



## August 2010 Newsletter

National Park Hospitality Association

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

This newsletter is also available in PDF format on [www.parkpartners.org](http://www.parkpartners.org)

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### **Register now for Park Partners Forum in Naples: October 17 - 20**

Register now for the 2010 NPHA *Park Partners Forum* to take advantage of lower registration fees! The National Park Hospitality Association will hold its Forum at the DoubleTree Guest Suites Naples – an award-winning Guest Services, Inc. property – on October 17-20, 2010. The *Park Partners Forum* will include general sessions addressing topics key to the future of the concessions industry, vendor displays, educational sessions, meetings with important industry allies and an opportunity to observe partnership opportunities underway in South Florida involving park concessioners. The agenda will include: follow up to discussions at meetings with regional directors; unveiling of the new NPHA “parks app”; a presentation by the National Parks Promotion Council; updates on Director's Order 35B and the SERA process; discussions with NPS leaders on shared goals including “green” operations, planning for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service and on effective response to crises like the oil spill; and much more. The meeting will include a mid-meeting excursion to a nearby National Park unit, and the option of a post-meeting trip to Key West and the Dry Tortugas!

### ***Meeting registrations and payments due by September 15 to avoid a 25% penalty!***

*Park Partners Forum* participants are offered a special nightly rate of \$99 for king rooms/suites plus state and local taxes, currently 10%. The rate is available for early arrivals and stay-overs. Reservations can be made by phone at (800) 222-TREE or (239) 593-8733 (direct line) or online at [www.doubletreenaples.com](http://www.doubletreenaples.com). Please use group code **PSF** when booking to assure the discounted rate.

***Room reservations by September 20 to receive the special NPHA rate!***

For those interested in sampling more of the Florida national parks experience, we have arranged a post-meeting excursion which will include a visit to the Dry Tortugas National Park and time in Key West. Your adventure aboard the *Yankee Freedom II* is being generously offered by NPHA members Carol Hill (Yankee Fleet) and Chris Belland (Historic Tours of America), who will be participating in the NPHA meeting and who operate from Key West. Each NPHA meeting attendee plus one guest will receive complimentary passage to the Dry Tortugas - **approximately a \$320 value!** See link below for Key West trip details.

- [2010 NPHA Park Partners Forum Registration Form](#)
- [2010 Park Partners Forum Overview with relevant travel and lodging information](#)
- [Current Meeting Schedule](#)
- [Details on Post-Meeting Trip to Key West](#)

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### **AGO session on Health and the Great Outdoors: August 31, Chicago**

Plans for an America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative listening session focusing on outdoor recreation and health have been finalized. The session will be on August 31 in Chicago, and capitalizes on the growing awareness that time in parks and outdoors is a very cost-effective solution to control of healthcare costs. Distinguished physicians, outdoor recreation industry execs and top Interior, Agriculture and Health and Human Services Department officials will gather for this special session and explore opportunities to expand pilot "park prescription" efforts, capitalize on the First Lady's Let's Move Outside campaign, and explore ways to have healthcare funds used for operations and maintenance costs of trails and other park and rec site infrastructure. Other ideas that will be raised include the medical community's support of the Little Rock Medical Mile and rewards for healthy lifestyles – from lowered premiums to "frequent walker miles." See a related story: park rangers as healthcare educators.

Groundwork for the Chicago session was laid in Washington during Great Outdoors Month by representatives from Physicians for Healthier Americans Through Fun Outdoors (PHATFOs). The AGO report, which is due to the President in mid-November, will outline a 21st Century Conservation Strategy, including means to reconnect the American people to parks and the Great Outdoors. ARC supports this great goal, and we expect that the report will be reflected in the President's FY 2012 budget and related initiatives early next year.

You are invited to help shape the AGO effort. Information on upcoming listening sessions is at [www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors](http://www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors), and you are encouraged to submit ideas and suggestions. Just register at <http://ideas.usda.gov/ago/ideas.nsf/> and join the blog!

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### **MyParkGuru is the working name of the new NPHA "app"**

Five NPHA members have joined together to help develop and promote a new smartphone app that is tentatively named MyParkGuru. The app will have information on each of the units of the National Park System, and especially on units with services provided by concessioners. The app will have a "sniffer" to locate nearby parks and will highlight "what to do" information. App owners will be encouraged to let us send them news of special events, discounts and hidden opportunities. Sponsoring concessioners will be able to offer the app to customers free – the public will purchase the app through the Apple App Store.

Marketing plans are now being finalized. If you want to be kept informed – even become an app supporter and offer the app to your customers free – contact Derrick Crandall ([dcrandall@funoutdoors.com](mailto:dcrandall@funoutdoors.com)). The app rollout will be done at the Park Partners Forum in October.

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## **Welcome, Belle Haven Marina!**

The National Park Hospitality Association is delighted to welcome new member Belle Haven Marina, located in Alexandria, Virginia! Belle Haven's George Stevens played an active role in the May concessioners' meeting with NPS National Capital Regional Director Peggy O'Dell and is a great addition to our organization. More information about Belle Haven Marina and the Mariner Sailing School is available at: <http://www.saildc.com/index.php>

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## **American Journal of Public Health explores new role for rangers**

In the future, park rangers may educate visitors about not only canyons and Civil War battles, but also infectious diseases, long-term wellness, and other health-related topics. In "Park Rangers as Public Health Educators," an article in the August issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*, David Wong and Charles L. Higgins of the National Park Service report on a project that tested the viability of national parks as settings for health education. The agency's Public Health in the Parks grants initiative funded outreach programs in parks throughout the country. In one program, Native American children engaged in actual exercise, which they translated into a "virtual walk" of the 74-mile length of Badlands National Park in South Dakota. In another program, visitors to Lowell National Historical Park in Massachusetts learned about a typhoid epidemic, the transformation of a local river into an agent of death, and the ensuing epidemiological investigation. "Further exploration of national parks as nontraditional and underutilized venues for health education is warranted," Wong and Higgins conclude.

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## **November 2010 elections: very important and very close**

Larry J. Sabato, highly regarded political analyst the University of Virginia, recently wrote:

*Everyone already knows the 2010 elections are significant and competitive. Let's add record-setting to that description. Why?*

- *2010 features the most U.S. Senate seats on the November ballot (37) since 1962.*
- *2010 also has the most elections for governor ever on the same ballot (also 37).*
- *2010 has produced one of the highest percentages of Democratic-versus-Republican House line-ups in modern history. Fully 405 of House races out of 435 have both a Democrat and a Republican running for the seat-the gold standard of basic two-party choice in democracy. Democrats have nominated 410 candidates for the House and Republicans have an even larger number, 430. For the GOP this is the most congressional districts they have ever contested.*

*Elections always matter, and citizens should vote. But if history is predictive, only about 40% of US adults will cast a ballot in 2010, as opposed to a much larger 63% in 2008.*

There's more reason than ever for CONPAC to be active this fall in Washington and around the country, raising interest in national parks and the businesses that serve visitors to those parks. We have a message that is "green," positive for jobs and health. We have

hundreds of voters in key districts that work for concessioners and allied businesses. And we have CONPAC funds available to connect with those now in important positions in the Congress and those who are running for office in states and districts linked to national parks.

Great 2010 elections info is at: <http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?parm1=21>. CQ senior writer Greg Giroux links you to information on individual races and elections overall.

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### **New 2016 100<sup>th</sup> NPS Anniversary Campaign effort**

Diverse national park leaders have formed a new steering committee to develop recommendations for a campaign tied to the 2016 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park Service. Led by the NPCA and NPF, steering committee members also include representatives of the Student Conservation Association, state tourism agencies, park friends groups and park concessioners. An initial meeting was held in August to review a "post mortem" on the Centennial Challenge effort launched under former Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne and identify key steps needed to create a unified, successful campaign. A two-day session to actually put together a campaign outline is planned for October. A first action is the submission of a letter, with recommendations, by park supporters to the America's Great Outdoors Initiative, which is widely regarded as the Obama Administration's central effort for park and resource issues.

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### **Commerce Department begins implementing Travel Promotion Act**

President Obama signed the Travel Promotion Act into law in March and amendments to the legislation to remove start-up challenges were made this summer. Now the Commerce Department has begun implementation of the act, which could yield tens of millions of dollars annually to promote visits to the US overseas. The act creates a new Corporation for Tourism Promotion (CTP) and a new fee for inbound travelers. The legislation provides for phased-in private sector matching of the fee. Beginning on September 8, 2010, inbound travelers from "visa waiver countries" will be charged a \$14 fee when accessing the Electronic System for Travel Authorization. Most of the fee will go toward funding the CTP, and the payment will only be collected once every two years from each traveler. The Commerce-selected board of directors of the CTP should be announced shortly. National parks and America's Great Outdoors are expected to figure significantly in the new marketing efforts of the CTP.

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### **A big thanks to Mindy Meade, who is off to law school**

NPHA members and staff wish Mindy Meade great success as she begins three years of law school after more than two years as NPHA's Director of Communications. Mindy's talents and energies will be sorely missed. She will remain in the DC area and we hope to stay in close touch. Her Alaska roots and genuine love of the outdoors have helped us know that the dream of connecting young Americans to the Great Outdoors can succeed. Thanks, Mindy! If you would like to get in touch with Mindy, she can be reached at [melinda.meade@gmail.com](mailto:melinda.meade@gmail.com).

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## **News**

- [Google CEO: 200,000 Android devices sold each day](#)
- [New York Times: Outdoors and Out of Reach, Studying the Brain](#)
- [Get Outdoors Day trumpets call of the wild](#)

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