



# VIP2VIP



Season 14, Volume 6

Big Bend National Park's Volunteer Newsletter

April 1, 2015

## Current Volunteers

### Castolon

- Bonnie Winslow—Camphost (2nd)
- Ken & Vicky Conway—Visitor Center (2nd)
- Paul & Judy Tarr—Visitor Center (2nd)
- Steve & Tina Ehrman—Backcountry (9th)
- Rick & Debbie Trimble—Camphost (3rd)

### Chisos Basin

- Terry Brackeen—Camphost (4th)
- Jim & Mary Lynn Murrell—Camphosts (5th)
- Phil & Peggy Spruell—Visitor Center (3rd)
- Jimmy Duke—Visitor Center (1st)

### Panther Junction

- Steve Blythe (3rd) - VaRP River (3rd)
- Daisy Welch (4th) - VaRP River (4th)
- Joan Spalding—ScRM (2nd)

### Persimmon Gap

- Mike Manning—Visitor Center (1st)
- Dave Yorkowitz—Visitor Center (1st)

### Rio Grande Village

- Dave England—Camphost (2nd)
- Susan Treneer—Camphost (1st)
- Kenn & Linda Sutton—Backcountry (8th)
- Joe Larrance—Visitor Center (1st)
- Mike & Jeanette Sage—Visitor Center (1st)

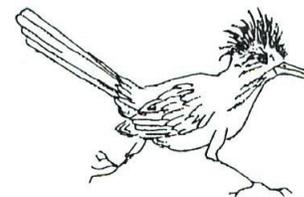
### Resident and remote volunteers

- Reine Wonite— Park Videographer (11th)
- Jim Bishop-BBNHA
- Tom Alex—ScRM (1st)
- Jeff Bantle—ScRM (1st)

\* Number in ( ) indicates years of service

## Volunteering with NPS is in the news

From InsideNPS



Volunteerism with the National Park Service was in the news in March as DOI Secretary Jewell launched the 50 Cities Initiative. As part of the Interior Department's bold youth initiative to engage the next generation of outdoor stewards and inspire millions of young adults to play, learn, serve and work in the great outdoors, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell officially launched a nationwide effort in 50 U.S. cities to increase awareness, support and participation in outdoor programs. The announcement comes on the heels of a \$5 million commitment from American Express to help the Department reach its goal of one million volunteers on public lands annually. The following cities have been identified to participate in the program: New York City; Miami; Atlanta; Boston; Washington, DC; Denver; Los Angeles; Minneapolis; San Francisco; St. Louis; and St. Paul. The initiative will roll out in 25 cities in 2015, with the remaining 25 cities to be identified in 2016.

In partnership with the YMCA of the USA, the funding from American Express will create community coordinator positions in 50 U.S. cities to increase awareness, support and participation in outdoor programs. These newly created positions are expected to engage thousands of volunteers in each city annually. In April 2014, the National League of Cities and the YMCA of the USA joined forces with Interior to get more kids to play, learn, serve and work on public lands. American Express has joined the movement as the lead sponsor for the "serve" component with a goal of more than tripling the current number of volunteers working on public lands annually to one million by 2017. The next step for each city will be a community-wide summit hosted by the local YMCA to bring all interested parties together to discuss strategies, priorities, and partnerships. These efforts will help leverage resources and support the goals of President Obama's "Every Kid in a Park" initiative that was launched in February that will provide all fourth grade students and their families with free admission to national parks and other public lands and waters for a full year (2016). In the lead up to the 100th birthday of the National Park Service in 2016, the President's "Every Kid in a Park" initiative is a call to action to get all children to visit and enjoy America's great outdoors.

Secretary Jewell first outlined the goals of the youth initiative in a speech at the National Press Club in October 2013 where she emphasized the need to bridge the growing disconnect between young people and the great outdoors. For more information on the youth initiative, visit [www.doi.gov/youth](http://www.doi.gov/youth).

## Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

by Dave Yorkowitz

A note about the history.

Under President Eisenhower's administration the administration wanted a missile system that could be powerful and reach its target in a short amount of time. In 1960 the Minuteman Missile program was born. It had solid fuel and could be launched with-



in 30 minutes, and arrive any target on earth within 30 minutes or less. The old Domino's pizza pledge was, "delivery of your pizza within 30 minutes or it is free"; our missiles were delivered in less than 30 minutes and were always free. The missile sites were set up in the fields of the Midwest, 1000 in total. When launched, a minimum of ten missiles would go. The destructive power in the warhead is equivalent to one half of all the bombs dropped in WWII, plus the atomic bombs dropped in Japan. They all pointed at Russia, but could be reprogrammed to go anywhere. One underground control center, manned by six officers, controlled ten missiles. The missile site itself was not manned.

Launch orders were given by the president through Air Force Generals. A B-52 Bomber was always in the air that could also launch the missiles. The launch codes were engraved on glass panels which would shatter if the plane was compromised.

In the Reagan and Bush era 700 missiles were decommissioned, but there are still 300 ready to be launched, with multiple warheads. Prior to this program the US had Titan missiles, which were very large, took hours to launch and moved slowly.

*Dave will be back at Minuteman NHS near Phillips, South Dakota, volunteering again this summer. If you are in the area, be sure to stop and visit this fascinating site. jb*

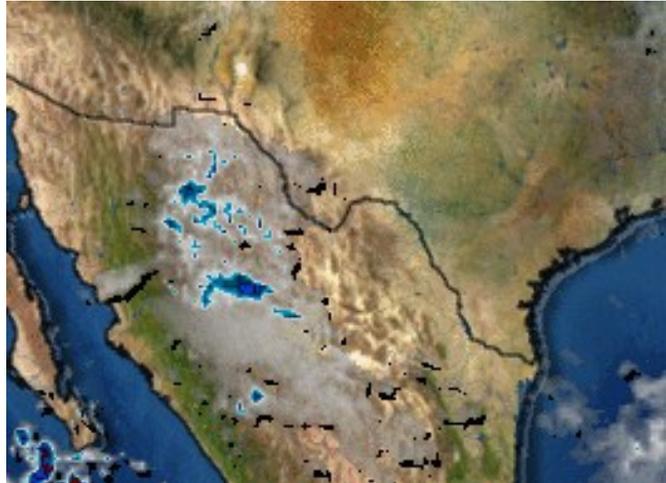


**Launch Door**

# Finding Radar Weather for Big Bend

by Jane Brown

Ever since I came to Big Bend National Park, I have been confounded by the fact that all the satellite weather stations in Midland or El Paso failed to include our park. The radar seemed to end just short of Brewster County. On thing that I have found successful is to enter **Chihuahua, Mexico** as the town that you are searching for. You will find that the radar now includes Big Bend National Park. - Jane Brown



**Big Bend National Park** has been nominated for the Hartzog Park Volunteer Program Award for 2015 from the Intermountain Region. The nomination now has been forwarded on to Washington for consideration for the national award. Keep your fingers crossed!

## **George B. Hartzog Jr. Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service**

The NPS created these awards to honor volunteers' hard work, draw attention to their vast skills and contributions, and to stimulate development of innovative projects and volunteer involvement. The intent of the awards is to distinguish those individuals or groups who give of their skills, talents, and time beyond the normal call of duty. They are not awarded based solely on length of service. The recognition is named for the late George B. Hartzog, Jr. and his wife Helen. There are six categories of service recognized by this award:

- The Hartzog Individual Volunteer Award
- The Hartzog Youth Volunteer Award
- The Hartzog Enduring Service Award
- The Hartzog Volunteer Group Award
- The Hartzog Volunteer Youth Group Award
- The Hartzog Park Volunteer Program Award (This is the one that we entered the nomination for).

## **No Hiking Club in April**

It is getting hot and finding a good hike in this weather is tricky. Therefore we will not be having a group hike in April. I do encourage you to get out for short walks and view the cactus which are busting out all over. On our hike on March 30, we saw a beautiful and very big rattlesnake, who let us know that we were in his space and also a spectacular red racer (3-1/2 feet long). What a treat to see both of them!



## *Where are you going to?*

Many years ago I traveled in Asia for quite a few months and the children loved to practice their English with us. Their favorite two questions were always, "Where are you coming from?" and "Where are you going to?", so I ask the same question.



**Paul and Judy Tarr** are headed home to Falmouth, Massachusetts for a couple of weeks. Then they will take off to Ann Arbor, Michigan to visit with their daughter and son-in-law. From there it is on to Reno, Nevada to give granddaughter Isabella a zillion hugs, followed by a zip up to Alaska (ha, ha). They hope to get back in time to visit with their son in Reno, who hopefully will be back from Afghanistan and of course, more time with Isabella. They are volunteering at Zion National Park for the fall of 2015 until December.

**Joe Larrance** and family will be camphosting at Straits State Park in Michigan's Upper Peninsula from July 13 until after Labor Day. May and June will be spent meandering home to visit friends and family.

**Dave Yorkowitz** is headed to South Dakota for five months at Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, about 50 miles east of Rapid City. He will be staying in Badlands National Park. The Minuteman Missile site welcomes 700 to 1,000 visitors a day!

**Rick and Debbie Trimble** (Cottonwood camphosts) will be volunteering at the Visitor Center at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park (MI) for the months of August and September.

**Riley and Karen Caton** are heading up to the northwest United States briefly, then off to South America for the Galapagos and Machu Piccu in May. Then it is off to New England and the Maritime Provinces for the summer. We will miss them next year here at Big Bend National Park. They are planning an eastern seaboard excursion next winter with a final destination in Florida. *I have to say a quick word about the Catons and their four years here. They have been the first to offer assist many times for events at Panther Junction. I certainly am going to miss their cheerful, helpful presence next year and I am sure that the EMS and Fire staff are already lamenting their departure. However, all good things must come to an end and I hope that they have a great year touring around. We can keep up with them digitally and very likely our paths will cross in the future. - jb*

**Steve Blythe and Daisy Welch** will be "workamping" at Hart Ranch (in South Dakota), a membership RV resort in Rapid City for the summer. They will be treating themselves to an Olympic sized pool, hot tubs, tennis and volleyball courts ( with activities director!) on-site restaurant, WiFi, lots of water, and major shopping only 12 miles away! 13 acres of grass and trees, and the Black Hills at the doorstep, where there are trout to be chased. Steve will be working maintenance, and Daisy will be on the Front Desk, trying to behave like a grown-up.

**Mike and Jeanette Sage** are going home to Hermann, Missouri when they leave Big Bend. They are scheduled to go to Henry's Lake State Park in Idaho in August, September, till the close of the park in October, then will return home again.

**Kenn and Linda Sutton** are going home to complete a couple of projects at home and then are off to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore as campground hosts for their summer gig.

(Continued on page 5)

## ***Where are you going to ....continued....***

**Susan Treneer** is going up to Anasazi Heritage Museum/Canyon of the Ancients National Monument outside of Cortez, Colorado when she leaves Big Bend. She would love to see anybody who will be close to the Four Corners area this summer.

**Dave England** is going to stay at Big Bend for the month of May, of course! He is heading back to the Chisos Basin campground for May and then on to Rocky Mountain National Park, west side, for a second season. (There's a cool lake there and his boat wants to get it's bottom wet.)

**Terry Brackeen** is going to spend time with family and friends in Holliday, Texas and Huntsville, Texas.

**Bonnie Winslow** is heading back to Oklahoma for the summer and fall. She may take some trips to Grand Tetons and Michigan, but her summer is pretty open.

**Phil and Peggy Spruell** are going on an Airstream caravan! They will be in Newfoundland, Canada from July 23rd to September 3rd. Of course, half the fun is getting there and back and seeing what kind of adventures they can find in between!

**Ken and Vicky Conway** are returning to their home in Blue Ridge, Georgia, when they leave Big Bend.

**Jim and Mary Lynn Murrell** head back to Plano, Texas for DOD ( doctors, ophthalmologists and dentists) . Next, they head to Santa Fe, Rocky Mountains, Grand Tetons, and Yellowstone for a Friends of Big Bend National Park Board meeting and training. Then they will continue to Glacier National Park and Whitefish, Montana, to visit friends. From there, it is on to Mt. Rainier, Bend, Oregon and Crater Lake, Oregon. Then they will continue down the California coast to Irvine to visit dedicated California kids, and back home to Plano, hopefully in time to reload and make it back to Big Bend for a Friends of Big Bend Board meeting the last of September. Fall of 2016 will be their 23rd Thanksgiving Camping Gala here in Big Bend. Finally they will head home to Plano for a short visit and again back here to BIBE where they hope to see everyone for the traditional “Spring Break”; February, March and April, 2016.

**Jane Brown** is going to be at Big Bend until June 12th or so. Then she will be spending some time in Colorado (June) and in North Carolina (July). She will be back at her desk for the month of August and leaving again at the end of August. September will hopefully be spent with her daughter travelling around the Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary.

## **Powerpoint Slideshow for the April Awards Dinner**

by Jane Brown

I am putting a powerpoint slideshow together for the Awards Dinner in April and I **need** photos of your best moments at Big Bend. Please email me a few of your favorite photos—I am especially interested in outstanding scenery, photos of your fellow volunteers and events that have taken place in the park. If any of you worked on a special project that deserves attention, send a photo along. Please do not reduce the pixels of the photos too much...I know that it can be difficult to email the larger photos. If photos can be downloaded from another location, let me know! If you have already sent me photos, THANKS!

## Events in the Area

**Wednesday, April 1—April's Fools Day VIP Community Potluck—Panther Junction Community Room at 6:30 pm.** Meet and greet will begin at 6 pm. Bring a covered dish to share, your own plates and silverware (if possible) and your best April Fool jokes. Iced tea will be provided.

**Wednesday, April 8—All Employees Meeting, 9:30 AM, Panther Junction Community Room—**Deputy Secretary of the Interior, Mike Connors, will be attending, as he and his family will be in the park for Spring Break. He will kindly speak to our group and take questions.

**Friday, April 10—Moving Forward Together/Avanzando Juntos Bi-National Event** at the Boquillas Port of Entry. This is a celebration of the 2nd anniversary of the Port of Entry's opening. Sally Jewell, U.S. Secretary of the Interior and Juan Jose Gerry-Abud, Mexico Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources will be the keynote speakers, plus several other special guests.

**Saturday and Sunday, April 11-12 Presa Canyon Hike at Seminole Canyon State Park—**Guided hike into Presa Canyon. This backcountry hike to the far secluded areas of the park where visitors will visit several rock art sites showing a variety of prehistoric and historic rock art styles and camp under the stars before returning the following day. Led by a member of the Texas Rock Art Society. Cost: \$50.00 For reservations call Tanya Petruney at 432-292-4464. Read more about it at <http://tpwd.texas.gov/calendar/presa-canyon-overnight-camping-guided-hike>. *(We did it as a day hike two years ago with the Texas Rock Art Society and it was very cool!)*

**Thursday, April 16—VIP Awards Ceremony** in the Panther Junction Community Room at 6 pm—Come and say Thank You to the volunteers! This event is held twice a year as a way to honor our volunteers here at Big Bend. Food and beverage is provided free of charge and all are invited to attend. The social 1/2 hour begins at 6 pm, with dinner served at 6:30 pm. The volunteers don't need to bring a thing. However, it would be helpful if you wore your nametag. Park employees are asked to bring a dessert.

**Saturday, April 18—3rd Annual Highland Games, 9 am** at Daniels Ranch. The Challenge: Ghost Ride, Oar Toss, Crotch Rock, Tree Climb, Three-legged Pickup, Running Archery, Tug-of-Love, Tug-of-War. Rules: You must wear a kilt, you must register, you must be a park resident. Prizes awarded to men's and women's overall high score winners, category winners, best dressed and best warrior. The volunteers often help with timekeeping at every station, so plan on coming even if you aren't up to actually participating. It is a riot to watch, plus there will be bagpipes! To register: Find Michael Ryan, Daisy Welch Steve Blythe, Claudia Arnberger or Natalie Craig. \$5 for early registration, \$10 for day-of registration. Game registration gets you lunch and more info on the highland games! Casa Grande will sell beverages at the event.

**Thursday, April 23-Retirement Party for Tom Alex** at the Panther Junction Ramada (picnic shelter near the school). Potluck dinner from 6-9. Bring your own table settings. More details about food and drink to come as the date draws nearer. Everyone is invited!