned gifts, and matching gifts, call our Development Department, extension 145 or 146.

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If you have any questions about your membership, call Member Services at 800.628.7275. On a selective basis, NPCA makes its membership list available to organizations that our members find of interest. If you would like your name removed from this list, please call us at the number listed above.

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WONDER AND SORROW

This past weekend, my wife, Amy, and I and our six young kids piled into the van for a trip inspired by "Where They Cried," the article about the mile-long piece of the Trail of Tears near Mantle Rock in Kentucky. Until I read the article, I had no idea that the largest freestanding arch east of the Mississippi was a two-hour drive from our home. In the span of a few miles, our children were exposed to wonder of the natural world and the moving sorrow of a people forced to leave their hallowed ground. It was a poignant reminder of just how much history and beauty lie right in our backyard. Thanks to the writer, Julia Busiek, and the magazine staff for featuring this little-known site. As easy as it is to highlight world-renowned places like Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Acadia, it is equally important that sites like Mantle Rock are given their due so that we may all come to better understand the places and peoples that have made this country what it is.

JIM SCHROEDER
Evansville, IN

A SECOND SIGHTING

In "Counting Sheep," you mention that a red fox was sighted in Yosemite for the first time in a century. While I was a backcountry ranger in Yosemite in the early 1980s, a red fox ran across the trail in front of my horse near Johnson Lake. I reported the sighting, but either no one believed it or it got lost in the shuffle. I know the difference between a red fox and gray fox, and if I live to a thousand, this one was red.

THOMAS SMITH
San Jose, CA

TURNING DOWN THE VOLUME

I just read Kate Siber's article, "If A Tree Falls, They'll Hear It," in the fall issue. The article reminded me of a vacation my mother and father took my brother and me on way back in 1975. We were touring around the Southwest in our Chevy Impala, and one of the parks we visited was Arches in Utah. We were hiking, and I stopped to look at something and fell behind. We were the only humans around, and I was struck suddenly by something I don't remember ever experiencing before—an abiding quiet. For a moment or two, there was no wind, no voices, and no traffic. Siber's article got me thinking, and I wonder if it would be possible to convince electric car makers to donate fleets of electric cars to national parks for visitors to lease. Such a plan would likely reduce air pollution, and visitors might be inspired to purchase their own electric cars. Could be a win-win-win.

VALERIE CONNOR
Winston-Salem, NC

LAKESHORE MARVELS

I very much enjoyed the article about

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore ["Gift of the Glaciers"] in the fall issue of the magazine. It brought back wonderful memories. My wife and I used to own 150 acres on the tip of Pyramid Point in the late '60s and early '70s until the Park Service kicked us out. My grown children now take their kids back to hike and climb the dune at the end of one of the trails, as they did when they were young. We had a trailer overlooking Good Harbor Bay. What wonderful years. Great article!

KEITH MERTEN
Romeo, MI

I thoroughly enjoyed the article in the fall edition on Sleeping Bear Dunes in Michigan. There is just one small bit of misinformation I noticed. The caption for the Petoskey stone stated they are rare and only found in Northern Michigan. True, this type of fossil is only found in Michigan, but they are far from rare. They are relatively common in and around the shores of Petoskey and Charlevoix, Michigan, and they are also found on the eastern side of the state, particularly along the shores of Lake Huron. I personally have found hundreds of Petoskey stones just casually strolling the Lake Huron shoreline.

DAVID TAILLARD
Westland, MI

AMERICA'S UNLISTED PARK?

In the fall issue, you lament the lack of visitors to Oxon Cove Park ["The National Park Next Door"].

It is not listed in *The Official Guide to America's National Parks* published by Fodor's. The park isn't even in the *Passport To Your National Parks*. And it's not included on the comprehensive list of park units on the National Park Service's website. There may be publicity about the park in the Washington, D.C., area, but what about the rest of the country?

PAUL BUMPUS
Ottawa Lake, MI

Oxon Cove is not listed in most national park guides because it is part of a larger national park unit known as National Capital Parks-East, which includes 19 different natural and historic sites in the metropolitan DC area.

-Editors

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Bear snaring and bear baiting and spotlighting bears—you know, shooting Boo-Boo when he's taking his winter nap in his den—that just doesn't have any place in lands managed by the National Park Service.

Recently retired Alaska Regional Director Jim Stratton on Alaska Public Radio praising the Park Service's new regulations banning predator-control hunting tactics that the state had tried to push into national preserves in Alaska.

The resounding support for this effort underscores that it is time to have a national park site that tells the story of the LGBT rights movement.

Northeast Regional Director Cortney Worrall quoted in the Chelsea News *about NPCA's campaign to create a Stonewall national park. In 1969, the Stonewall Inn was the site of riots that ignited the modern LGBT civil rights movement in this country.*

We should be thinking about how to protect this water and not extract it and ship it out to urban markets. The Mojave needs its water.

David Lamfrom, director of California Desert and Wildlife Programs, speaking to The Desert Sun *about Cadiz, Inc.'s plans to tap water in the Mojave Desert and pump it to Southern California. Conservation groups, tribal leaders, and Sen. Dianne Feinstein oppose the scheme, which could harm the Mojave National Preserve.*

PHOTO: BROWN BEAR CUBS IN LAKE CLARK NATIONAL PARK & PRESERVE, ALASKA

100 Years at a Glance

1892 Manzanar National Historic Site is established at a former Japanese-American internment camp.

1898 Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site is created.

2014 Major parks bill creates or expands 16 parks.

2014 National Parks see record-breaking 292.8 million visits.

2015 Manhattan Project National Historical Park becomes 409th national park site.

1982 Vietnam Veterans memorial is completed.

1978 President Jimmy Carter invokes Antiquities Act to create 17 national monuments in Alaska.

1963 Martin Luther King, Jr. gives "I have a Dream" speech on National Mall.

1955-66 Congress sets aside $1 billion for Mission 66, a massive facility construction program.

1950 After wartime slump, visitation hits new high of 6,672.

1973 President Richard Nixon Signs Endangered Species Act.

1964 Wilderness Act is signed into law.

1934 Everglades and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks are created.

1933 War Department's parks and monuments are transferred to park service.

1933 Park Service's purview expands to include historic sites.

1933 President Franklin D. Roosevelt establishes Civilian Conservation Corps.

1924 Statue of Liberty is designated a national monument.

1919 NPCA (formerly National Parks Association) is born.

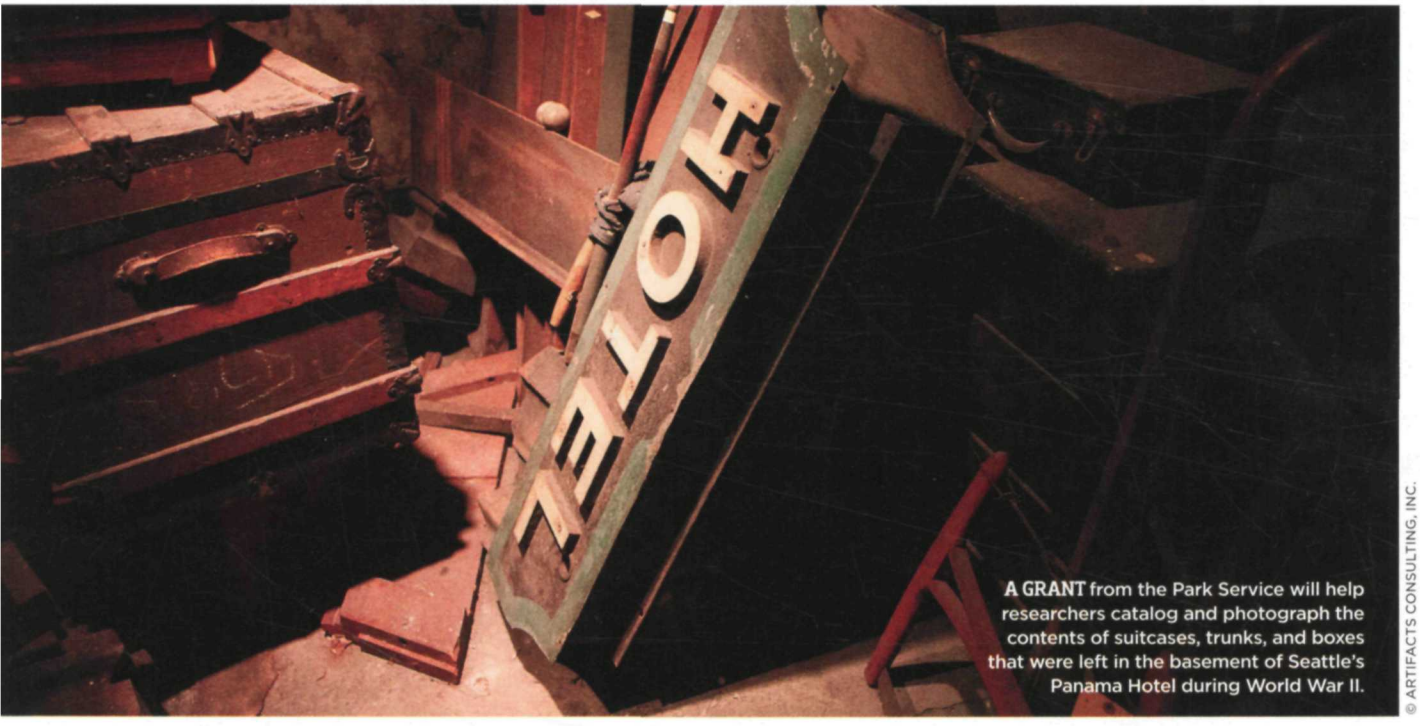
1919 Grand Canyon and Acadia become national parks.

1916 Stephen Tyng Mather is named first director.

By 1916, the Department of Interior was responsible for 14 national parks and 21 national monuments, but no single organization existed to oversee these places. That changed on August 25, when President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act. Though the agency has evolved over the century, its central mission to preserve America's lands and treasures for future generations remains untouched.

In honor of the Park Service's Centennial, here are some notable dates from the first 100 years.

Christiane Engel



A GRANT from the Park Service will help researchers catalog and photograph the contents of suitcases, trunks, and boxes that were left in the basement of Seattle's Panama Hotel during World War II.

The Mysteries of the Panama Hotel

What treasures did Japanese-Americans abandon when they left for internment camps?

The teahouse nestled below Seattle's historic Panama Hotel is filled with relics, from Japanese dolls in kimonos to the framed page of a Japanese-American newspaper from the day it ceased publication in 1942. But the most intriguing artifacts are the dusty ones in the basement, which visitors can just make out through a square of plexiglass cut out of the hardwood floor. Under a spotlight, the items look eerie: a trunk, a stuffed basket, some furniture and books, an old handbag. They are but a few of the belongings left here by Japanese-Americans and Japanese immigrants when they were forced—by presidential order—to relocate to internment camps after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The Panama Hotel, a National Historic Landmark, was designed by Seattle's first Japanese-American architect, Sabro Ozasa. It was built in 1910 on South Main Street in Nihonmachi, or Japantown, and the brick building became a gathering spot for the Japanese immigrant community. With lodging upstairs, doctors' and life insurance offices on the second floor, and a bookstore, barbershop, and billiards room on the ground floor, it was ahead of its time—not unlike today's mixed-use properties. The basement's traditional Japanese-style bathhouse remains the best surviving example of an urban sentō in the United States and looks much like it did when it closed in 1964.

Families believed their belongings could be safely stored at the hotel, and they were. But when the owner, Sanjiro Hori, and his family returned from a camp, they found some internees had died in the interim, and others moved on, leaving much of the luggage unclaimed after World War II. Today, the stories behind many of these items remain unknown, but thanks to a recent $137,000 grant from the National Park Service to inventory, catalog, and photograph the objects, details should begin to emerge this year.

"There are so many unanswered questions, because we're not 100 percent sure what's in the suitcases," said Jacqueline Ashwell, former superintendent of Seattle Area National Park Sites. A historical archaeologist who is now superintendent of the World War II Valor in the Pacific and Honouliuli National Monuments, Ashwell said it's extremely rare to find a time capsule like the one in the hotel's basement. (She's seen just one other in 20 years, an old mining site with miners'

time cards still in the desks.) "It speaks to so many layers of history," she said. "I wouldn't be surprised if a lot of the items in those suitcases relate to a Japanese heritage intentionally left behind, but for now, it's only speculation."

The grant was awarded to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which added the hotel to its portfolio of National Treasures in 2015. An inventory of the basement collection will start this winter, and subsequently, the nearby Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience will research and identify the objects to determine their cultural significance. The goal is to create a searchable database with photos and a description of each item.

THE PANAMA HOTEL, designed by Seattle's first Japanese-American architect, was built in 1910 in the city's Japantown.

Meanwhile, staff at the National Trust are in the process of identifying a new steward for the hotel. The current proprietor, Seattle native Jan Johnson, purchased the building from the Hori family in 1985. She has been a devoted caretaker, establishing the teahouse and fighting to preserve the hotel and its artifacts (including original furniture and tools Sanjiro Hori handcrafted) long before their value was officially recognized. Johnson is ready to pass the torch to another conservation-minded owner who can work with the National Trust to develop a plan for the building and the hotel's deserted treasures.

It's the "rare authenticity" of the hotel that's most compelling, said Sheri Freemuth of the National Trust. "I think all visitors feel like they're in a place that has experienced some sort of journey," she said, "whether it's because of its connection to an immigrant experience or because Jan has given it that vibe, or because of the suitcases in the basement connected to a horrible journey in 1942."

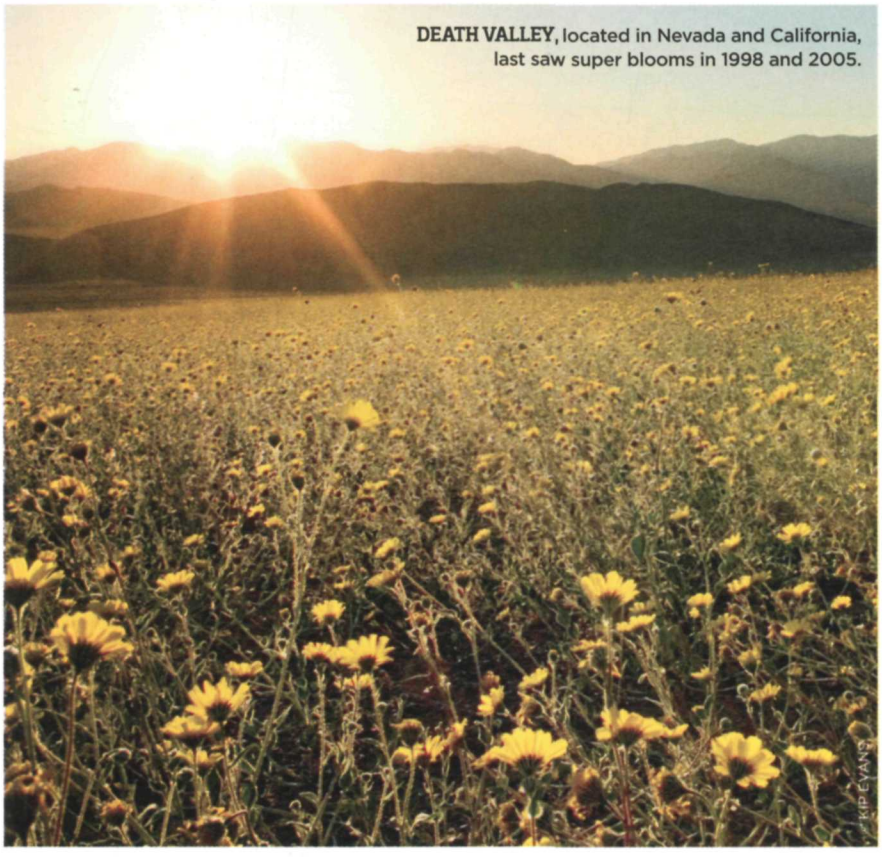
These days, Johnson—usually dressed in black, with a ring of keys jangling from her waist—lives at the hotel and largely fills her days with the minutia of innkeeping. "No wheels on the floor," she sometimes calls out to guests, referring to luggage on the old leather flooring. She likes to show off the guest room armoires, which her predecessor constructed out of old Frigidaire crates when wood was in short supply after the war.

Johnson came to appreciate history during a trip to Europe she took as a young woman. She has been passionate about preserving the hotel for decades and said she'd like to see the entire basement "plexiglassed off" and turned into a museum. By limiting access to a handful of people over the years, she has helped protect the bathhouse and abandoned belongings.

Some people come to the teahouse as a pilgrimage, occasionally finding family members in the old black and white photos of Japantown residents lining the exposed brick walls. A dozen translations of Jamie Ford's novel, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, which features an inn based on the Panama Hotel, sit nearby in a glass case.

One visitor, in town from Corvallis, Oregon, last summer, stood by the wall, examining the photos. He said Ford's book had inspired his visit here. "In 1942, my mother took supplies from Berkeley to a nearby Japanese camp," he said. "I lived through it, but I was too young to remember."

—MELANIE D.G. KAPLAN



DEATH VALLEY, located in Nevada and California, last saw super blooms in 1998 and 2005.

KIP EVANS

Striking Desert Gold

Will a wet winter bring a spring super bloom to Death Valley?

Aficionados of music videos from the salad days of MTV might recognize these lyrics from "In a Big Country," a 1983 hit for the Scottish band, Big Country: "I'm not expecting to grow flowers in a desert/ But I can live and breathe and see the sun in wintertime."

These lines provided a steady backbeat for my own journey to some decidedly big, open country—a trip to Death Valley National Park last March with NPCA's travel program. After a particularly cold and restless mid-Atlantic winter, I was more than ready to live, to breathe, and to see the sun in the waning days of that long season.

Although I wasn't necessarily expecting a profusion of flowers, my travel party was rewarded by an impressive showing of desert ephemerals—roadsides dotted white and lavender-pink by gravel ghost and desert five-spot, washes and ravines punctuated by the brilliant fuchsia of beavertail cactus flowers, open expanses of the park covered broadly, if not thickly, with the showy yellow flowers of desert gold.

This spring, there's reason to believe the bloom could be even better.

An early October rainstorm brought .7 inches of rain over two days—more than a third of the park's average annual rainfall—a veritable deluge by Death Valley standards. Two weeks later, thunderstorms dropped another half inch of rain, producing flash floods. The weather caused millions of dollars of damage, but there is a silver lining. This early autumn soaking and the gentle winter rains of a predicted El Niño are key ingredients for something this desert park hasn't seen in more than a decade: a super bloom.

Death Valley's last two super-bloom events occurred in 1998 and 2005, and Alan Van Valkenburg, a ranger who also leads wildflower walks, was there to witness it all firsthand.

"The alluvial fans, hillsides, valley floor, and washes were covered with solid carpets of flowers that went on for miles and miles," he said. "In a normal springtime there will be scattered flowers here and there, but during a super bloom, almost every possible place a flower can grow, it will. It totally transforms Death Valley into a valley of life."

The predominant color of that transformation will be a sunny yellow. Although other wildflower species will bring splashes of purple and pink, the stars of the show will be the desert gold poppy at lower elevations and golden evening primrose and desert dandelion at higher elevations.

If it comes to pass, a super bloom could start as early as late January and likely would peak from late February to mid-April. The indications are good, but the sprouts, which have already emerged, still need the right combination of temperature, wind, and moisture to thrive.

"A hard freeze this winter could kill the sprouts, too much wind could desiccate them, or the El Niño rains could come too late or too little," said Van Valkenburg. But still, he's optimistic. "I'm usually pretty cautious when predicting a super bloom," he said, "but so far, everything seems to have fallen into place."

—TODD CHRISTOPHER

DEER CREEK NARROWS, a remote slot canyon, can be reached only from the park's North Rim.

© COREY RICH/AURORA PHOTOS

The Space Between Things

A writer returns to the Grand Canyon again and again. And again.

It's not easy to get to the Deer Creek Narrows, tucked deep in Grand Canyon National Park. You must descend over a vertical mile from the remote North Rim, down through layers of rock formed over millions of years, along slippery slopes of cobbles, and across vast undulating sheets of sandstone. Last spring, five friends and I undertook the multiday journey, encountering chilling winds and snow flurries on the rim, raging stream crossings, and nerve-fraying heat on the canyon floors.

When we finally arrived, wearily, on a perfect 70-degree afternoon, the Narrows seemed almost magical. A nave of curving sandstone striped with shades of terracotta and crimson, this slot is graced with perennial waters that tumble in rivulets and waterfalls and collect in clear green pools paved with stone marbles. The sounds of rushing water filled the canyon, punctuated occasionally by the lilting song of a canyon wren. There was no sign of civilization.

We stripped off our salty shorts and t-shirts and slid into the pools. Sunning ourselves on perfectly flat ledges, we wordlessly agreed to cut our chatter out of respect for this rare place. I had been to the Grand Canyon many times but never a corner of it quite like this. It was just the latest episode in a love affair I never expected to have.

A decade ago, when I was in my 20s, I met an elderly woman while hiking in Canyonlands National Park in Utah. She had silver hair, a sturdy gait, and an air of quiet confidence. We got to talking, and she told me that she came here often even though she lived on the other side of the country. She had traveled all over the world, but now, instead of seeing new places, she preferred to return to the same one—to hike different trails but see the same spires and hoodoos in different moods

I felt like I had passed through some mysterious curtain to a secret world of towering cliffs and glowing turquoise waterfalls.

and seasons.

I thought she was crazy. At the time, I was addled with wanderlust, hell-bent on constant movement. What could possibly be learned seeing the same place over and over? Now I am beginning to understand.

You don't need to go out searching for a place to return to. In the course of your travels, it eventually finds you, sinks a hook, and beckons you back again and again. I traveled to the Grand Canyon as a child, but for years, it stayed in a drawer in my mind. Then, in my early 20s, I moved to the Southwest, and since then, I've returned to the park eight times for trips ranging from a few days to 19. At some point, around the third trip, I realized what was happening. The Grand Canyon had become that place for me: It had drawn me in and wasn't letting go.

The first thing most people notice about the Grand Canyon is its stupefying grandeur and scale. When I first encountered it, I was ten years old, embarking on my first backpacking trip. My dad bought me a pink-and-teal backpack, filled it with camping gear, and cajoled me—with no previous hiking experience—ten miles down to Havasu Falls in a day. I whined and cried and collapsed from exhaustion, unable to go a step farther until I'd wolfed down some oranges and candy. But in my delirium, I also felt like I had passed through some mysterious curtain to a secret world of towering cliffs and glowing turquoise waterfalls that seemed as tall as skyscrapers. Growing up in a big Eastern city, I had never dreamed the world could look like this.

The next time I visited, I was in my 20s on my first long rafting trip: 18 days and 226 miles on the Colorado River with 15 friends. Over those many hours floating on the river's grand stage, we ran out of words to describe the huge amphitheaters going by. I don't think there's any way the human mind can actually grasp the scale of time the cliffs so eloquently illustrate. The result is a sort of suspension of hubris, a constant feeling of wowed, grateful humility.

On that trip, I trained myself to look beyond the magnitude to see the intimate beauty of the canyon—the soothing sound of a tiny riffle, the delicate beauty of a cactus blossom in a throne of needles, the way the water's reflected sunlight dances on overhanging stone. These are things that take time to notice, and I began to realize that you must spend weeks—months, years—here to gain a real understanding of its rhythm and tone. I also began to see that part of the allure of the canyon is not only its beauty, but its danger.

In the middle of that trip, one cool, sunny day in April, three friends and I switched from a raft into the group's wooden dory, a craft that bucks like a carnival ride. Just as I was getting used to its jerks and shudders, the boat capsized in Dubendorf Rapid, and in a nanosecond, I was hurled into a wall of water and enveloped. I gasped for air and was shoved beneath again, bouncing off rocks like a doll. The next few minutes were a jumble of darkness and light, air and water. Finally I reached flatwater, spotted the three others—all swimming—and swam back to the overturned dory, which we eventually wrangled to shore. The river had claimed an oar and gruesomely smashed the bow. I was unscathed but

my mind replayed the incident incessantly. I felt small and vulnerable, cowed by the indiscriminate power of water. But I was also, in part, thrilled. So often in daily life, we are insulated from the ever-present reality of our own fragility, and it was exhilarating to see beyond the delusion.

When we left the river after nearly three weeks, I felt bereft. It wasn't just that the canyon was so beautiful and exciting. Being in such a place, so connected to my body, to other people, and to feelings of fear, humility, and belonging made me feel more human than I ever feel surrounded by civilization. I knew I had to return not only to try to understand this inscrutable place but to remind myself of who I am.

A few years ago, I applied for a permit to backpack the Nankoweap Trail without ever looking at the trail description. "You know, this is a pretty scary trail," my friend Amanda told me as we drove through a starry evening to get to the trailhead and camp. She unfolded the description and read aloud. "This is NOT recommended for people with a fear of heights." She looked at me with her eyebrow raised. The next day, we hiked by Saddle Mountain on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon and peered down. A rolling cliff face dropped into an abyss. The narrow thread of a trail appeared impossible.

I felt small and vulnerable, cowed by the indiscriminate power of water.

Somehow, with the help of some wires holding rocks to the slope and well-placed logs to prevent erosion, a trail made its way down into the canyon. This was the way it went: We looked ahead and deemed it undoable. And yet, step by step, we moved forward.

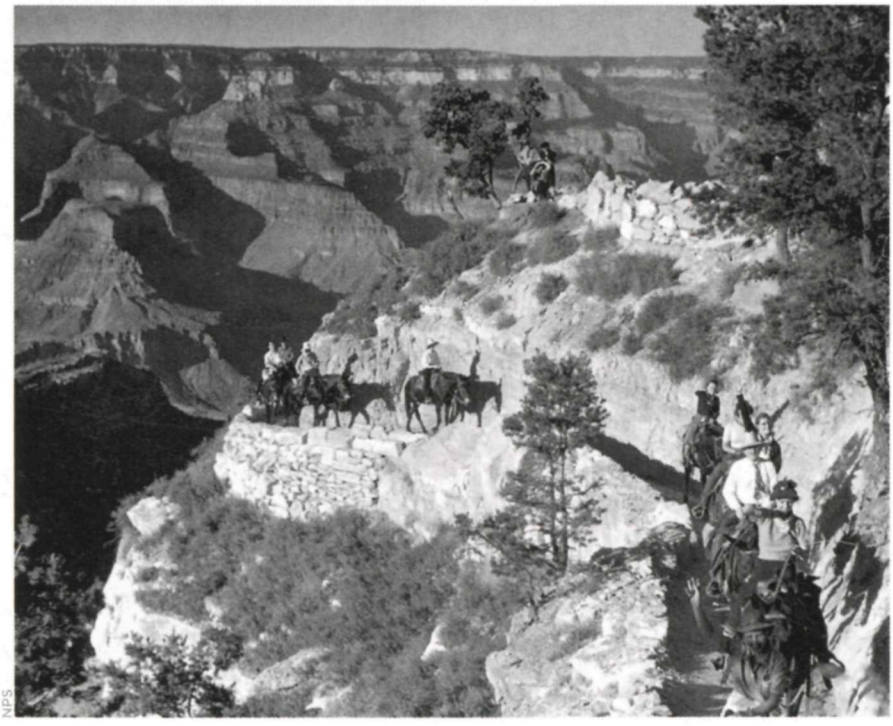
This time, what the canyon required was unbroken concentration. Our shoulders grazed a cliff on our left as another dropped away on the right; one misstep could have spelled disaster. I trained my gaze on the path ahead and wired my attention to my feet: heel, toe, heel, toe.

Eventually we made it all the way down into the canyon and along a stream to the Colorado River, where ancient granaries overlooked a ring of cliffs and the river twisting off. But what I remember best was taking a moment, on that tightrope trail, to stop and look around. It was as if the uncluttered calm it required to walk the path safely allowed me a sharper view.

Billions of years' worth of happenings—climates changing, seas coming and going, sediments blowing and moving—were all preserved here in this labyrinth that stretched to the horizon. A charcoal smudge of rain traveled among the uplifts. Elsewhere the sun illuminated the layers. I had always experienced this place as a landscape of stone, but, standing there, perched in the middle of a huge cliff, I realized it was just as much a landscape of air and silence. It seems there are only certain moments when I'm able to see the spaces between things.

—KATE SIBER

A MULE PARTY moves along Bright Angel Trail in 1947. Millions of people have visited the Grand Canyon over centuries, from Native Americans to Spanish explorers, prospectors, profiteers, and adventurers.



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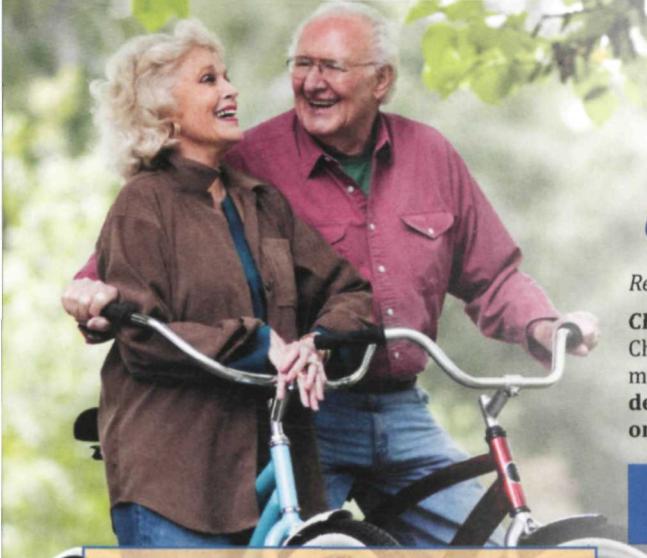

Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid

Outperforms Many Expensive Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

CHICAGO: A local board-certified Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

"Perhaps the best quality-to-price ratio in the hearing aid industry" —Dr. Babu, Board-Certified ENT Physician

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's disease. **He could not understand why the cost of hearing aids was so high when the prices of so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones, and digital cameras had fallen.**

Since Medicare and most private insurance plans do not cover the costs of hearing aids, which traditionally run between $2,000 — $6,000 for a pair, many of the doctor's patients could not afford the expense. Dr. Cherukuri's goal was to find a reasonable solution that would help with the most common types of hearing loss at an affordable price, similar to the **"one-size-fits-most" reading glasses** available at drug stores.

He evaluated numerous hearing devices and sound amplifiers, including those seen on television. Without fail, almost all of these were found to amplify bass/*low frequencies (below 1000 Hz) and were not useful in amplifying the* frequencies related to the human voice.

Inspiration from a Surprising Source

The doctor's inspiration to defeat the powers-that-be that kept inexpensive hearing aids out of the hands of the public actually came from a new cell phone he had just purchased. **"I felt that if someone could devise an affordable device like an iPhone® for about $200 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at a similar price."**

Affordable Hearing Aid with Superb Performance

The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical-grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the **MD**HearingAid ***PRO***, under $200 each when buying a pair. **It has been declared to be the best low-cost hearing aid that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.**

Tested by Leading Doctors and Audiologists

The **MD**HearingAid ***PRO*** has been rigorously tested by leading ENT physicians and audiologists who have unanimously agreed that the **sound quality and output in many cases exceeds more expensive hearing aids.**

DOCTORS AND PATIENTS AGREE: "BEST QUALITY SOUND" "LOWEST AFFORDABLE PRICE"

"I have been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years and these are the best Behind-the-Ear aids I have tried. ***Their sound quality rivals that of my $3,000 custom pair of Phonak® Xtra digital ITE."*** —Gerald Levy

"I have a $2,000 ReSound® Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid in the right ear. ***I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids."***
—Dr. May, ENT Physician

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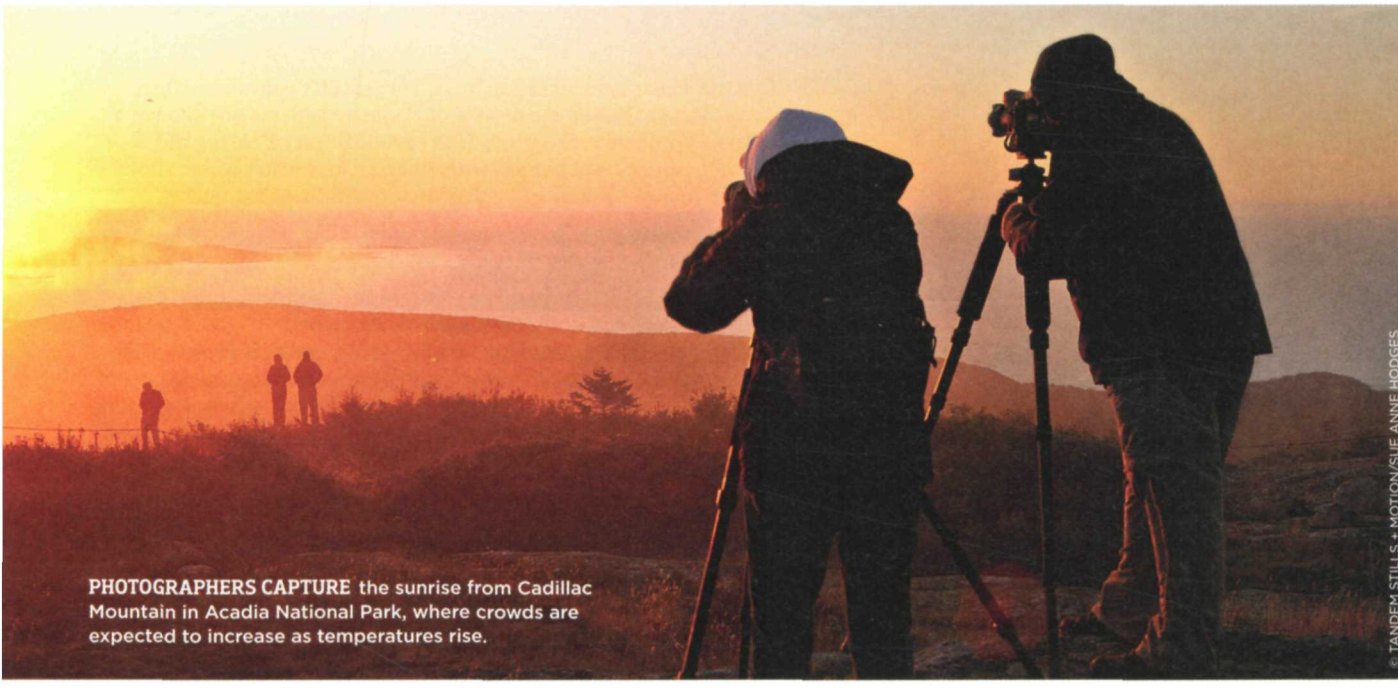


PHOTOGRAPHERS CAPTURE the sunrise from Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park, where crowds are expected to increase as temperatures rise.

Warm With A Chance Of Crowds

A study forecasts how climate change could affect national park visitation.

A POLAR BEAR STANDS STOICALLY on a small ice floe. Haunting music builds as the frame expands to encompass the surroundings: the azure blue of an endless, unfrozen ocean. A somber voice explains the present realities of our melting ice caps and the future we can expect for our warming planet.

This is the sad, familiar face of climate change. We've seen the documentaries and read the news stories. We know about severe storms and droughts, sea-level rise, and shifting habitats. It should be no surprise that, in the coming years, these changes will acutely affect public lands. What might come as a shock, however, is how warmer temperatures could lead more people to explore national parks.

Using nearly four decades of visitation data amassed by the National Park Service, employees with the agency's Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Directorate recently plotted park visitation alongside historical average monthly temperatures at 340 parks. The results surprised them: Visitation at the majority of parks tracked the mercury reading even more closely than they expected. Basically, warmer air correlated with more visitors—at least until temperatures reached the 70s. Curious about how the hotter weather expected by 2050 would influence visitor numbers, the authors projected park visitation into the future. Their projections indicate that mid-century temperatures could be accompanied by a significant increase in annual visitor numbers in many parks and a busy season that is up to one month longer.

For Nicholas Fisichelli, an ecologist and lead author of the study, the message is clear: "Based on warming, you're likely to see more visitors in your park for a longer period during the year." Summer visitation at Wyoming's Grand Teton and Maine's Acadia National Parks, for example, may rise by more than a third. The projections predict these two parks could experience even bigger visitation jumps during other seasons. In Grand Teton, the number of visitors could double during the spring and fall, and Acadia might see an increase in winter

traffic. Overall, the study showed that total annual visitation across all park sites could increase between 8 and 23 percent.

Notable exceptions to the general trend include parks with little annual fluctuation in temperature, such as Hawaii's Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park. Other outliers are those sites already on the warm end of the spectrum. At Everglades National Park in Florida, for example, further warming might push people indoors to the comfort of air conditioning. Arches National Park, too, is predicted to experience a slight decline in park-goer numbers during Utah's hot summer season, counterbalanced by a swelling of visitors during winter. In general, as monthly average temperatures approach and exceed 77 degrees, visitation plateaus and then wanes.

Though focused on the future, the findings aren't just a matter for the next generation to worry about, park staff say. Anyone who has idled in a park traffic jam or struggled to snap a stranger-free photo at a crowded viewpoint has felt first-hand the growing pains of a park scrambling to keep up with an adoring public. And overcrowding is not limited to a few of the best-known parks. Nationwide, annual visitation at parks is on the rise. The number of recreational visits to national parks in 2014—a whopping 292.8 million—exceeded 2013's total by more than 19 million.

"The biggest single challenge facing Acadia right now is our popularity," said Sheridan Steele, the former superintendent who retired this fall. Last summer, he said, some days were just "crazy." Roads were gridlocked, parking lots overflowed, and overtaxed shuttle buses provided free rides for up to 9,000 passengers daily. Park rangers were forced to close one of the park's most sought-after destinations, Cadillac Mountain, when congestion threatened visitor safety and challenged their ability to manage the crowds.

Mark Miller, chief of Resource Stewardship and Science for the Southeast Utah Group of parks, called the research "interesting" but noted that "Arches and Canyonlands already are experiencing visitation growth rates that are comparable to those predicted." On Memorial Day, in fact, the Utah Highway Patrol shut the main entrance to Arches because the line of waiting cars had backed onto a nearby highway.

In light of current pressures, many park managers are taking measures to adjust to increased visitor demands. Concerned about traffic and public safety, Acadia staff recently initiated a transportation study. Similarly, the staff of Arches is considering everything from a shuttle service to a timed-entry ticket system to remedy congestion. Administrators of Yosemite in California and Shenandoah in Virginia have recently tried raising entrance and campground fees.

"The biggest single challenge facing Acadia right now is our popularity."

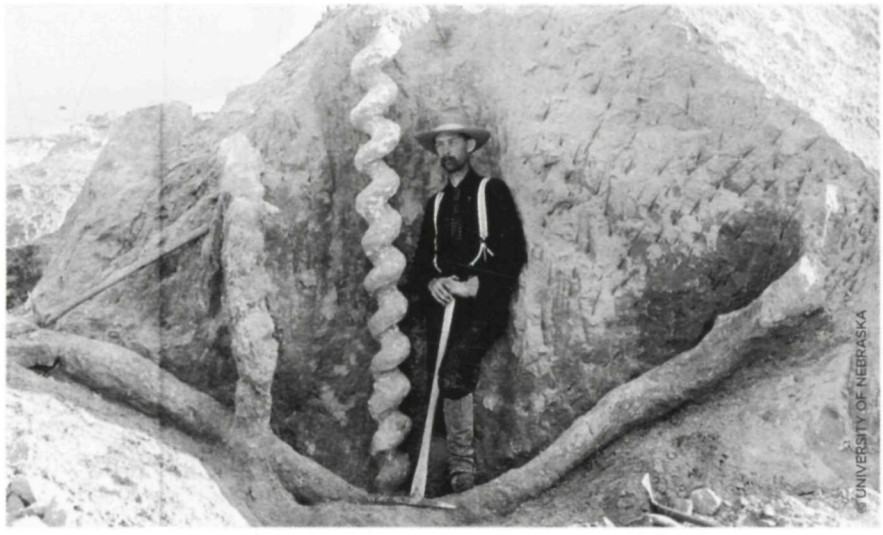
Gregor Schuurman, an ecologist and co-author of the study, said he and his colleagues on the Climate Adaptation Team have been speaking with park staff across the country about creative ways to adapt to shifts in visitation. A longer shoulder season (spring and fall for most parks) could enable staff to offer new activities. Perhaps, in anticipation of warmer weather, park roads could be cleared of lingering snow and ice and opened earlier in the spring. And at parks where visitor numbers could decline due to the midday heat, he suggested that rangers might consider planning more nighttime activities focused on astronomy or nocturnal animals.

Schuurman noted that many park managers' concerns are budgetary and often boil down to crises with bathrooms and parking lots. Between the costs of daily operation and an existing $11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog, parks don't have the funding to handle the crowds. There actually is a simple solution, he pointed out: "Gosh, wouldn't it be nice if Congress would give us a bigger budget?" But that, he said, is "pie in the sky." **NP**

DIVERSITY MATTERS

The National Park System proved to be a useful and unique data source for this study because of parks' geographic diversity. The parks range across 150 degrees of longitude and 80 degrees of latitude and experience a variety of climates.

KATHERINE MCKINNEY assists NPCA's 24 regional and field offices from Washington, D.C., while dreaming of her next big park adventure.



FREDERICK C. KENYON, a neuroanatomist, standing next to a "devil's corkscrew" discovered in the late 19th century at Agate Fossil Beds National Monument.

The Beaver That Didn't Give a Dam

Solving the mystery of the ancient *Palaeocastor*.

PIONEERING RANCHERS MOVING INTO SIOUX COUNTY, Nebraska, in the mid-1800s began finding odd structures sticking out of eroded prairie hillsides. They were rocks, it appeared, but unlike any rocks the cattlemen had seen before: tubes, about as tall as a man and as thick as his arm, wound up into perfect spirals like fusilli pasta. According to an early account, these whorls were so dense in some places they appeared to form "a veritable forest" along the prairie. The ranchers began calling these strange structures "devil's corkscrews," and the name stuck. Based on the number of these corkscrews found on the plains, the devil had one heck of a party in Sioux County.

When rancher James Cook found devil's corkscrews on his property along the Niobrara River in 1891, he alerted Erwin H. Barbour, a geologist on an expedition nearby. Barbour dug some of the spirals out of the ground and found they were actually big twisted straws filled with calcified roots, sand, and silt. These corkscrews weren't rocks at all, Barbour determined; they were fossils—but fossils of what?

Barbour named the spirals *Daemonelix*—a Latin version of "devil's corkscrew"—and began trying to answer that question. Because the tubes were formed of fibrous materials, Barbour assumed *Daemonelix* were the roots of fossilized plants, perhaps the remains of giant freshwater sponges. Much of what became the Great Plains of the United States was once underwater, after all. Soon other scientists weighed in, their guesses focusing on other fossilized remains that were occasionally found when the base of a *Daemonelix* was broken apart: rodent bones.

Paleontologists thought that the repeated discovery of an extinct rodent's bones was too much of a coincidence and in 1893 proposed a new theory: The spirals weren't the remains of organisms but were the remnants of intricate spiral burrows dug by the rodents found entombed in the base. Scientists confirmed the link in 1905 after finding scratch marks on the inside of the spirals indicating that they had been clawed out of moist soil. And with that, America was introduced to one of its oddest ancestral creatures—a family of 22-million-year-old, spiral-burrowing land beavers named the *Palaeocastor*.

Meaning "ancient beaver" (Castoridae is the family that includes beavers), the several known species of *Palaeocastor* most likely looked like a cross between a modern North American beaver and a gopher and lived only in what is now the American Midwest. They had stubby tails, small ears, and eyes like gophers, but, unlike most burrowing mammals, they had the super long, quickly growing front teeth of modern beavers.

"They were pretty incredible creatures," said Caleb Prater, a park ranger at Nebraska's Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, which sits on the land once owned by the rancher, James Cook. "Some were as big as woodchucks

but probably lived in communities across the landscape like modern-day prairie dogs."

Like those of many burrowing mammals today, *Palaeocastors*' dens were fairly luxurious. Often as much as nine feet deep, the shelters had side chambers for sleeping and rearing young. Some of these excavated rooms contain low pockets that scientists believe were dedicated latrines or natural water-collecting "sinks" for drinking and bathing. Some chambers have steep inclines that kept sleeping *Palaeocastors* safe from flooding, evidence of a type of mid-summer hibernation called "estivation."

But the *Palaeocastor's* corkscrew chambers set it apart from all other known burrowing mammals, which generally tunnel straight down into the earth. University of Kansas professor Larry D. Martin examined more than a thousand fossilized *Palaeocastor* burrows in the 1970s and made some surprising discoveries, most notably that the scratches found on the walls weren't from claws but from teeth. The ancient beaver used its long front incisors to dig its tight spirals, fixing its hind feet on the axis and, in Martin's words, "literally screwed itself straight down into the ground."

> The ranchers began calling these strange structures "devil's corkscrews," and the name stuck.

But why go to the trouble of digging spiraled burrows instead of straight ones? According to Prater, there are a couple of possibilities. The spiral perhaps made it easier to escape predators, which might be able to reach down into a straight burrow but not around a curve. Or it could have been easier for the *Palaeocastor* to push excavated dirt up a gently sloping spiral than a steeper straight burrow. Perhaps the spiral helped keep water out.

Those curious to see a *Palaeocastor* for themselves can visit Agate Fossil Beds and see its collection of fossils from the Oligocene and Miocene Epochs. A mile down the Daemonelix Trail, *Paleocastor's* corkscrew burrows are still embedded in the side of ancient rock hillsides, just where James Cook found them in 1891.

Of course, only fossils remain—not even the descendants of the *Palaeocastor* are still living. "The entire lineage died out during the Oligocene Epoch when the world was changing," said William Korth, an earth science professor at Nazareth College and an expert in ancient rodents. From 33 to 23 million years ago, the planet's ecosystems cooled down and dried out, and a tropical world evolved into one dominated by grasslands. "*Palaeocastors* were probably adapted for a wetter world, and so when grasses and prairies came in, they just couldn't hang on," he said.

And that was that for the *Palaeocastor*, but fortunately, it wasn't the end for all mammals of its kind. Diverse forms of grazing mammals continued to thrive on grassy savannahs, alongside a motley crew of meat-eating predators. Elsewhere, aquatic beavers did hang on and eventually became the flat-tailed dam builders we know today. And gophers and other rodents evolved and took over the underground niche previously occupied by *Palaeocastors*. None of them, however, has ever managed to get the hang of the corkscrew burrow. **NP**

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ONCE UPON THE SAVANNAH

Visitors to Agate Fossil Beds National Monument can see the remains of other extinct creatures (in addition to the *Palaeocastor*, above) including small camels called *Stenomylus*, dog-sized rhinoceroses known as *Menoceras*, and "bear dogs," such as the *Daphoenodon*, whose name means, evocatively, "blood-reeking tooth."

NICHOLAS LUND, senior manager of NPCA's Landscape Conservation Program, writes silly things about birds at TheBirdist.com.

A QUEST TO REMEMBER

116,000 Americans were killed in World War I.

Why has it taken a century to build a national memorial in Washington, D.C.?

By Julie Scharper

Edwin L. Fountain was jogging on the National Mall a decade ago when—for the umpteenth time—he noticed a stained marble dome jutting from a shaggy grove of trees. He'd never given the half-hidden structure much thought, but that day, curiosity stopped him. He pushed through the brush to find out what the faded monument was. There, on the base of the dome, were the names of the 499 residents of the District of Columbia who had been killed in battle during World War I.

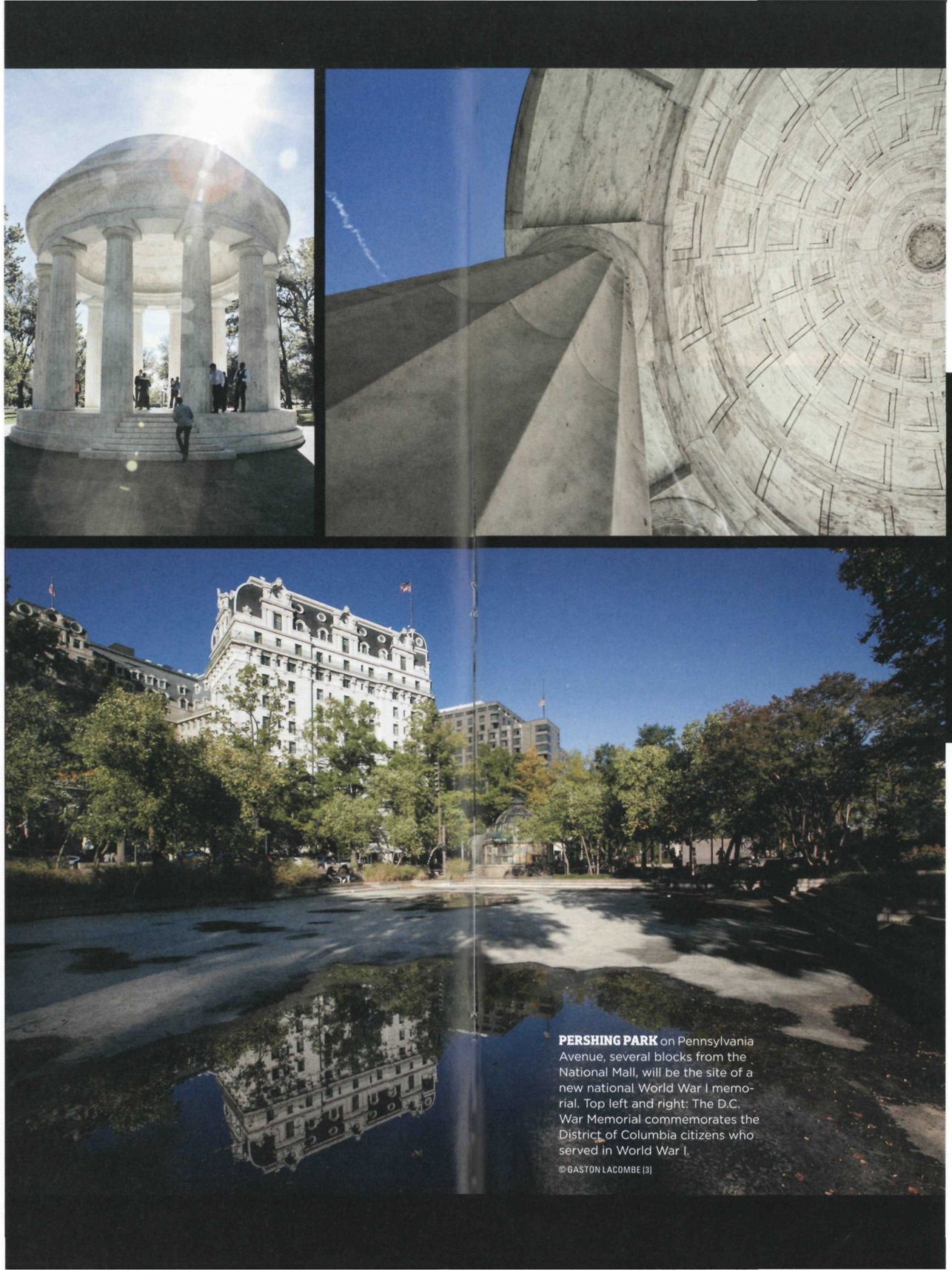
Nearby, ringing the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool, striking memorials stood in silent testimony to the other great conflicts of the 20th century. There was the somber gleam of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The startling immediacy of the faces of the stone soldiers of the Korean War Veterans Memorial. The elegant arc of columns that encircles the national memorial to World War II. But this battered dome was the only monument commemorating World War I, a conflict in which more Americans lost their lives than the wars in Vietnam and Korea combined. Fountain, an attorney and student of military history, was troubled.

"It does a disservice to the veterans of World War I," he said. "It diminishes their service and sacrifice and sends a message that we don't value it as much as the others."

The discovery spurred Fountain, now 51, to embark on a crusade to restore the District's memorial and build a monument honoring veterans of what had once been known as "The Great War." Fountain, who now serves as the vice chair of the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission, hopes to unveil the first national World War I memorial at a site just a few blocks away from the Mall—a neglected park dedicated to one of the war's heroes, Gen. John J. "Black Jack" Pershing. The commission plans to announce a winning design in January; Fountain hopes to see the monument formally dedicated on November 11, 2018, the 100th anniversary of the armistice. But many hurdles remain. The commission must choose a design that meets the site's unique challenges, and it must raise around $25 million in private donations, a daunting prospect when the veterans of the war—and many of their children—are no longer living.

"This is the first memorial built to a generation of veterans who are no longer with us," Fountain said.

At the same time, Fountain and his commission hope to spark interest in a poorly understood and often forgotten conflict. While World War II was emblazoned in the national consciousness through newsreels, films, and novels, World War I is rarely discussed outside of history classrooms. Many Americans recall that the conflict was sparked by the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand, but few can explain the complex political motives that drew most of Europe, Japan, and eventually, the United States to enter the conflict.



PERSHING PARK on Pennsylvania Avenue, several blocks from the National Mall, will be the site of a new national World War I memorial. Top left and right: The D.C. War Memorial commemorates the District of Columbia citizens who served in World War I.

© GASTON LACOMBE [3]

Many soldiers refused to talk about the war at home, unsure of how to express the horrors they had witnessed.

The war introduced the brutalities of trench warfare and chemical weapons, shattering Old World notions of the nobility of the battlefield. Some 17 million soldiers and civilians were killed, including 116,000 Americans, many of them farm boys who had never seen an automobile, let alone a tank, before the war began.

"World War I was harrowing, the psychological devastation of it alone," said Erika Doss, an American Studies professor at University of Notre Dame. Returning veterans "threw themselves into the culture of the 1920s and tried to forget about it."

Many soldiers refused to talk about the war at home, unsure of how to express the horrors they had witnessed. They also returned to another crisis, a flu pandemic that killed an estimated 675,000 Americans. And then, there is the ultimate tragedy of WWI, which had been called "The War to End All Wars"—it set the stage for a second and far more deadly global conflict 20 years later. While many towns built small memorials to the war—bronze statues of doughboys in round-brimmed helmets—there was little movement toward a national memorial in the decades immediately following WWI.

Perhaps the lack of a national memorial has led to some of the national amnesia around the war. Even Fountain said that until a decade ago, his knowledge of WWI could have "fit on a single file card." Both of his grandfathers served in the war, including one who had been scheduled to go to the front the day after the armistice. But it wasn't until Fountain joined the DC Preserva-

tion League and began campaigning to restore the local WWI memorial that the war captured his imagination.

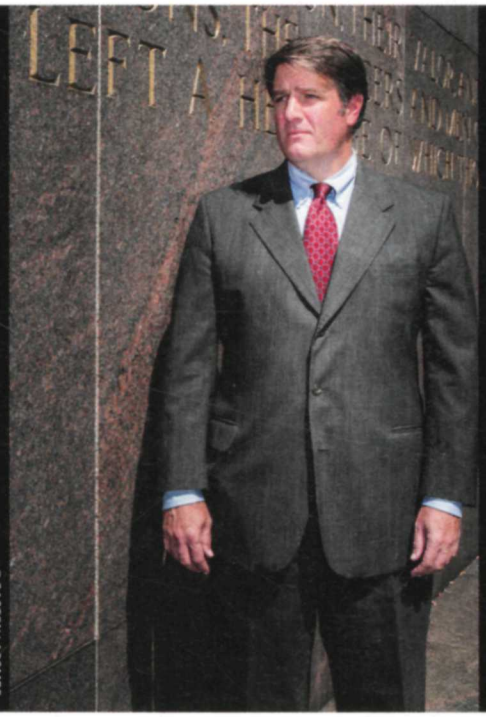
That memorial, which was dedicated in 1931, commemorates the 26,000 residents of the District who fought in the war and lists the names of the 499 who died. The marble dome was the only war memorial near the reflecting pool for half a century, until the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was completed in 1982. As it was joined by tributes to the veterans of the Korean War and WWII, the WWI memorial fell into disrepair. The marble grew drab. Cracks appeared. Overgrown bushes cloaked the dome. It was "a forgotten memorial to a forgotten war," Fountain said.

Spurred by his growing fascination with WWI, Fountain won the support of Frank Buckles, the last surviving American veteran of the conflict. Buckles, a Missouri native, had dropped out of school at 16 and fibbed about his age to join the Army, then served as an ambulance driver at the Western Front. Until his death at the age of 110 in 2011, he joined Fountain in campaigning to restore the District's memorial and create a national monument to the war.

Fountain and his group managed to secure $3.6 million in federal stimulus money to pay for repairs. After a year of work, the memorial reopened in 2011 with gleaming marble, tidy landscaping, and a replica of a long-vanished medallion. But Fountain's second quest—to convert the Doric-style structure into a national memorial to the war—was opposed by District lawmakers, including Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, who wanted it to remain solely a tribute to veterans from Washington.

Undaunted, Fountain and the Commission decided to turn their attention to Pershing Park, named for the commander of the U.S. forces in Europe. Late last year, Congress authorized the park to be a national WWI memorial, although it did not set aside funds for construction. (See sidebar, page 30.)

Pershing Park sits on Pennsylvania Avenue across from the 200-year-old Willard Hotel, where Lincoln stayed in the weeks leading up to his inauguration and Julia Ward Howe penned "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." When the park opened in 1981, a waterfall trickled into a placid pool ringed with lush plants. But the water was long ago drained, leaving a lake of stained concrete. Pigeons roost in a long-shuttered concession stand.



© GASTON LACOMBE

EDWIN L. FOUNTAIN, the vice chair of the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission, hopes to unveil the capital's first national memorial commemorating The Great War by the 100th anniversary of the armistice in 2018.

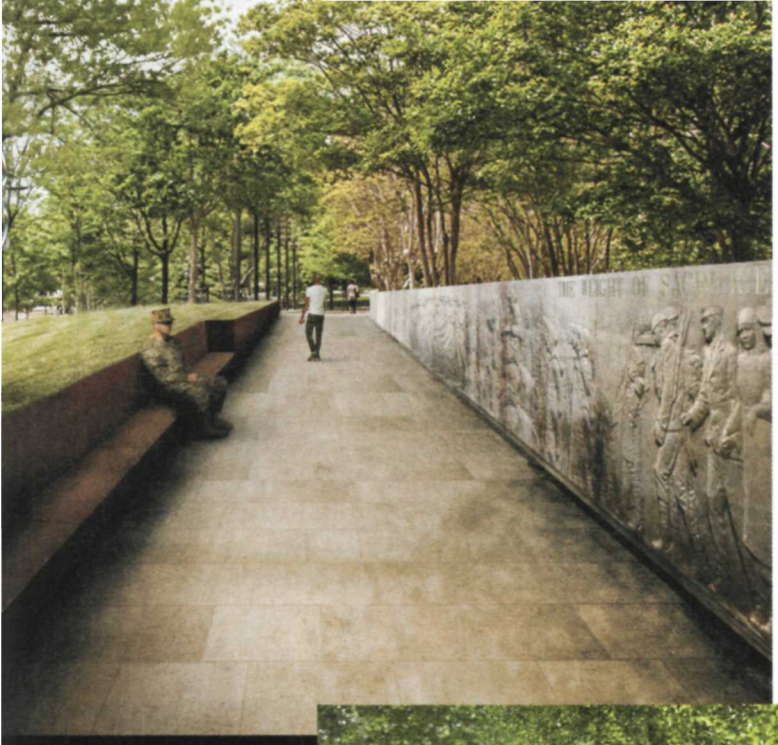
"This is the first memorial built to a generation of veterans who are no longer with us."

As heat rose from the concrete on a blistering day last summer, Fountain pointed out the park's shortcomings. Its sheltered location hides the park from passersby. Steep steps are treacherous and make for uncomfortable seats. The existing statue of Pershing is "static," said Fountain, and panels of text are hard to parse for the casual visitor. He envisions reinventing the park to create an attraction on par with the war memorials on the mall.

"You have to do something to make this a destination," he said. "You don't want the only people who come here to come by accident."

Nearly every monument on the National Mall can be seen as a war memorial, said Doss, the University of Notre Dame professor and author of *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America.*

The Washington Monument commemorates the Revolutionary War. The Lincoln Memorial prompts reflection on the Civil War. Washington, D.C., is a "sort of sacred ground" for Ameri-



giant portraits of soldiers and their families jutting from the lawn. A third would include a field of 1,166 bronze markers shaded by red oaks and paper birch trees. Yet another would frame the statue of Pershing with panels of friezes depicting the doughboys. And a fifth hearkens back to the WWI era's aesthetics, with a classically inspired monument surrounded by an ellipse of trees.

But some are concerned about the finalists, all of which call for an overhaul of the park. The Cultural Landscape Foundation, a preservation group headquartered in D.C., wants Pershing Park to be restored to its original design and preserved.

"We believe that it is in fact historically significant and is in fact eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places," said Charles Birnbaum, the group's president and CEO.

The park is one of the most important projects by noted

FINALISTS IN the design competition for the new World War I memorial include "The Weight of Sacrifice" by Joseph Weishaar (above) and "Heroes' Green" by Maria Counts and Counts Studio (right).

cans, where the nation's ideals are enshrined in stone, made permanent and legitimate, she said. Once the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was unveiled, veterans of other 20th-century conflicts and their descendants pushed for monuments to their wars.

"From childhood, we're expected to go to Washington on field trips, to go to the Mall and the memorials," said Doss. "Part of that is to tell stories and share ideas. And the biggest idea of all is that Americans are warriors."

The Mall and the surrounding areas are "highly symbolic," Doss said. But building on that prime real estate can be highly contentious.

A design competition for the memorial brought in some 350 proposals, and the commission announced five finalists in mid-August. One plan would transform the 1.8-acre park into a series of undulating grassy ridges and a grove of 116 gingko trees—one for every thousand Americans who died. Another would feature landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg, whose Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis was recently added to the National Register. The park's original plantings, which complemented Friedberg's design, were planned by the Washington-based firm of Oehme, van Sweden & Associates, which pioneered the "New American Garden" look.

That none of the design competition finalists plan to preserve the park's original features is disturbing, Birnbaum said. "When you're talking about the demolition of a historically significant park designed by three masters, that's problematic," he said.

The winning design must also be approved by the National Park Service, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Capital Planning Commission before construction can begin. The entire process will likely take much longer than the 19 months that Americans were engaged in the war.

Yet Fountain is confident that the memorial can—and must—

be built. He wants people to understand the profound effects of the war, which fueled the cynicism of the "Lost Generation" of writers, such as Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald, inspired technological advances, led to greater rights for women and African-Americans, and sowed the seeds for World War II and other conflicts that have raged around the world over the past 100 years.

Fountain, a broad-shouldered man with a military bearing, has seen his own life change as his interest in the war has deepened. He left a career in corporate law earlier this year to become general counsel for the American Battle Monuments Commission, the federal agency charged with protecting American war memorials and cemeteries around the world. He's also become passionate about sharing the stories of WWI veterans after years of research.

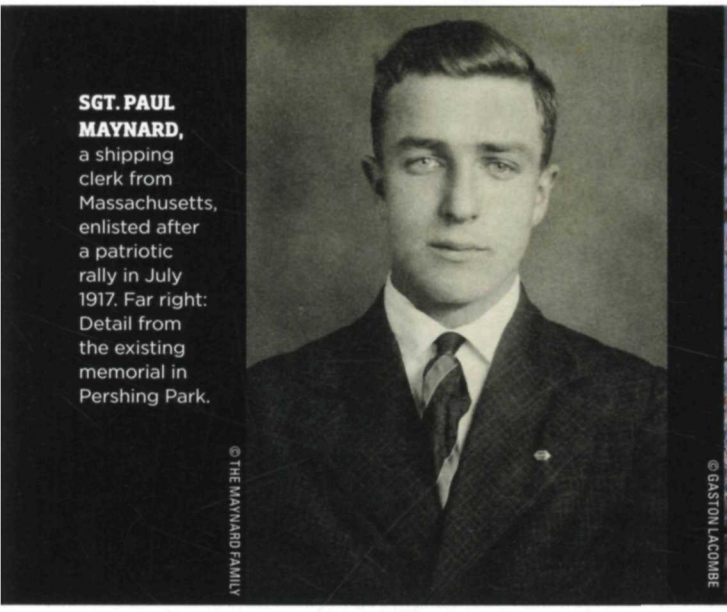
Take, for example, the story of Sgt. Paul Maynard, a shipping clerk from tiny Leverett, Mass. After a patriotic rally in July 1917, Maynard jumped on stage to enlist, according to family and historical records that his great-niece, Lisa Ann Maynard of Washington, D.C., has studied.

After a few months of training, Maynard and other soldiers from New England were shipped to France. He detailed his struggles there in a series of letters home.

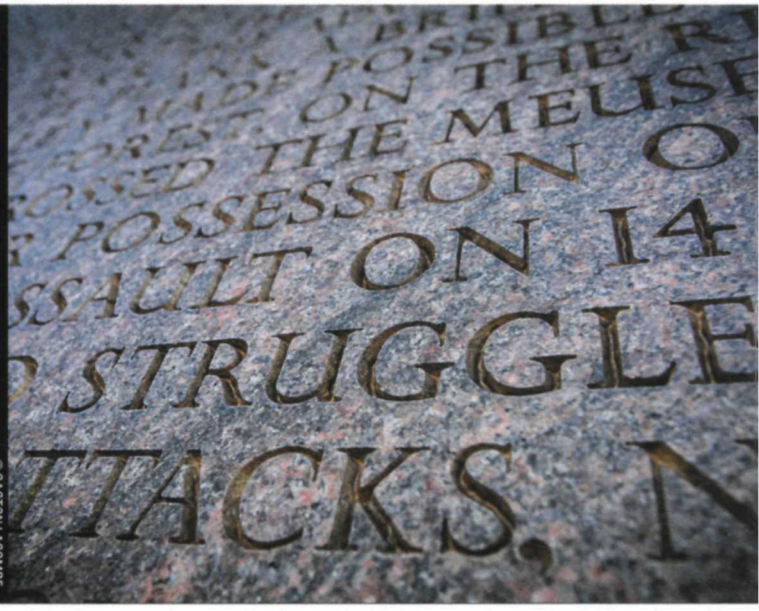
In March of 1918, Maynard was temporarily blinded by a gas attack. He was still recuperating at a Paris YMCA camp when he turned 21 a couple of weeks later. "Well, my birthday went by very quietly," he wrote to his family. "I wonder where my next one will be. I hope the war is over by then. If it is, I intend to be home."

But Maynard would not live to see his 22nd birthday.

Hours before the November 11 armistice, Maynard—who had



© THE MAYNARD FAMILY



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SGT. PAUL MAYNARD, a shipping clerk from Massachusetts, enlisted after a patriotic rally in July 1917. Far right: Detail from the existing memorial in Pershing Park.

"There's no particular American mythology built up around the war," he said, which he attributes, in part, to the humility of the era. Yet the actions of American WWI soldiers were no less heroic than those of veterans of subsequent wars.

recently been promoted to sergeant—and his men were following orders to push forward near Ville-de-Chaumont in northeastern France, part of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. As the squad came under heavy fire, Maynard ordered his men back to the trench, then jumped into a bomb crater to cover for them, his great-niece said. Soon after, word of the ceasefire spread and Maynard's men hurried out to look for him. His body lay in the crater where he had made a desperate attempt to protect his men.

His great-niece, a 54-year-old paralegal with the Department of Justice, believes that Maynard—and the other 4.3 million Americans who fought in the war—deserve a national memorial. "All the people who fought in it, they need to be remembered," she said. "WWI has just been lost to history."

NPCA@WORK

The National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C., was established last December with the passage of the Defense Authorization Act. A remarkable public-lands provision in the bill, which represents a major victory for NPCA and its partners, creates or expands 16 parks and authorizes eight studies that could lead to additional park sites. It is the largest expansion of the National Park System since 1978. —RM

JULIE SCHARPER is a freelance writer and journalism professor in Baltimore, Maryland.

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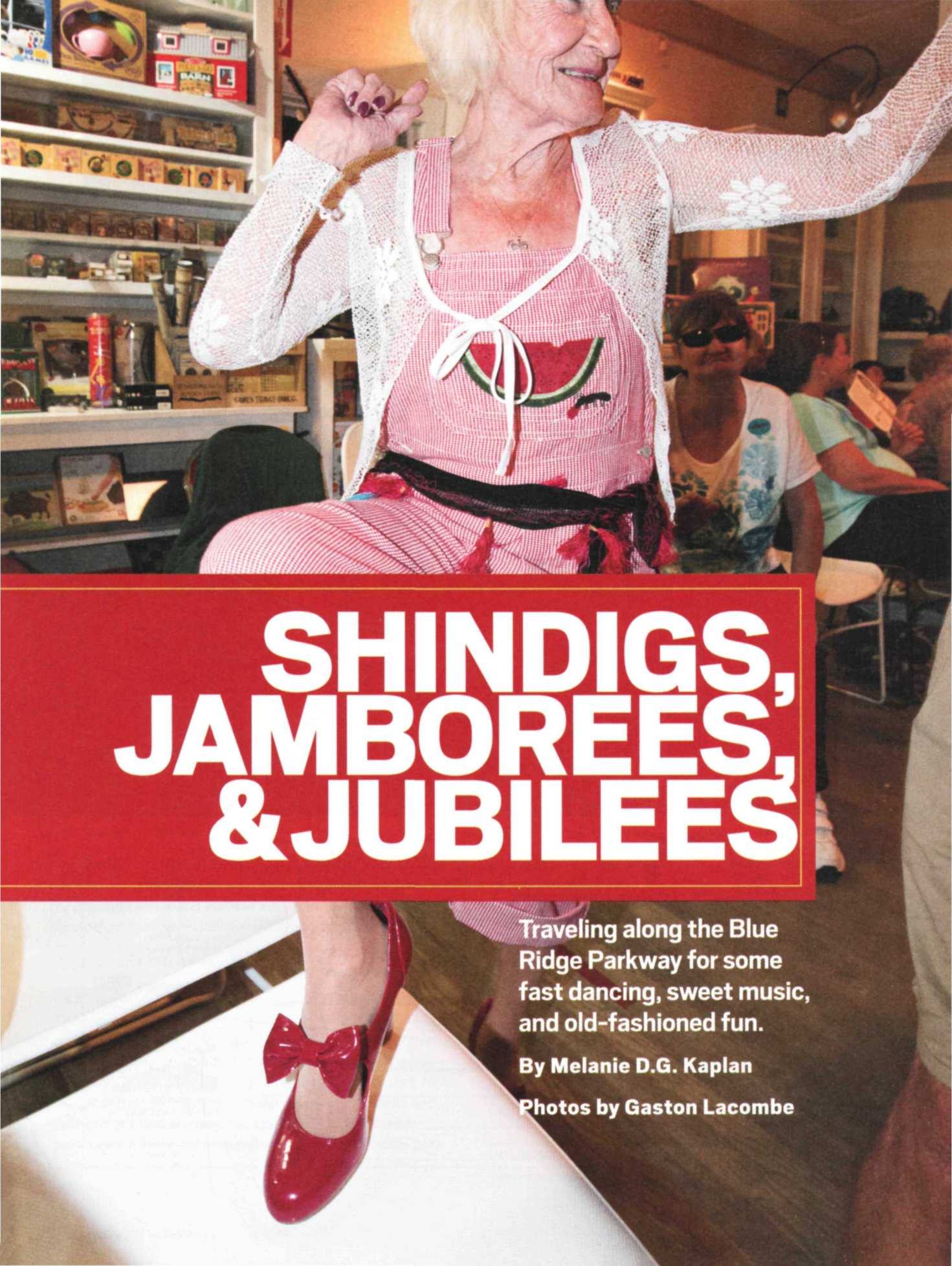


SHINDIGS, JAMBOREES, & JUBILEES

Traveling along the Blue Ridge Parkway for some fast dancing, sweet music, and old-fashioned fun.

By Melanie D.G. Kaplan

Photos by Gaston Lacombe

On Friday nights in southwest Virginia, as the gospel hour draws to a close at the Floyd Country Store, you may hear a stir in the audience. Walk past the racks of Carhartt overalls and bins of candy, and you'll find people quietly replacing their sneakers with leather-soled shoes. One man crouches in the corner with a bar of paraffin, waxing the bottoms of his loafers. A parade of locals stream in the front door, some just off their Harleys, others just off their farms. Previously restrained children grow fidgety. Grown-ups rise out of chairs in anticipation.

This is the Friday Night Jamboree. It's time to dance.

KAY GORDON shows off her outfit and dancing shoes at the Floyd Country Store's Friday Night Jamboree in Floyd, Virginia.

NORM AND GINNY SPURLEY are regulars on the dance floor at the Orchard at Altapass near Spruce Pine, North Carolina.

THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY, a 469-mile, two-lane highway that winds through Virginia and North Carolina, links Shenandoah National Park in the north to Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the south.

Years ago, I'd fallen hard for the old-time music of this region. The sweet tunes that seem to seep out of the mountains and foothills have drawn me back to the Appalachians time and again. With music comes dancing—but that had always been an afterthought on my previous visits here. Last summer, I decided to embark on a different journey. I had been a dedicated ballerina through my childhood and adolescence, and for a couple years, I'd also performed with an Irish dance troupe. I wanted to return to my roots, and I suspected the rhythm and footwork of Irish dance had prepared me well for the step dancing of Appalachia. Armed with a list of dance venues along the Blue Ridge Parkway and a longing to revive my inner dancer, I hit the road.

In Floyd, my first of numerous stops on a ten-day road trip, the dress code was "come as you're comfortable": Folks danced in footwear from socks to Crocs to snakeskin boots. They showed up in capri pants or Wrangler jeans and sometimes, they donned cowboy hats. A few measures into each song, the floor was packed with people showing off a range of dancing styles. I'd fretted about learning the steps and finding a partner, but I needn't have worried about either.

"Hit your foot to the floor with each beat," one man coached. "Just don't jump up and down, or you'll look like Buddy Ebsen"— of "Beverly Hillbillies" fame. "That's what some people think we dance like," he said, scrunching his shoulders and poking out his elbows.

"Southern step dancing" is a broad term for one of the ways people in this region connect to music. The style, in which the feet stay close to the floor with a consistent downbeat, has several names including flatfooting and buckdancing, and it's typically done without a partner. This mountain dance grew from the Appalachian tradition of playing music on back porches: Some sat and listened, while invariably, others would stand up and tap out a rhythm with their feet. The custom hasn't changed much since.

"These step dances have roots in the dance traditions of Europe, Africa, and Native America," said Phil Jamison, a renowned flatfoot dancer and old-time musician who recently wrote *Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics: Roots and Branches of Southern Appalachian Dance*. "They evolved over time as generations of dancers shared steps and styles across racial and ethnic lines, and they were once part of the common rural Southern culture." Jamison told me clogging—which is similar to flatfooting but performed by a group on stage—began in North Carolina and came into its own as a dance form in the 1940s and '50s, an era when local schools displayed dancing and basketball trophies side by side.

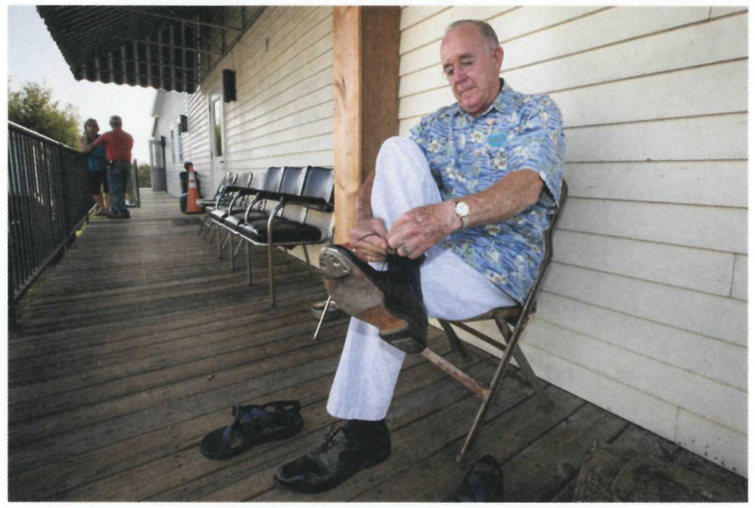
Arthur Grimes, a well-known flatfooter in Boone, North Carolina, says his traditional dancing draws on the dances of his ancestors, who were once slaves in the region. He calls himself a percussionist—sometimes he plays the spoons, sometimes he makes music with the taps on his feet. Grimes has performed with Old Crow Medicine Show and the Carolina Chocolate Drops and is known for putting a microphone down by his taps. "You feed off the banjo and fiddle," he told me. "Just make sure you keep up with the music. If you're off-beat, you'll mess up the band."

Some traditionalists frown at wearing taps in small venues because they drown out the sound of other steps. That was true in Floyd, where the clickety-clack of metal on the boards was loud and unrelenting. But taps or no, the energy on the floor was powerful, and even if I wasn't quite in step, I felt a deep connection with the music and dancers around me. When the tune changed and it was time for a two-step or waltz, I'd take the hand of a stranger. The town's mustachioed deputy sheriff told me during one dance that he'd learned the steps only recently.

"I DECIDED I DIDN'T WANT TO DIE NOT KNOWIN' HOW TO DANCE."

"I decided I didn't want to die not knowin' how to dance," he said. We collided with other couples like bumper cars on the crowded floor.

Many dances later, I left the warm fold of the jamboree and walked outside, where musicians gathered in clusters up and down the street for impromptu, old-time music jams. A teenage girl in cutoffs kicked



TOM GILLIE puts on his tap shoes at the Floyd Country Store's Friday Night Jamboree. Above: When the Floyd Country Store gets too full, the crowd spills out onto the street to dance and socialize.

THE WRITER'S BEAGLE, Hamilton, catches some wind at an overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia. Right: On the streets of Floyd, Virginia, musicians frequently gather for old-time music jams.

"MY DAD WOULD COME HOME FROM THE FARM IN TALL RUBBER BOOTS AND TEACH ME HOW TO DANCE IN THE KITCHEN."

off her flip-flops and flatfooted barefoot on the sidewalk. Spectators moseyed past pockets of music, holding fold-up chairs or instruments. Legs weary, I strolled the short distance to Hotel Floyd, where I was staying. As I walked my beagle, Hamilton, the sound of banjos and fiddles filled the dark night. I was tempted to return to the jamboree, but instead, I turned back to the hotel and gave in to sleep.

The Blue Ridge Parkway, which celebrated its 80th birthday in 2015, is a two-lane highway that winds through Virginia and North Carolina for 469 miles. It links Shenandoah National Park in the north to Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the south.

After escaping the interstate, it takes but a moment to adjust to the change in landscape—rather than billboards and 18-wheelers in your periphery, you find scenic overlooks, a tiny cemetery, and wildlife. When I hit the road Saturday morning, the Parkway was quiet, a ribbon of asphalt bisecting the green countryside. Leaning into one curve after another, I found shady forests leading to open meadows and watched the sun rise over yellow wildflowers. On a short hike to stretch our legs, Hamilton and I came upon a snow pea-sized newt that was such a brilliant orange I thought it was plastic.

That night, after crossing the North Carolina bor-

NINA CARICO,
86, flatfoots with relatives at the Alleghany Jubilee in Sparta, North Carolina.

der, I went to the Alleghany Jubilee, a twice-weekly dance in the three-traffic light town of Sparta. The dance was held in an old movie theater with green walls, twinkly lights, and American flags. Sitting next to other spectators along the wall, I marveled as couples who looked like they'd been dancing together for decades moved easily around the dance floor. One man wore an Army Veteran hat and struggled to walk, but he looked so pleased shuffling around the floor that I could barely take my eyes from him.

A middle-aged woman approached and introduced herself as Doris. "I saw you in Floyd last night," she exclaimed. She drew me up to accompany her, and we joined a procession of two-steppers moving around the perimeter of the floor.

"I tell everyone this is my therapy—dancing makes you feel good," Doris told me outside, after I'd bought a bottle of water and a Klondike bar to cool down. (It's also a vigorous workout; I heard more than once, "clogging beats jogging.") "My dad would come home from the farm in tall rubber boots and teach me how to dance in the kitchen." She said she follows bands rather than staying loyal to venues, a refrain I heard from others. If a band isn't known for its dance music, the floor might very well be empty.

Later, a caller led a figure-eight square dance, and I followed along, laughing through my missteps, perpetually searching for my partner. We followed that with a Virginia reel, which I remember learning in grade school. Every time I tried to rest on the edge of the dance floor, Doris and my new acquaintances gestured me back. I found long-forgotten steps emerging from my memory, and every now and then, my feet would keep up with my brain. It was during the lively song, "How Many Biscuits Can You Eat," that I thought, "Doggone. I'm flatfooting."

Packed into my car with Hamilton were thousands of old Kodachrome slides. My plan, between weekends of dancing, was to return them to my mother, who was vacationing in western North Carolina. During the week, we looked through the slides on a backlit viewer and found countless shots of me before dance recitals, posing in tap and ballet shoes and always wearing too much of my mom's lipstick. A few slides showed my Irish dance troupe performing at the Kennedy Center when I was 12. I wore a costume my mother had helped sew—a handmade, knee-length skirt and white, puffy-sleeved blouse.

We also discovered shots from a cross-country drive we took with our dachshund when I was 3 months old. It was like finding a puzzle piece to my life that I didn't know was missing: the first of my many long-distance road trips with hounds.

The following weekend, I headed back toward the Parkway and found myself in Fletcher, North Carolina, on a busy strip near Dickey's Barbecue Pit and LuLu's Consignment Boutique. There, a former Feed & Seed shop in a century-old building serves as a weekend dance venue and doubles as a church. I slipped into a pew, mindlessly flipping through a threadbare

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

Although the Blue Ridge Parkway is open year-round, many facilities don't open until May. Plan your trip for summer, and you'll find dance opportunities nearly every night of the week. The Parkway covers about 218 miles between Floyd, Virginia, and Asheville, North Carolina. Dances are family-friendly, most admission is less than $10 if not free, and venues often sell refreshments priced from a bygone era. Spectators and dancers alike are welcome. Blue Ridge Music Trails and The Crooked Road, tourism initiatives that offer interactive maps and suggested itineraries, are invaluable resources for trip-planning around weekly dances and annual festivals. If you're coming from the north, kick off your journey at the weekly Friday Night Jamboree at the Floyd Country Store. At Parkway milepost 213, the Blue Ridge Music Center offers summer Mid-Day Mountain Music and weekend concerts. Alleghany Jubilee in Sparta, North Carolina hosts dances all year on Tuesday and Saturday nights, and the Orchard at Altapass, on the Parkway north of Asheville, offers free summer music and dancing Wednesday through Sunday afternoons. Feed & Seed in Fletcher, North Carolina has Friday and Saturday dances year-round. This summer, Asheville hosts its 50th annual Shindig on the Green, a free outdoor event every Saturday with traditional music and dancing on stage and jam sessions throughout the park. The closest airports are Roanoke Regional Airport, 53 miles from Floyd, and Asheville Regional Airport.

SIDETRIPS

Give your dancing feet a break with a cycle along 57-mile New River Trail outside Galax, Virginia. The trail follows an abandoned railroad and parallels the New River for 39 miles. Bike rentals are available at Foster Falls. After the last dance, treat your feet at Wake Foot Sanctuary, an Asheville spa where you can luxuriously soak your toes in baths of avocado oil, wintergreen, or locally brewed BRÖÖ beer.

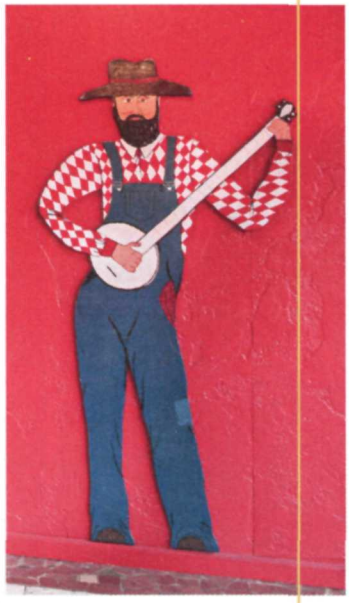
A MUSICIAN plays the autoharp at an impromptu jam session.

bible while waiting for a friend to arrive.

"We don't dance to gospel music, but you can sure sing along," the host said, introducing the band and explaining that we'd hear gospel songs now and then throughout the evening. When they played "I'll Fly Away," the audience stood and clapped, as fans whirred overhead. I looked around to find every horizontal surface covered with relics—an old guitar, a bas-relief *Last Supper,* and an ancient typewriter.

As soon as the bluegrass began, a man in a bowler hat and plaid shirt, skinny as a green bean, stepped out of his pew, into the aisle, and started tapping. Within minutes, the dance floor was packed with little girls in Mary Janes, focused flatfooters, and a group of teens visiting town for a service project. The best dancers were nimble and light on the boards. The amateurs often looked like they were trying—with each step—to ram a nail into the floor.

My friend and I two-stepped around the small floor to Bill Monroe's "Sitting Alone in the Moonlight." Walking out into the dark night, he spun me once more on the sidewalk, past a pickup truck filled with baskets of peaches.



The next morning, I drove to meet Green Grass Cloggers dancer Suzannah Park, who lives at the end of a gravel road in Asheville and comes from a family of musicians and dancers. The more I talked to people about dancing, I told her, the less clarity I had about dance names.

"When I ask about flatfooting or buckdancing or clogging, I get a different answer from everyone," I said.

"That's exactly right," she said, laughing. "Your research is over!"

Turns out the lexicon has a lot to do with the origins of the person who taught you to dance. After a bit, we shelved that discussion, and Park pulled out a small plywood platform called a step-a-tune. She put on her black tap shoes and demonstrated flatfooting's walking step.

"Most importantly, bend your knees," she said, shifting her weight between feet. She started with her right foot and then dragged it back, as though she were getting gum off the sole. Slowly, she added steps, and I followed her on the wood board: step right, heel left, pull right, toe left. At the end of my lesson, she sent me off with local goat cheese and fresh bread from her baker husband.

That afternoon, I traveled along the Parkway to reach the Orchard at Altapass, a historic music and dancing venue that's perched atop the Eastern Continental Divide in Spruce Pine, North Carolina. Inside the large tin-roofed barn, people danced to a country band, and girls in floral dresses who had just finished a clogging performance stood in line for ice cream. I wandered around the shop, circling back to the fresh apple pie and homemade fudge.

Back in Asheville that evening, I headed out for my last dance. Shindig on the Green, which celebrates its 50th year in 2016, is held at Pack Square Park and is one of the region's best-known events. Over the course of a couple of hours, two dozen acts performed on stage, from young dancers in red crinoline skirts to seasoned cloggers. My favorite was the "sit-down square dancing," led by esteemed caller Glenn Bannerman.

"You're not goin' anywhere," he announced to the audience of thousands, sitting in camping chairs, strollers, and wheelchairs. He called for us to join hands, lean to the right, and lean to the left.

"Everyone in the middle!" The crowd leaned forward. "Come on back!" We leaned back. "Men circle left. Ladies circle left. Now bow to your partner!" On either side of me, people grinned.

As the sun set over the park, young musicians crooned from the stage, their wistful voices floating out into the night. I walked around the park and found a jam on the steps of the Buncombe County Courthouse. A few paces away, under a tree, Phil Jamison played the banjo with a few other musicians He stopped for a moment to share a copy of his new book with me before he picked up his banjo again.

Presently, a lanky man plopped a step-a-tune down on the grass behind the musicians. He stepped onto the board and began dancing perfectly in tempo with the music, moving his feet so quickly they seemed barely to touch the wood.

I couldn't help but tap my feet and rehearse Park's instruction in my mind: step right, heel left, pull right, toe left. I wanted to dance but knew my feet couldn't keep up. Instead, I kept my eye on this man, his limbs swinging loose like a marionette's. After one song, he picked up his board, tucked it under his long arm, and ambled out of the park.

ADDITIONAL DANCE VENUES

For visitors who just can't get enough flatfooting and square dancing, here are a few more spots along the Parkway:

Mabry Mill, Meadows of Dan, Virginia

Blue Ridge Backroads Live, Rex Theater, Galax, Virginia

Monday Night Street Dances, Hendersonville, North Carolina

Friday Night Street Dances, Waynesville, North Carolina

Contra Dances at the Grey Eagle, Asheville, North Carolina

Old Farmer's Ball at Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, North Carolina

Mountain Dance and Folk Festival, Asheville, North Carolina

MELANIE D.G. KAPLAN is a Washington-based writer who tries to incorporate a dance or two into all of her travel adventures. **GASTON LACOMBE,** a photographer and filmmaker based in Washington, D.C., specializes in conservation and documentary projects.


HARPER'S WEEKLY.

ROBERT SMALLS, CAPTAIN OF THE GUN-BOAT "PLANTER."

THE GUN-BOAT "PLANTER," RUN OUT OF CHARLESTON, S. C., BY ROBERT SMALLS, MAY, 1862.

STEAMER "PLANTER" AND HER CAPTOR.

The following are the names of the black men who performed this gallant and perilous service: Robert Smalls, pilot; John Smalls and Alfred Gradine, engineers; Abraham Jackson, Gabriel Turno, William Morrison, Samuel Chisholm, Abraham Allston, and David Jones. They

by Captain Relay, of the Confederate navy—all the other employés of the vessel, excepting the first and second mates, being persons of color.

Robert Smalls, with whom I had a brief interview at General Benham's head-quarters this morning, is an intelligent negro, born in Charleston, and employed for many years as a pilot in and about that harbor. He entered upon his duties on board the *Planter* some six weeks

on the following morning for Fort Ripley, and to be sent from the city for some days. The families of the contrabands were notified and came stealthily on board. At about three o'clock the fires were lit under the boilers, and the vessel steamed quietly away down the harbor. The tide was against her, and Fort Sumter was not reached till broad daylight. However, the boat passed directly under its walls, giving the usual signal—two long p and a jerk at the whistle-cord—as she passed the

Once out of range of the rebel guns the whit raised, and the *Planter* steamed directly for th ing steamer *Augusta*. Captain Parrott, of the sel, as you may imagine, received them cordially

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE 1862 ARTICLE from *Harper's Weekly* about Robert Smalls' daring escape.

A COMPLICATED PAST

Is the U.S. Ready for a National Park Site Devoted to Reconstruction?

BY KATE SIBER

On the evening of May 12, 1862, the Confederate ship *Planter* sailed into Charleston's harbor, and the captain and officers, breaching protocol, disembarked for a night of socializing. It was the rare moment Robert Smalls, a fiercely intelligent 22-year-old slave, had hoped for. In the dark hours before dawn, with the help of the African-American crew, he fired up the ships' boilers, hoisted the state and Confederate flags, and donned the captain's straw hat as a disguise. In a move punishable by certain death, the crew boldly sailed to a nearby wharf to pick up Smalls' wife, children, and several others, made the key signals to exit the harbor safely, swapped the flags for a white sheet, and, as dawn broke, sailed straight into the nearby Union blockade. In a matter of hours, Smalls had succeeded in surrendering a huge trove of Confederate supplies to Northern forces and had delivered himself, his family, and others from slavery to freedom.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

AFTER ESCAPING SLAVERY, Robert Smalls went on to become the captain of the *Planter*, a South Carolina state assembly member and senator, and a U. S. congressman.

Lauded as a hero across the North, Smalls eventually became the captain of the *Planter* and one of the highest paid black soldiers in Union forces. Sitting next to Frederick Douglass, he successfully lobbied President Abraham Lincoln to enlist black soldiers, whose ranks swelled to 200,000, numbers that undoubtedly played a role in the outcome of the war. Later, with the reward money from his audacious feat aboard the *Planter*, Smalls bought his former master's home in Beaufort, South Carolina. He went on to serve in the South Carolina state assembly and senate and as a congressman in the U.S. House of Representatives. And in 1868, at the state constitution convention, Smalls successfully advocated for universal education of all South Carolinians, regardless of race, a provision that citizens still benefit from today.

Smalls may not be a household name, but he was a key figure in one of the most formative and poorly understood eras in American history, the short period after the Civil War known as Reconstruction. During this approximately 12-year stretch, which began in 1865, a war-torn country wrestled with questions about reconciliation, the role of federal power, the benefits of citizenship, and establishing a new economic and social system with four million newly freed slaves.

Even though scores of National Park Service sites memorialize the Civil War, there isn't a single one dedicated to Reconstruction. In part, this is because there has never been a big enough grassroots campaign to drum up the political support needed to establish such a site. (Park Service sites are designated by presidential proclamation or an act of Congress.) But the reasons also run deeper. Even now, some Americans view that time period as a dark moment when power dynamics shifted and white Southerners suffered. It's a period that brings up hidden (and sometimes blatant) resentments, prejudices, and misconceptions that still simmer beneath the surface of our civic life today. And for many, it's a sensitive topic that's difficult to talk about.

Smalls may not be a household name, but he was a key figure in one of the most formative and poorly understood eras in American history.

The Park Service wants to change that. The agency is trying to bring the topic into the light and, it hopes, lay the groundwork to establish the first park site commemorating Reconstruction. The initial step is an ambitious year-long study of the period—expanded to include the years 1861 through 1898—that will wrap up this spring.

One of the study's leaders, Michael Allen, a community partnership specialist for Fort Sumter

National Monument and Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, is spearheading the creation of a database of Reconstruction sites, stories, and important figures by reaching out to local organizations and churches across the South, state historic preservation offices, and Park Service sites. Meanwhile, historians Kate Masur, a professor at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and Greg Downs, a professor at University of California, Davis, assembled a short book on Reconstruction (set to hit shelves in parks soon) and are visiting Reconstruction-related sites from Mississippi to South Carolina. The study's leaders hope not only to unearth good candidates for new parks and national historic landmarks but to develop educational resources for existing parks and materials for schools.

"We have an opportunity that few other agencies have in that a lot of people trust what we say," said Robert Sutton, chief historian for the Park Service. "We're hoping that we will have an opportunity to educate the public about what Reconstruction was really about."

For decades, some Americans on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line regarded Reconstruction as a disaster, in which the South was hobbled by an overreaching federal government, preyed upon by Northern carpetbaggers and Southern scalawags, and damaged by former slaves, seen by many as ill-equipped to adapt to their newly found freedom and leadership roles. This view was promulgated by an influential school of historians; books such as Thomas Dixon, Jr.'s 1905 novel, *The Clansman: An Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*; and the popular, influential, and overtly racist 1915 film, *Birth of a Nation*.

"You see emerging in the early 20th century a very

"The disaster wasn't Reconstruction. The disaster is that it ended."

AN 1862 PORTRAIT of African-American men and women on a plantation on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Freedmen established the self-governing community of Mitchelville on the island the same year.

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FREED SLAVES in front of a schoolhouse in Beaufort, South Carolina. Fifteen years ago, the Park Service considered establishing a Reconstruction site in Beaufort; several historians involved in restarting that conversation recently toured the town.

broad-based cultural view that really sees Reconstruction as at best a foolish mistake—a vision that's rooted in the idea that African Americans will always be inferior and separated—or at worst, a real violent and terrible overthrow of civilization," said Downs. "This becomes an ideology of a national acceptance of segregation, one that has particularly powerful forms in the South but that also becomes a national order."

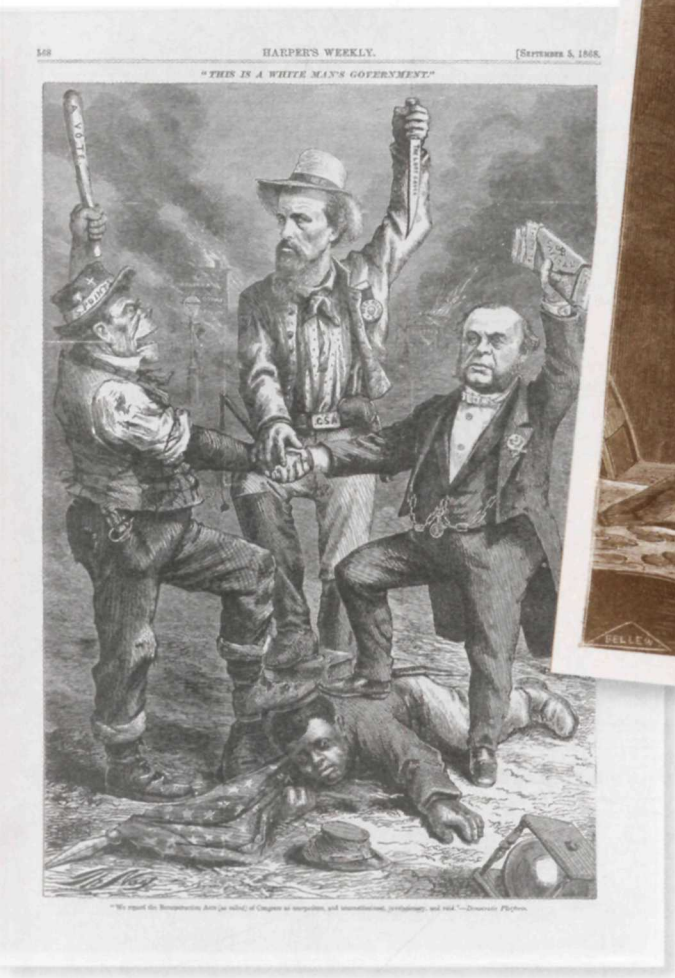
In the mid-20th century, as the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum, a new generation of historians revisited Reconstruction, leafing through old church records, voting records, and town charters in dusty archives across the South. They came to see the dominant view of Reconstruction as wildly untrue and racist at the core. These historians argued that African Americans largely responded innovatively and responsibly to freedom, and that progressive policies established many of the institutions, such as universal education, that we still cherish as hallmarks of American democracy today.

"It was one of the few times in American history where the interpretation turned 180 degrees," said Sutton. "The new interpretation is that it was a very positive thing and the disaster wasn't Reconstruction. The disaster is that it ended."

Groups like the Ku Klux Klan began to terrorize African Americans with unfathomable violence.

Freed people chartered successful new towns, many of which still exist, and experimented with different forms of self-governance. They founded churches and mended families that had been separated when members were sold off to distant owners. Newly installed, progressive Southern governments established hospitals, schools, and other community institutions that benefited not only blacks but all Southerners.

It was also a period of tremendous political change. In a matter of years, the country went from considering an amendment that would have guaranteed slavery to abolishing it altogether. In 1868, the 14th Amendment guaranteed due process and equal protection under the law to all citizens, regardless of race, and in 1870, the 15th Amendment prohibited




VISIT OF THE KU-KLUX.—DRAWN BY FRANK BELLEW.—[SEE PAGE 157.]

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racial discrimination in voting. African Americans exercised their right to vote, and many were elected to positions of authority, becoming local sheriffs, assessors, and U.S. members of Congress. In some states, more African Americans held office during Reconstruction than at any other time in U.S. history.

"It was an incredibly democratic moment in which many, many people in the United States were trying to remake the country on more democratic grounds than ever before," said Masur. "Many of the ideas about democracy that we still hold dear today were forged during Reconstruction, far more than during the original founding of the United States."

The changes brought by Reconstruction revolutionized political and economic systems. They also challenged white Southerners' self-concepts, which, before the war, were largely in the context of a race-based hierarchy. The result was a backlash and, in the absence of slavery, an effort to recreate some kind of hierarchical system based on race, said Downs.

A THOMAS NAST political cartoon from 1868 (left), criticizing the Democratic Party's opposition to Reconstruction legislation. Right: After the end of slavery, African Americans were often the victims of harassment and murder at the hands of the Ku Klux Klan. This illustration by Frank Bellew appeared in *Harper's Weekly* in 1872.

Groups like the Ku Klux Klan began to terrorize African Americans with unfathomable violence, using fear and force to discourage them from exercising their rights. By 1896, the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy* v. *Ferguson* that providing "separate but equal" facilities for the races was constitutional, ushering in the era of Jim Crow segregation.

For decades, scholars have widely accepted the revised view of Reconstruction as a time of opportunity, but the American public has remained relatively unaware of the era. Educators often gloss over the topic because of its complexity, and historians say it may be hard to talk about because it didn't have a happy ending. Many older people learned only the old interpretation, and some people still cling to that version because it supports a worldview in which racism is justified. Mostly, however, people just don't know about it.

"Go out on the street and ask people if they've heard of Reconstruction," said Eric Foner, a Columbia University professor and author of *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*. "First of all, they haven't; ignorance is the number one thing.

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THOMAS KELLY'S 1870 lithograph illustrates rights granted by the 15th amendment, which was passed during Reconstruction. It prohibited racial discrimination in voting.

But when they have, they'll tell you about corrupt carpetbaggers, about corrupt government, and about the North punishing the South—the underlying premise being that giving more rights to blacks is somehow a punishment to whites. The old mythology is still out there."

That's exactly the sort of educational gap the Park Service would like to address. The agency started tossing around the idea for a park dedicated to Reconstruction back in 2000, when then Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt reached out to Foner for suggestions on locales. Babbitt even visited Foner's top pick, Beaufort, South Carolina, a Confederate town that fell early to Union forces and still retains many significant post-war landmarks. Ultimately, the idea fizzled for a host of reasons, including a change in administration, the retirement of key political proponents of the idea, and powerful opposition from the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Foner was disappointed if unsurprised, but he remains cautiously hopeful, despite the fact that the Sons of Confederate Veterans suggested they would again oppose any effort by the Park Service to designate a new Reconstruction site in the region, a position echoed by others.

"It's not going to turn out to be anything but another propaganda effort," said Michael Hill, president of the League of the South, which advocates for state secession and anti-immigration measures. "If the federal government is involved in this and if they're bringing in mainstream historians, this won't be very favorable for the South. Reconstruction will be politicized: North, holy and righteous; South, evil and despicable."

Yet the Park Service's mandate is to celebrate the full history of our country, including time periods that have been overlooked, marginalized, or misunderstood, such as Reconstruction. The 150th anniversary of the beginning of Reconstruction and the approaching anniversaries of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments inspired a revival of the idea

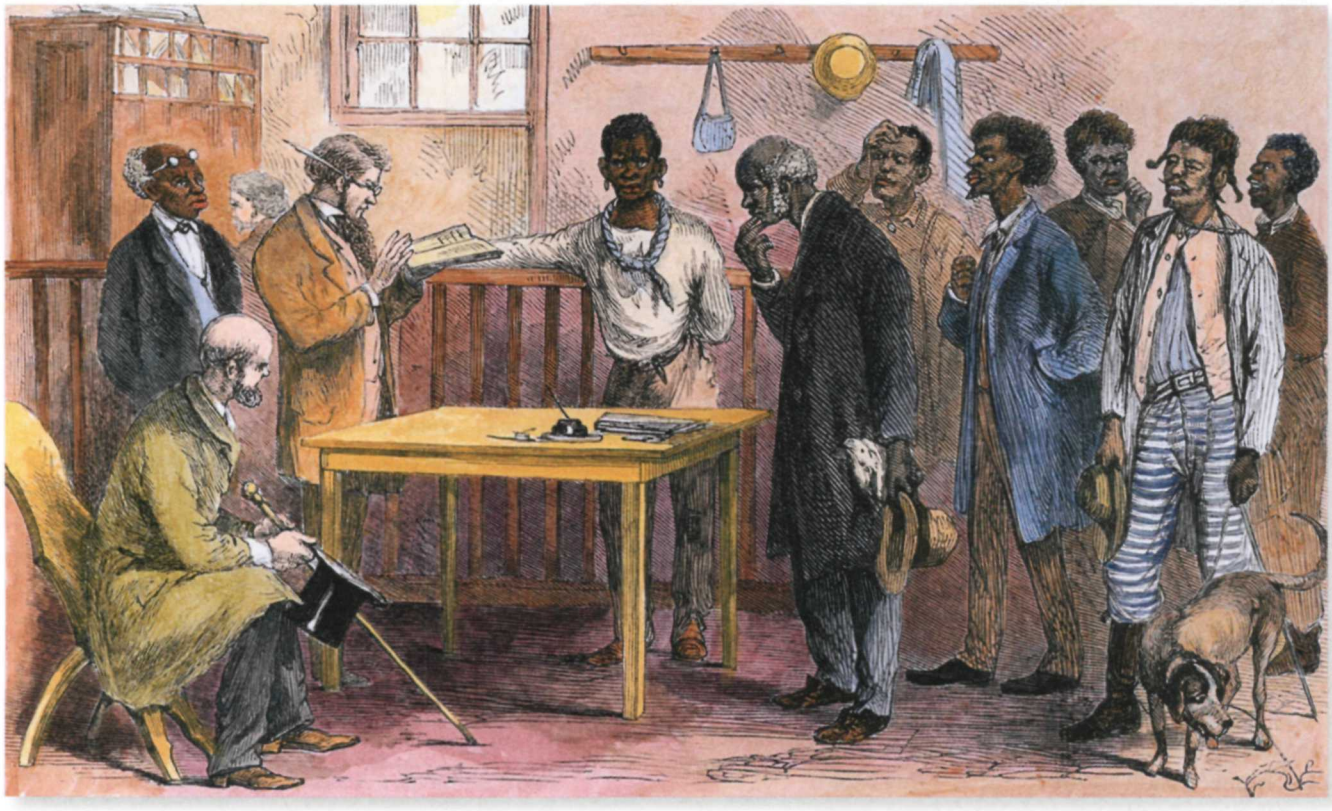
to designate a new site. Recent events, such as the police violence and protests in Ferguson, Missouri, the Charleston church shooting, and the removal of the Confederate flag from the South Carolina statehouse, have also rekindled questions about the nature of our democracy. Do people of different races in fact have the same protection under the law? Are we all effectively equal? These are issues that defined Reconstruction—and make it especially relevant today.

During that time, "we can see the United States wrestling with some of the central questions of citizenship, of belonging, of violence, and of the potential role of African Americans in American life," said Downs. "We do seem to be in a moment now where many of those questions, which have always been there, have once again risen into public view." The study also comes at a time when the Park Service is working to broaden its relevance among minorities by commemorating their contributions to the nation and shedding light on their struggles, among other measures.

"How do we engage new audiences? How do we bring in new history that we otherwise have not been addressing or dealing with? And how do we find ways to leave permanent marks as a part of the continuing journey of our American experience?" asked Michael Allen from Fort Sumter. "For me, that's a driving force, because it encourages me to learn more, to dig deeper, and to really expand my horizon. Sometimes when you point these things out to individuals with other views, they will come back and say, 'Well, you know, I just wasn't taught that. I just didn't know that.'"

Already, the Park Service study has gathered remarkable stories. In Tennessee, for example, Carroll Van West, the state historian and director of the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, has visited churches and communities across the state that date to Reconstruction, interviewing elders, capturing their stories, and attending village homecoming celebrations. He has passed along numerous ideas for the study, including the story of one group that has worked to preserve Promise Land Community, a 1,000-acre settlement founded in 1870 by black Civil War veterans and former industrial slaves who worked the nearby Cumberland Furnace. In Promise Land, many residents owned the land they farmed, and the schoolhouse and church survive some 150 years later.

Do people of different races in fact have the same protection under the law? Are we all effectively equal?



A 19TH-CENTURY engraving showing freedmen at a voter registration office in Macon, Georgia, in 1867.

ROBERT SMALLS' elegant white home still stands in downtown Beaufort, South Carolina.

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On the coast, a preservation group on Hilton Head Island has rallied to protect the remains of Mitchelville, South Carolina, the first self-governing community of freedmen in the nation, founded in 1862. The industrious citizens laid out tidy streets, established laws, elected leaders, and provided education for all children. Even Harriet Tubman reportedly traveled to see the successful freedmen's town.

"It's important for people to understand that this is not just an isolated story," said Joyce Wright, executive director for the Mitchelville Preservation Project. "It's an American story." Wright would welcome a move by the Park Service to designate a new Reconstruction-related site, not only to celebrate stories like Mitchelville's but to spur discussion about important issues. That's the only way, she said, to promote healing. "Are we ready to talk?" she said. "I think, yes, we are. We can't continue to repress and ignore. Talk about it. Talk about it so you can understand."

Not far away, in Beaufort, South Carolina, where historians once considered a Park Service site more than 15 years ago, Robert Smalls' elegant white home still stands downtown. Last May, Masur, Downs, and Allen ambled the streets of the town on a historic reconnaissance tour with prominent locals, visiting landmarks like the Smalls' home and the Grand Army of the Republic Hall, an 1896 structure that served as a gathering place for veterans of the Union cause, mostly African Americans. Most locals support the idea of establishing a Park Service site, partly because they view it as a boon for tourism. The historians were welcomed, and local newspapers celebrated their arrival.

> "We can't continue to repress and ignore. Talk about it. Talk about it so you can understand."

On their tour through the area, one building in particular stood out to Masur on that pleasantly warm afternoon. Over the years, the Arsenal, an imposing pale yellow fortress constructed in 1799 and rebuilt in 1852, housed weapons for the Carolina state militia, the Confederacy, the Union, the black militia during Reconstruction, and the late 19th-century Democrats, who violently reclaimed power from Republicans in the 1870s. Today, it serves as a museum.

"Just standing at that building and thinking about how many different things had happened right there was pretty remarkable," said Masur. Many of the differing views and interests, sides and factions that have defined the major tides of our country's history all walked under this same roof. How many unsung stories, Masur wondered, are hiding here in plain sight?

KATE SIBER is a freelance writer based in Durango, Colorado.

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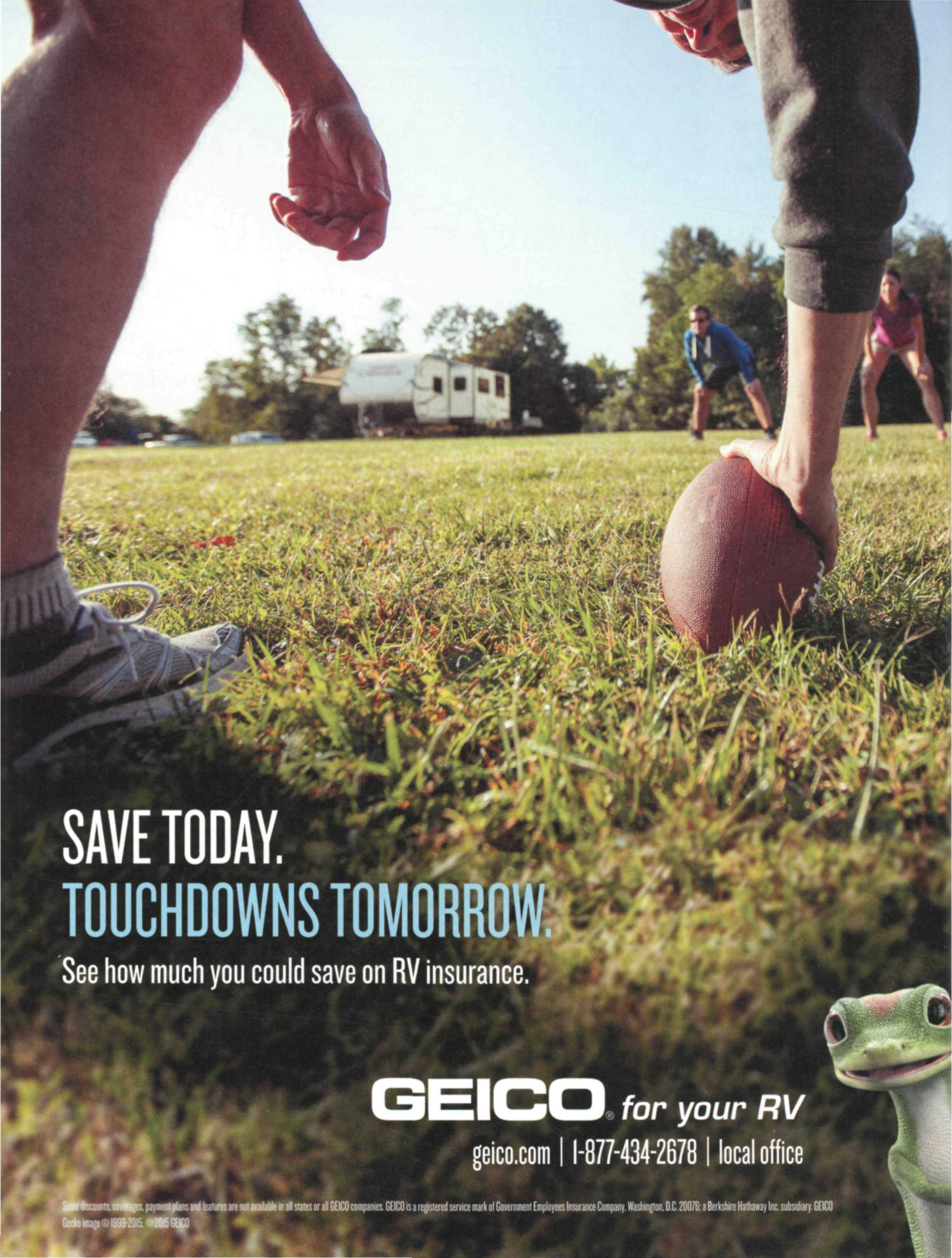
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ST. LOUIS' Gateway Arch under construction in the 1960s.

Standing Tall

At 50, the St. Louis Arch gets a makeover.

A MY DAD, ST. LOUIS BORN AND RAISED, vividly remembers watching the Gateway Arch rise above his city's skyline half a century ago. During its construction in the early 1960s, he would sit in his bedroom window and peer through his father's old Army field glasses, watching cranes lift pieces of the arch into place. Dad moved away after college, but our family goes back to St. Louis often, and I always look forward to catching my first glimpse of the arch as we drive into town.

One sunny afternoon last fall, my Dad and I went back to the arch for the first time since I was a kid. In the small crowd milling around its base, all cameras aimed toward the sky and all eyes traced up sharp edges that tapered together high above our heads. The arch seemed to change shape with every step as we drew closer to it, and the dull sheen of stainless steel stood out clean against the deep blue sky.

The Gateway Arch is the centerpiece of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, a 90-acre park along the Mississippi River in downtown St. Louis. A masterpiece of mid-century modernism designed by architect Eero Saarinen, the soaring monument is recognized as an expression of America's rising confidence and ingenuity following World War II. The park also epitomizes the car-centric urban design ethos of its era: It's bordered by a six-lane freeway and had its own parking garage onsite. But soon after the arch was finished, the promise of the automobile age gave way to a disappointing reality: St. Louis' iconic monument was isolated from the rest of downtown. Now, 50 years later, the park is undergoing a $380 million renovation to make the arch a more welcoming destination.

St. Louis's riverfront was once the beating heart of one of America's largest cities, where barges moved people and goods between the crowded East and the beckoning West. But by the early 20th century, as barge traffic gave way to the railroads, the river's vitality waned. In the 1930s, boosters hatched a plan they hoped would reinvigorate the riverfront and help bail the city out of the Great Depression. Led by lawyer Luther Ely Smith, St. Louis raised millions of dollars to build a riverfront monument dedicated to the city's role as "Gateway to the West." In 1935, the federal government acquired 40 square blocks along the river, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt designated the area a National Historic Site. Then, despite protest from some residents and preservationists, nearly every warehouse, apartment building, and home was razed to the ground.

This "grand scheme" approach to urban renewal wouldn't fly today, said Jefferson National Expansion Memorial

Superintendent Tom Bradley as we strolled under the arch, "but during the Depression, it was seen as a shot in the arm." Nearby, an excavator turned up hunks of broken bricks and smashed tiles, the remnants of the buildings that once stood here.

After World War II, a competition to select the memorial's design netted 172 entries. The jury's selection of Saarinen's self-supporting arch generated great excitement, but its $13 million price tag and battles over the railroad tracks on the site stymied the project. Meanwhile, the freeway opened, a sign of American progress that Saarinen heartily embraced. "In the '50s and '60s, for urban planners, highways were the wave of the future," said Ryan McClure of CityArchRiver, a nonprofit that's coordinating the renovation. "It was a totally different mindset."

Construction on the arch began at last in 1963. For the next two years, cranes and "creeper derricks," which crawled up the legs, hoisted 142 preassembled sections into place. The operation demanded extraordinary precision—if the builders had erred by more than a few centimeters, the arch's legs would not have met.

On October 28, 1965, a whole city held its breath as crane operators lowered the final section into place. My dad, then 13, recalls his lessons coming to a stop. His teacher wheeled a TV into the room, and the class watched a live broadcast of the proceedings. With the keystone wedged in place, the arch stood fast, topping out at 630 feet, the tallest freestanding arch in the world.

On October 28, 1965, a whole city held its breath as crane operators lowered the final section into place.

Like all the St. Louisans I know, my dad is proud of the arch—its audacious size and graceful strength make it a universally recognized symbol of his hometown. But almost immediately, the park's isolation from downtown became a problem. "For 50 years, people have been talking about how we can connect the arch to the city," said Ryan McClure. Plans for restaurants, shopping, a theme park, and an aboveground museum came and went until 2009. That's when the National Parks Conservation Association helped initiate another design competition, this time focused on the arch's future. "The challenge we faced was to make the arch better, while staying true to that original vision," said NPCA Midwest Regional Director Lynn McClure (not related to Ryan McClure).

One solution has come in the form of a new "cap" of parkland covering the freeway, which will create an uninterrupted greenway from downtown to the arch. When construction wraps up in 2017, the arch will be "physically connected to its city for the first time in its history," said Ryan McClure. Five miles of new pathways will welcome wheelchair users and bicyclists, and an airy museum will replace the windowless, bunker-like entrance visitors pass through today. The parking garage is gone, too, and in its place visitors will soon find seven acres of lawns, a garden, and an amphitheater, all just steps away from a commuter rail stop.

"This has been called the worst entrance to any national park in America," said Ryan McClure, shouting over midday traffic and the parade of rumbling dump trucks. "But not for long." **NP**

JULIA BUSIEK, a California-based writer, has a healthy fear of heights but bravely rode the tram to the top of the arch anyway.

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MEET THE BUILDERS

Every October 28, the Park Service welcomes back the iron workers, electricians, sheet-metal workers, draftsmen, engineers, and crane operators who worked on the arch. The builders share stories and photos from their time on the project and sign autographs for the public.

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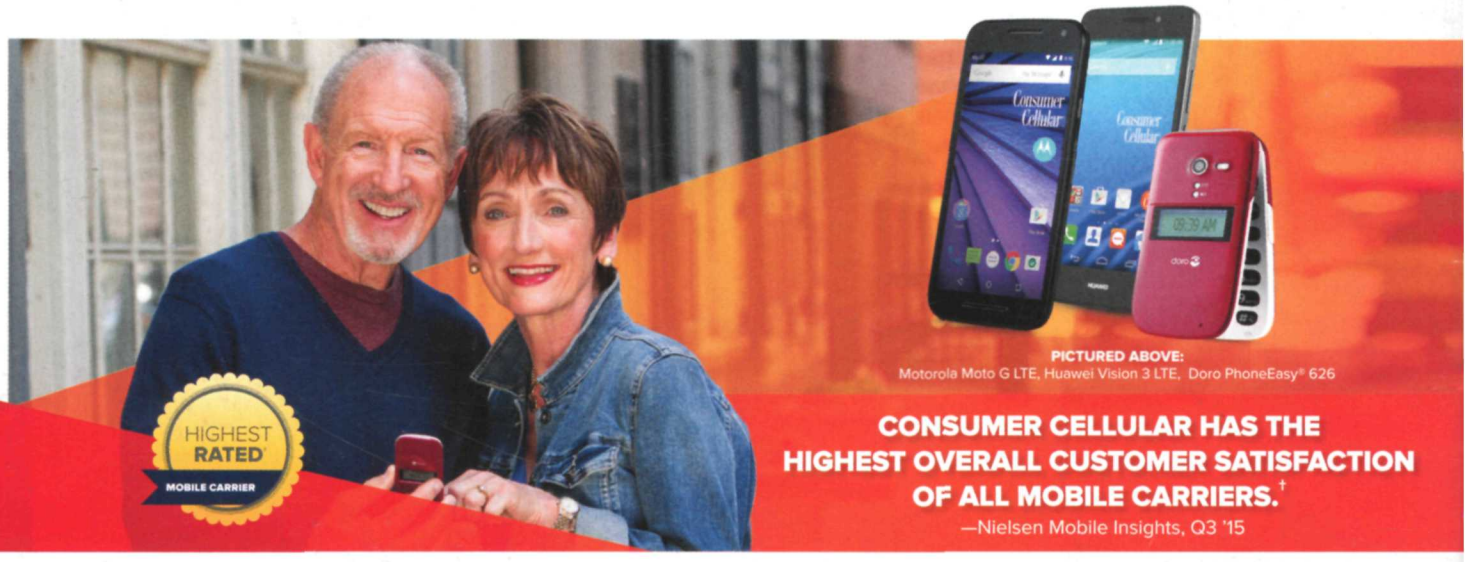

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