



October 2010 Newsletter

National Park Hospitality Association

www.parkpartners.org

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Special Edition:

- **2010 Park Partners Forum Report, Naples, Florida**

The National Park Hospitality Association's **2010 Park Partners Forum** focused on long-term, big-picture issues for national parks in the 21st century. The Forum convened October 17-20, at the Doubletree Guest Suites, in Naples, Florida, a Guest Services, Inc. (GSI) hotel. The discussions focused on partnerships and outreach, health and the great outdoors, policy issues and national parks in the 21st century. It brought together concessioners, National Park Service (NPS) officials, health experts, NPHA associate members and allies.

Labels with the letters **WWSMD?** were given to everyone upon arrival — a clue to a theme throughout the meeting. The letters were an acronym for *What Would Stephen Mather Do?* Stephen Mather was the visionary, partnership-focused first director of the National Park Service. Attendees were urged to recall Mr. Mather's legacy and leadership during the meeting. He made bold moves to connect parks to Americans. Then as now, the future of parks cries out for innovation, and concessioners can continue a long tradition of partnership with the NPS leaders in creating lifelong memories for park visitors.

Sunday, October 17, 2010

Unity is the Key Message of Park Partners Forum

At the opening session, NPHA Chairman Joe Fassler set the tone for the meeting, praising concessioner unity. Mr. Fassler said, "Concessioners keep parks relevant and we have raised the funds to create promotions and to help grow visitation. Concessioners have built the love of the parks. Together, we need to keep moving the ball forward." He recounted the important efforts of the organization during 2010, including meetings with NPS and Interior leaders in Washington, regional NPS/NPHA leadership summits, Congressional testimony and action on key issues including utility cost pass-throughs and park promotion efforts. NPHA Counselor Derrick Crandall also touted unity. "We can make good things happen. We can be a potent force, removing barriers to sound business operations. Industry unity allows us to overcome challenges to expanding concessioner-provided visitor services," he said.

Collaboration Between NPHA and Native American Tribes

NPHA welcomed Tina Osceola, President of the American Indian and Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA), as Sunday's guest speaker. AIANTA represents 500 American Indian tribes. She expressed enthusiasm for expanded cooperation with concessioners.

"History and culture open doors. Our group is a conduit to all tribes. We can help in several ways: interpretation, performances, arts and

crafts and native food. The value is providing authenticity to your visitors. In national parks, we walked those lands — let us tell our story. Hire natives as authentic messengers. Let's combine ideas, plans, promotions and opportunities," she said.

AIANTA plans to be actively involved in the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service and in the work of the new Corporation for Travel Promotion. In addition, AIANTA is refining its database as a source for authentic American Indian products and services.

More information on AIANTA is available -- [click here.](#)



Jim Santini and Tina Osceola.

Monday, October 18, 2010

Board of Directors Meeting

The NPHA Board of Directors had two sessions intertwined with the Park Partners Forum. In its first session, it gave preliminary approval to the organization's 2011 budget and initiated a new associate member campaign. It also agreed to an active role in the 2016 National Parks Campaign — a partnership-based campaign still in development. It selected meeting dates for its 2011 annual meeting — March 15 -17 in Washington. That meeting is expected to continue the tradition of a roundtable discussion with Interior and NPS leaders and will substantially increase time with Congressional leaders active on parks issues.

In its second session, it reaffirmed the NPHA commitment to the Guest Donation Program but outlined plans to revamp the program to increase accountability to donors and to overall visibility. NPHA will also begin development of a white paper on the results of the 1998 concessions act reforms, including results regarding competition, reduction in administrative burden and the impact on NPS/concessioner partnerships. Finally, the NPHA leaders affirmed the organization's commitment to help launch National Parks Promotion Council and expand parks-related outreach and promotion, especially to urban youth.

Monday Invocation

Monday's meeting began with an invocation by Rev. Spencer Lundgaard, Executive Director of A Christian Ministry in the National Parks – an honorary member of NPHA. He remembered several members and park supporters who have passed away or were unable to participate because of illnesses and concluded with the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi.

Linking Our Legacy of Parks to 21st Century Americans

Monday's first session focused on National Parks in the 21st Century and was moderated by GSI President and CEO Gerry Gabrys. He unveiled the meaning of **WWSMD** and told participants, "Together we need to step back, take a big-picture approach as Mr. Mather did and create a strategic outlook. Our biggest challenge is declining visitation at national parks and how to reverse this trend, which reduces the importance of parks to the American public. Visitation is not keeping pace with population growth and more effort is needed to attract youth and minorities. There are great opportunities now, including the NPS 100th anniversary, the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) effort and increased interest by Congress in better health through outdoor activities."



Gerry Gabrys kicked-off Monday's session.



David Vela, left, Mike Burke, and Terry MacRae after the session.

The session featured National Park Service Southeast Regional Director David Vela. He offered insights into both national and regional NPS priorities, and told the group that there is a great need for visitor services in parks. He said that, like Stephen Mather a century ago, we need to "leverage resources through partnerships." Mr. Vela described partnerships of the NPS Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program and with AMTRAK, involving "host parks" along train routes. The Regional Director underscored the

importance of involving youth, and added, "one size does not fit all. Youth outreach has to fit the community," he counseled. "AGO will outline a strategy for reaching out to youth," he said. He shared upcoming news from his region, including expanded marketing of units relevant to the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War, focusing on making the Civil War more relevant to today's Americans. According to Mr. Vela, "We will embrace the theme of *Civil War To Civil Rights*. I strongly believe we must connect the past to 21st century Americans in a more meaningful way."

Tom Strickland, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, spoke with Forum participants via phone. He told the group about the preparation of the AGO report to the President, following nearly 30 public sessions attended by 20,000+ persons. The report, he told the group, will have tangible and specific recommendations to "address conservation and to get people outdoors and engaged in nature." He also shared broad themes of the report, including:

- Investing in public places
- Conservation tax code incentives
- Increasing parks in urban areas
- Linking ecosystems
- Protecting river corridors
- Expanding recreation and conservation opportunities



Hon. Thomas Strickland

- Outreach to youth and enhanced connections to education

Mr. Strickland called Health and the Great Outdoors “an exciting bipartisan topic with broad support on the Hill.” He thanked NPHA members for day-to-day assistance in creating park experiences for visitors, for their longtime support of national parks, including efforts to demonstrate “best practices green operations” and for their involvement in discussions regarding the upcoming 100th anniversary of the National Park Service.

Forever Resorts' CEO Rex Maughan served on the panel and told the group, “We need to recall the fingerprints Stephen Mather put on parks in the early 1900's – roads, lodges and promotion campaigns that launched the love affair Americans have with national parks today.” He shared fond memories of working to create a blueprint for recreation’s future through the President’s Commission on Americans Outdoors in the 1980's. He called on concessioners “to take a central role in the America's Great Outdoors follow up, and in the efforts to create a Parks 2016 Campaign. It's the right thing to do and it will also be a good business decision for companies that intend to stay in the concessions business,” said Rex.

Monday’s breakfast and coffee break were sponsored by new NPHA associate member **International Paper Foodservice**. The company has launched a partnership program with the National Park Foundation involving “ecotainer beverage cups” featuring eight different designs of national park images plus an educational message about conservation and environmental stewardship. International Paper will donate one penny for each commemorative cup sold, up to \$1 million, to the National Park Foundation. For more information, [click here](#).



Beth McKeithen, International Paper Foodservice, with Julie Gackenbach, Confreere Strategies.

NPS - NPHA Cooperation on Green Operations; Response to Society's Needs



Monday panelists, from left, Kevin Kelly, Chris Belland, Capt. Chuck Higgins, and David Vela.

Monday’s second session addressed “green operations,” crisis management, health and youth obesity. Delaware North Companies Parks and Resorts President Kevin Kelly, session leader, spoke about his company's GreenPath initiative, which began at Yosemite and is now embraced in corporate operations including stadiums and even airports. “It has evolved over the years from recycling in the 70s to a formalized program of environmental stewardship with goals and measurement tools today,” he said.

Capt. Chuck Higgins, Director of the NPS Office of Public Health and chairman of the newly formed NPS Health and Wellness Steering Committee, said, “Our work on the role of the National Park Service in health promotion has found a growing body of evidence which suggests that human health is linked to the health of our natural world. Parks connect people to nature, thus it’s a perfect opportunity for the NPS and concessioners to draw

people in with this message. We need to continue to build an ongoing relationship.” To read more about the Steering Committee’s efforts, [click here](#).

David Vela, NPS Southeast Regional Director, also spoke on this panel, addressing NPS’s green strategy and the need for unified communications when faced with oil spills and other major events. “We must always strive to reduce our carbon footprint, create sustainable buildings and be leaders,” he said. He noted that Fort Sumter has reached a milestone: they sell energy back to the “grid.” “An environmental ethic must be our way of life,” he said, and urged NPHA’s active leadership on this issue. “Build on what you already do. Continue to improve on your efforts. Never underestimate the importance of our role together.”

Chris Belland, CEO, Historic Tours of America, touted national parks as a way to engage youth on conservation and addressed efforts of his company to mitigate its environmental impact. “By 2045, the world population will be 14 billion. We will face a severe crisis, especially with water,” he said. But it is not too late to take action, he told the group. “We can communicate these values through youth engagement,” he added.

Lunches with Learning

Concurrent lunches with learning sessions were held Monday. Topics included: the [Guest Donation Program](#), presented by NPHA associate member Jon Simon, Partner, Van Ness Feldman; an update on CONPAC, led by Jim Santini; and an “Outreach and Promotions” roundtable led by National Parks Promotion Council Interim Executive Director John Poimiroo.



NPPC’s John Poimiroo and NPHA members at the lunch and learn.

Big Cypress National Preserve

The meeting’s mobile seminar was to the Big Cypress National Preserve. Forum participants toured the park’s new visitor center, explored the Turner River by canoe and hiked the boardwalk. Big Cypress borders the wet freshwater prairies of Everglades National Park. Water from the Big Cypress flows south and west into the coastal Ten Thousand Islands region.

Monday evening’s gathering was pool side at the Doubletree Guest Suites Naples, which has won top honors from Hilton six of the last 10 years. The hotel showcased locally-grown and harvested food and healthy dining strategies being employed by GSI throughout its operations. NPHA associate member Segway sponsored the evening’s reception and entertainment.



Big Cypress National Preserve mobile seminar.

Tuesday, October 19, 2010

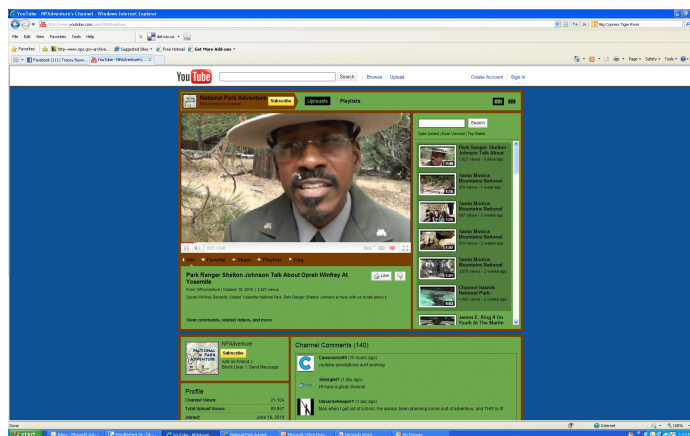
Tuesday began with a “Segway Sampler” – a chance to test out two versions of the innovative and environmentally friendly personal transportation device. Segway Vice President Matt Dailida shared information on use of the vehicles for tour purposes, including in Washington, DC, on and around parks and other key sites, and expressed interest in joint ventures with concessioners. Segway, Inc. is the global leader in the light electric vehicle (LeV) market. Segway offers safe, highly maneuverable zero emissions personal transportation devices for both personal and work-related applications.



At the Segway sampler, Brian Lamaccia, left, of Segway, with Barry Trice, Guest Services, John Rutter, Grand Teton Lodge Company, and Spencer Lundgaard, A Christian Ministry in the Parks with family.

National Park Outreach and Promotion Efforts

The day’s first general session, National Park Outreach and Promotion Efforts, featured updates about the National Parks Promotion Council (NPPC). NPPC Chairman Terry



Yosemite NP’s Shelton Johnson is featured in the new series of YouTube “NP Adventure” videos.

MacRae, CEO of Hornblower Cruises, and NPPC Interim Executive Director John Poimiroo reviewed progress on establishing research and marketing committees and on the organization’s first project, a series of YouTube videos branded **NP Adventures** and aimed at youth under age 30. “They are honest and believable,” Mr. Poimiroo said. The videos have attracted 125,000 views from 33 videos now uploaded, and more than 100 videos, all 2-5 minutes in length, are planned highlighting visits to national parks this summer and fall.

Here is a sample of viewer comments:

- *Love these videos: seeing all the sweet places all the nature that most people don't have time to go see...that's awesome guys!*
- *Man, when I get out of school, I've always been planning some sort of adventure, and THIS is it!*
- *Wow! Sounds like a grand adventure to go around and see all the National Parks! That would be fun. Awesome channel!*

A special serendipity of the series was the ability to share “first news” about a camping trip to Yosemite by Oprah ([click here](#)), talked about on video by NPS Ranger Shelton Johnson who hosted Oprah and achieved fame for his featured role in the recent Ken Burns PBS special on national parks. To view the videos online, [visit NP Adventure](#). Oprah will broadcast two episodes October 29th and 30th about her Yosemite visit. The NPPC is simultaneously working on research to determine what motivates youth to visit national parks.

Growing and Improving Visitor Services in National Parks

Tuesday's second panel addressed Growing and Improving Visitor Services in National Parks, and was moderated by ARAMARK Parks and Destinations President Bruce Fears. Speakers included NPS National Capital Regional Director Peggy O'Dell, NPS Director of Public Health Capt. Charles Higgins and NPHA Counselor Derrick Crandall. The

discussion included ways to shape General Management Plans (GMPs) and Commercial Services Plans (CSPs) so concessioners can provide "accommodations, facilities, services that are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment" – and to reflect changes in public wants and interests.



Bruce Fears moderated a Tuesday session.

Mr. Fears discussed some new ideas, including several raised in NPHA's testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands last month: applying historic tax credits to park structures, the idea of a Park Facilities Investment Corporation or Park Infrastructure Bank, alternative revenue bonds and applying the lessons of Fort Baker and the Presidio to possible new park units – for example, if Fort Monroe were made a park unit.

Mr. Fears introduced Ms. O'Dell, "a proven innovator and someone whose positive focus and excitement about forging partnership have won her friends from sea to sea." He noted that she has managed park units, worked on large interagency projects and, as the NPS Regional Director for the National Capital Region, holds an especially politically charged job. She spoke about one of the really big challenges facing the NPS today: the future of the National Mall. Visited by nearly 25 million people annually, the Mall is a case study for how to understand park options, including improved visitor services, and then work on the dual challenges of (1) crafting a consensus about future uses and (2) assembling the resources to move from concept to reality – a multi-hundred million dollar issue.

Ms. O'Dell thanked Guest Services, Inc., the Mall concessioner, for its outstanding visitor services and for being a great partner with the NPS. She noted that the General Management Plan for the National Mall has taken many years and countless meetings to develop. The current plan dates to the 1970s. Developing the new plan involved 60 cooperative agencies and comments from 30,000 people at public meetings. And even after identifying a preferred option, the plan must go to several local and national commissions for approval. "We had to think about what



Panelists, from left, NPHA's Derrick Crandall, NPS's Peggy O'Dell and Capt. Chuck Higgins.

was necessary and appropriate, about size and scale. We also had to ask what do people want? We found the Mall wasn't being used or regarded as a local park – used by local residents – so a top goal is to better integrate it as part of the city," she said. The Mall also sustains extremely high use. There were eight million people on the Mall during the 2009



Derrick Crandall and Peggy O'Dell after the session.

Obama inaugural events. “We manage people attending 3,000 events a year and we have to plan for more in the future. So, we’ve proposed a special use space for big events near the Capitol. This will decrease the impact of large crowds repeatedly trampling the grass area. For sustainability, we’re adding an irrigation system for the first time, with cisterns to collect rainfall,” she said.

The plan development looked at re-purposing current structures, how and where to add food service, including deploying mobile food units for large events. The 1970s plan called for a restaurant and recreation area at the Tidal Basin that was never built. The plan also addresses a key issue – the need for more restrooms. “We even had to demonstrate the need for more and better directional signs throughout the Mall to skeptical commission members,” she said.

Mr. Crandall told of his review of GMPs for park units and the rarity of any discussion of expanded concessioner services. He noted that it is infeasible for concessioners to invest time and energy in a multi-year GMP effort, and then wait for several more years for the issuance of a concessions contract prospectus before finally preparing a proposal – a proposal that will not receive any special consideration over a proposal offered by a firm with no involvement in developing the opportunity. He asked the Regional Director, “How can a concessioner offer an idea for an appropriate, new visitor service?” Ms. O’Dell expressed sympathy for the obstacles but urged concessioners to suggest augmented services. “I love good ideas,” she told the group. “We don’t have to own the idea, just find a mechanism to do it. However, keep in mind that local decisions can affect national policy. But we do want to be bold. We want to do everything possible to serve visitors better. Our relationship with concessioners must be healthy, professional and profitable.”

Mr. Crandall also shared other insight and thoughts. “Stephen Mather would be pleased and excited with the leadership being demonstrated today. However, we must challenge the process as he did 100 years ago. All of us must be bold in our thinking – our rethinking – of the future and our relationship with the NPS,” he said. “There are 393 units in the national park system now. Where will we be in 10 years? We must find new ways to feed, transport and care for people visiting our parks. The challenge is integration and flexibility in planning. How do we make sure commercial services are compatible with GMPs? One suggestion is to provide incentives for concessioners to be part of early GMP planning,” he said.

Capt. Charles Higgins, NPS Director of the Office of Public Health, was the third panelist. Participants loved both his message and the enthusiasm with which it was delivered. Leaping from the stage with arms raised, he exclaimed, “Mark



Capt. Chuck Higgins enlivened the crowd.

this date! October 19th is the date *you have been given permission to promote the health of the nation!* Collectively, you — the concessioners — make a real contribution to the health of the nation. I urge you to own this moment,” he said. Capt. Higgins distributed a list of NPS public health “consultants” across the nation, newly empowered to move from simply preparing for pandemics and checking kitchen cleanliness to being true health proponents. “The potential belongs to all of us. The NPS is a catalyst and national parks have a big role in this health protection partnership,” he asserted. The NPS Office of Public Health is staffed by more than 40 health professionals, including physicians and public health specialists, with the mission of assisting agency and park unit management and staff with protecting and promoting the health of the visitors to national parks. [Click here](#), for the list.

NPS Deputy Director on National Parks in the 21st Century



Dan Wenk, left, and Pedro Ramos, Superintendent, Big Cypress National Preserve.

Tuesday’s featured speaker was NPS Deputy Director of Operations Dan Wenk. He has served as the Deputy Director of Operations since 2007 and was Acting Director for much of 2009, while Jon Jarvis awaited confirmation as Director. He “absolutely views concessioners as partners,” a view developed from his time at the Denver Service Center, at Yellowstone National Park and as Superintendent of Mount Rushmore National Memorial. He spoke about opportunities and challenges facing national parks in the 21st century. He shared his guiding principle that it is “not only important that we do things right, it is important that we do the right thing.”

Mr. Wenk spoke about three areas of importance to the NPS and concessioners. The first was profitability for concessioners. He agreed that the 1998 law deserves discussion, noting its key intent “was to provide competition.” Second, he called for more communications and strategic planning. He cited the **NP Adventures** promotion as a program with great opportunity that needs additional cooperation between NPS and NPPC. Third, the healthy parks/healthy people initiative will be a big opportunity for NPS/concessioner collaboration. He referenced Victoria, Australia, which has increased its park budget significantly through partnerships with the sports medicine industry and related health interests. “In the U.S., we have to look at public lands holistically, too,” he said. Mr. Wenk noted that one of the biggest issues now for the NPS is energy development. “With solar and wind power issues, how do we deal with the shared landscape?” he asked. He urged everyone to read the Second Century Commission report, noting it is the blueprint for the National Park Service. He then addressed the AGO initiative, saying that the youth and health messages are firmly in place in the draft report. “The NPS has a commitment to a strong health initiative as a critical part of a strategy for achieving sustainability,” he said. But he shared his concern that the first draft of the AGO report did not mention NPS or national parks specifically, instead focusing on private lands as the target for a new 21st Century Conservation Strategy. Mr. Wenk concluded his remarks by talking about the excitement he feels as he takes on his next NPS role: Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, effective early in 2011.



Server Christine hand-cuts lettuce for Rev. Spencer Lundgaard of A Christian Ministry in the National Parks.

Farm-to-Table Taken to New Heights

A vegetable extravaganza was served at Tuesday's outdoor lunch with a bounty of fresh locally grown fruit and vegetables. Hydroponic lettuce was grown starting four months ago especially for the meeting by two local farms, Rabbit Run and Oakes Run. The lettuce choices were hand-cut with scissors by the hotel's servers.



Dan Jensen, President, DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite, right, learning about Walker Farms honey.

Walker Farms Honey Company brought a bee hive and served tastes of its products, including its signature orange cloud honey. The dessert included local Meyer lemon mini tarts. Guest Services, Inc., and the local growers went to new heights to create this memorable lunch. It was an example of the company's commitment to sustainable, creative and flavorful cuisine.

A Conversation with the NPS Commercial Services Program Chief

Jo Pendry, Chief of the NPS Commercial Services Program, joined NPHA again this year for discussions on operational issues Tuesday afternoon. The session was moderated by NPHA Counselor Derrick Crandall. The session filled more than an hour with questions and discussions on a wide array of topics raised by NPHA. Ms. Pendry thanked concessioners, saying, "The service you provide is unparalleled." She then acknowledged that the process is not always easy. "There are understandable frustrations with some of the burdens on concessioners. Open discussion provides a way to strike a balance so both sides come away at least a little happy," she added.



Jo Pendry

Ms. Pendry told the group that a conditions assessment of concessioner-operated facilities is nearing completion and shows a backlog of more than \$350 million in maintenance and repairs. She also warned the group that the agency was receiving pressure to include various concessioner services under the Service Contract Act. Mr. Crandall referenced materials (*please see links on last page*) included in the Forum participants' folders, including correspondence between NPHA and NPS on requested operational changes. She noted progress made to date on issues ranging from guidelines on use of anticipated

rates to expanded use of core menus to reduce pricing approval burdens. A number of key issues are nearing action, she told the group – including some that are on the Director’s desk. She also indicated that final action on Director’s Order 35B is near, and noted that many of the concerns expressed by concessioners in comments this spring have been addressed in a presentation made to the Concessions Management Advisory Board (CMAB) and shared with NPHA.

Other topics covered in the session included: the role of the Commercial Services Program in expanding concessioner services; the status of the Standards, Evaluations, and Rate Approval (SERA) program; the ability of concessioners to influence prospectuses, to help meet current visitor wants; steps to better understand the NPS review of contract offers, including information on the number of bidders and the reasons for selection; development of a unique “Authorized Commercial Service Provider” mark; NPS oversight of the Guest Donation Program; and the NPS Healthy Foods effort.

Interest in SERA is high, and a meeting of key concessions industry representatives serving on a CMAB subcommittee is planned for this winter to review standards and evaluation procedures. Ms. Pendry indicated that the standards for lodging are nearing final form, and include four lodging classifications. In response to questions, Ms. Pendry indicated that unusual park lodging options, including housekeeping tents and park model trailers, remain a topic of discussion. Standards for other concessioner operations, including campgrounds and marinas, will get underway soon. She addressed questions about the roles of some 125 NPS concessions specialists at the park, regional and national levels and six companies selected by NPS for contract work, especially in development of prospectuses.

Teaming Up for National Parks

Tuesday’s final afternoon session was informative, entertaining and inspiring. It was moderated by Acadia Corporation President Dave Woodside and featured guest speaker Terrence “Terre” Jones, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, outside Washington, DC in Vienna, Virginia, and panelist John Rutter, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Grand Teton Lodge Company.



From left, Dave Woodside, Terry Jones and John Rutter.

Mr. Woodside said in Acadia National Park, the focus is on collaboration with the local friends group. His company provides membership displays at the Jordan Pond House, provides membership premium coupons redeemable at restaurants and retail stores, and donates meals and merchandise to honor park volunteers and visiting VIPs. The company also collaborates with the Abbe Museum, a local nonprofit museum focusing on the local native American culture, by hosting fund-raising events at the Jordan Pond House.

Mr. Jones spoke about staging concerts in national parks, and using the performing arts to highlight parks. Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts is the only national park unit created specifically to present staged performances. It has the second-largest stage on the continent, set in a 7,000-seat amphitheater. More than 500,000 people attended 105 concerts at Wolf Trap in the summer of 2010. He invited the concessions community to understand why and how concerts can be staged in a national park, noting that reasons can vary from drawing attention to a park unit to showcasing relevant stories to fundraising. He offered ideas for succeeding with use of the performing arts in park settings:

- Be clear about your purpose. Do you want to increase visitors and raise awareness? Are you interested in building local goodwill? Are you trying to raise cash? If the answer is yes to all, you must prioritize or you'll get nowhere.
- Get help from professionals, including a top-notch producer. It's a complicated business. If you remember nothing else, work with pros! They will help find the right performers, negotiate a fair fee and make sure the performance runs smoothly.
- Select the right performer. If you want national attention, pick a big national name or do something out of the ordinary that the new media can't resist such as Wolf Trap's multi-media program [The Face of America](#), filmed in national parks and now airing on PBS.
- Who does the best job selling tickets to the audience you want to reach? Get the word out using social media, especially if you seek a younger group.
- Use your concert to build your park's profile. If your purpose is fund raising, get advice from a professional fund raiser. You may also want to secure sponsors – but know the rules.

Wolf Trap has two free community programs: *Blast Off*, which kicks off the season and *Holiday Sing* in December, both featuring the United States Marine Band. "The Blast Off features the best fireworks in Washington, DC, even better than the 4th of July downtown," he said. Wolf Trap also has its own opera company, which offers an introduction to opera for thousands of children annually and an extensive youth program involving local schools.

John Rutter offered his perspective about the viability of arts and entertainment in and around the Grand Teton Lodge in Wyoming. An especially popular and successful event is the Grand Teton Music Festival as well as smaller scale events such as daily children's chamber music performances in the lobby. "Our approach is to develop programs that are a reflection of our local area. We stage more than 100 events and have big community support," he said. The Lodge has the good fortune of being in a place where collaboration within the state and community is very strong. According to Mr. Rutter, "Everyone capitalizes on the Grand Tetons destination. We work with the local NPS business resource office, elected leaders and officials, the business community, state restaurant and tourism organizations, the airport, the local fish and wildlife agency, regional business partnerships, tour operators, and so forth," he said.

Tuesday Evening Includes Salute to Steve Tedder

NPHA board member Steve Tedder, Vice President, National Parks, Xanterra Parks & Resorts, was honored at Tuesday's dinner at Charlie Chiang's restaurant adjacent to the hotel. Mr. Tedder plans to retire in early 2011. The evening featured labels with a slight alteration: **WWSTD**, for *What Would Steve Tedder Do?* He oversees Xanterra's concession operations in Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Zion, Petrified Forest and Crater Lake National Parks as well as Mount Rushmore National Memorial. He also oversees the

operations of Furnace Creek Resort, Stovepipe Wells and Scotty's Castle in Death Valley National Park and Grand Canyon Railway in Williams, Arizona. He is a past board member of the Grand Canyon Foundation and the Yellowstone History Association and is a native of Key West.

Charlie Chiang's was recently named the best Asian restaurant in Naples. Charles and Christiana Chiang, who operate a network of restaurants from the Washington, DC, area, were on hand to greet the NPHA group personally. The dinner was served family style, a fitting highlight of a great meeting.



Steve Tedder, retiring next year.

Wednesday, October 20, 2010

Wednesday morning began with an early NPHA Board meeting and then continued with meetings of the NPPC Board and Research Committee.

[For the list of attendees, please click here.](#)

Concessions Session Reference Materials:

[Advance Rates and Deposits](#)

[Guest Donations and Tipping Practices](#)

[Standards, Evaluations, and Rate Approval \(SERA\) Update Sept. 2010](#)

[Leasehold Surrender Interest \(LSI\) Valuation Alternative Formula \(LSI\) Sept. 2010](#)

[Director's Orders 35B: Sales of National Park Service Produced Utilities](#)

[2010 Convenience Store Markup Percentages & Competitive Market Declaration for Retail Merchandising](#)

[Clarifications on Use of Mark-on, Markup and Competitive Market Declarations Jan. 2010](#)

IMPORTANT DATES:

Pacific West NPS/NPHA Regional Summit. December 15, Oakland, CA

2011 NPHA Annual Meeting: March 15-17, Washington, DC

2011 NPS Concessions Management Advisory Board Meeting - March 16-17, Washington, DC (Tentative)

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!
