ND PARKS & RECREATION

NDPRD interpreters host national convention

The National Association of Interpretation (NAI) is a not-for-profit professional organization consisting of dedicated interpreters connecting visitors to natural, historical, cultural or recreational resources at locations such as state or national parks, nature centers, museums, zoos, aquariums and various other sites.

North Dakota belongs to the Heartland Region within NAI, along with Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Manitoba and Nunavut. The NAI Heartland Region Conference was held in Bismarck, April 7-10, where interpreters were encouraged to "Catch the Spirit." Each year a different state or province hosts the conference, coming up with a creative theme and having the opportunity to showcase their state/province, their variety of interpretive sites and some of the local flavors and products.

The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department was heavily involved as several staff members served on the planning committee for the conference or simply attended the conference for their own professional development.

Amy Schimetz, Lake Metigoshe State Park Interpreter, served as Conference Co-Chair.

Erika Kolbow, Turtle River State Park Interpreter, served as Promotional Chair and Auction Co-Chair.

Molly Skadsen, Icelandic State Park Interpreter, served as Auction Co-Chair.

Matt Schanandore, Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park, Interpreter, served as Logistics Co-Chair.

Kevin Kirkey, Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan Site Manager, served as Finance Chair.

Char Binstock, Cross Ranch State Park Ranger, and Katie Ogden, Lewis and Clark State Park Ranger, attended as they supervise seasonal interpretive staff and take on interpretive duties as needed at their respective parks. Robert Hannah, Interpreter at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan, and Caitlin Carlson, Lead Seasonal Interpreter at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park also attended for professional development.

The first Keynote Speaker was Linda Black Elk, an ethnobotanist who specializes in teaching and learning about culturally important plants and their uses. Another Keynote Speaker, Arch Ellwein, portrayed Theodore Roosevelt and entertained all with his impressive historical accuracy.

Greg Hager inspired conference attendees with his ability to share his stories pertaining to his successes and struggles of country life, love and faith through song. Steve Stark brought history to life interpreting North Dakota history on a 30- foot roll of paper, illustrating our area's history with great accuracy and speed. NASA-Jet Propulsion Laboratory Solar System Ambassador Christopher Milford hosted a night sky exploration at Double Ditch Indian Village Historical Site. Cheaper Than Therapy, an acapella group of four women from Jamestown, that have been singing together for 17 years, used their voices to share their humorous antics and slightly off-color lyrics to some classics as well as some original works pertaining to our great state of North Dakota.

Off-site sessions included trips with three different themes; Energy, Nature and Cultural History. Places visited included Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site, Fort Clark State

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Discover

Spring/Summer

Volume 21, Number 2

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(ON THE COVER: Ground breaking ceremonies at Fort Ransom State Park for a new visitors center featured a horse drawn single-blade plow to make the initial "dig.")

New construction projects at state parks

Several new capital projects are moving forward at North Dakota's state parks this summer including the construction of two new visitor centers, two comfort stations, three full service yurts, campground electrical upgrades and a major road repair and repaving project.

Fort Ransom State Park (FRSP) is getting a new 3,000 square foot visitor center which will be a great improvement over the smallish Bjone home which has been the visitor center at the park for many years. Ground breaking for the new visitor center took place April 20 with completion of construction expected in early November.

The visitor center at FRSP is being built for just slightly over $1 million. According to Jesse Hanson, NDPRD's Planning and Development Division Manager, the new visitor center will be much more accessible than the Bjone Home which originally was a farm house. It will be available for public access year round. Besides offices, the new center will have a group meeting room with audio-visual capabilities. There will be a small area for concession sales.

"It won't be a huge store, but will stock things such as camp fuel, bug spray – things that campers may forget or run out of," Hanson says. "It will be located adjacent to the entrance road on its north side, not too far from the existing offices. It will be within walking distance of the main campgrounds."

FRSP recently completed construction on two full-service yurts, the first of their kind in the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department's system. Yurts can be found at Cross Ranch and Lake Metigoshe state parks, but these are fairly basic with just chairs and beds. The new FRSP yurts are ADA compliant and feature indoor bathrooms and kitchenettes along with living quarters.

Eight additional camp sites have been added in FRSP's horse corral area, each with 50 amp electrical service. The addition brings the total horse campsites with electric service to 24. The number of horse pens has been doubled at the park as well, going from 18 horse pens to 36. Equestrian trail use at FRSP has increased dramatically over the past several years. These improvements help ensure there is ample room for horse campers even on holiday weekends.

Artist renderings of visitor centers at Grahams Island State Park (top) and Fort Ransom State Park (below)

Energy conservation has been a big part of the planning process. The heating and cooling of the visitor center will get a geo thermal source and the lighting will be LED. Paired with the south side windows, the building will be very efficient to run. YHR Partners, LTD, is planning the buildings and the general contractor is Diversified Contractors, Inc.

Up at Grahams Island State Park, on beautiful Devils Lake, another visitor center combined with a bait shop is being built for a cost of about $1.2 million. The 3,500 square foot building will provide offices that are now found in the maintenance shop.

"The Grahams Island bait shop does an amazing amount of bait and tackle and concession item sales. The current store is about 1,600 square feet and a large portion of the new building will be devoted to this," Hanson explains. "It will really enhance what they have now."

The new visitor center will be located just across from the existing bait shop and is expected to be completed by mid-November. There will be offices for the manager and assistant manager along with a work area for seasonal staff. Visitors will have access to the administrative assistant's area through an outside window. The store and offices will be in separate areas but under one roof with a commons area found in between. The building will use geothermal for its heating and cooling along with LED lighting. No decision has been made on what to do with the old bait shop when the new one is functional.

Two new comfort stations are being built at Icelandic and Fort Stevenson state parks. There is a strong need for both structures, according to Hanson, especially at Fort Stevenson State Park. Both of the new comfort stations will be ADA compliant, which the existing

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Planning underway for Missouri River Day Park

For the first time in nearly 30 years the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD) is planning a new park for the state. Hopes are the Missouri River Day Park, as it is currently called, will be open in the fall of 2016, providing a unique perspective of the Missouri River and educational experience for visitors.

The project came out of the 2015 legislative session which appropriated about $1.2 million for development of property on the east bank of the Missouri just south of Bismarck. The land is part of the Missouri River Correctional Center which will be deeded to North Dakota Parks and Recreation for the park.

Houston Engineering was hired to study the issue and develop a plan to be implemented by NDPRD. The NDPRD's mission statement "to provide and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities through diverse parks and programs that conserve the state's natural diversity" is incorporated into the Missouri River Day Park mission statement which reads: "Create a regional park masterplan that preserves and restores Missouri River watershed ecosystems while providing compatible recreation opportunities to all; create interpretive opportunities related to outdoor learning and the cultural history of the area; generate opportunities for the tourism industry in North Dakota."

In February the NDPRD and Houston Engineering sponsored the first public meeting on the Missouri River Day Park in an effort to determine the public's interest and how they want to see the park used. The meeting at the Bismarck Memorial Library was packed with interested outdoor enthusiasts, many representing special interest groups wanting to participate in the planning.

NDPRD Director Mark Zimmerman explained the park was small, but its diverse eco-system included wetlands, forest, sand dunes and grasslands in its modest 213 acres. He envisioned a trail system allowing visitors to explore the park. Zimmerman expects the new park to provide excellent educational opportunities for students.

The park should also provide much needed access to the Missouri River for such activities as canoeing,

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Sand dunes created by the Missouri River .

Forested area on the parks' west side.

Park featues woods, dunes and wetlands.

Missouri River Day Park

continued from page 3

kayaking, paddle boards and shore fishing. While a ramp is not in the plans, docks would be put in the river.

One problem that has surfaced is accessing the park itself. It appears that a route will have to come from Bismarck's Washington Street, east along 43rd Avenue and then cut through some Missouri River Correctional Center fields to an area where an intial parking lot adjacent the Day Park will be built capable of handling about 50 vehicle. Hopes are a trail can be established from an eventual bike path along Washington Street.

The Day Park is also close to Bismarck's Sibley Park, though there is private property dividing the two properties. Planners for the park are looking at possibly connecting the two parks via a trail. Sibley does provide camping and a boat ramp on the Missouri.

There are also concerns about erosion stemming from the Missouri River flow and there are plans for stabilizing a long sandbar which runs parallel to the park. Further protective measures will be will be phased in over a matter of time.

Among the objectives listed for the park are:

• Preservation and restoration of Missouri River watershed ecosystems.

• Improve Missouri River access for all segments of the general public.

• Generate tourism and compatible outdoor recreation opportunities.

• Highlight the unique history of the area.

• Become a regional learning site for students and eco-groups.

• Integration of sustainable design practices to protect and enhance environmental sensitivities.

• Employ management procedures that are economically viable.

"We'll want to integrate as many uses for the park as possible," Zimmerman told participants in the first public meeting. "It will be up to the department to find funding for the various phases and there isn't a lot of money available. The Outdoor Heritage Fund may be a source for some of the needed resources."

Houston Engineering's Michael Gunsch displayed a map to orientate a group of stakeholders who were given a tour of the property and what it has to offer.

The NDPRD will be responsible for patrolling and maintaining the property.

Houston Engineering did provide a survey that was passed out at the public meeting and was available via the internet. Areas of use receiving the most interest included these activities: picnicking, cross country skiing, kayaking/canoeing, photography, running, snowshoeing, shore fishing, biking, bird watching and hiking. These came out of a list of a possible 35 types of activities.

NAI Conference

continued from Inside Front Cover

Historic Site, Fort Mandan, Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, Double Ditch Historic Site, Audubon National Wildlife Refuge, Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery, Cross Ranch Nature Preserve, Cross Ranch State Park and Garrison Dam.

Various supporters and attendees donated items to raise money for the NAI Heartland Region through the Silent and Live Auctions. Funds raised support students' attendance at the NAI conference as they seek employment and opportunities within the field. Funds also provide various locations in our region the opportunity to do interpretive projects through a mini-grant program.

Concurrent Sessions included various topics such as geocaching, dealing with controversial subjects, utilizing the media for interpretation, ideas for hands-on programming, research pertaining to environmental education topics and inspiring through interpretation to name a few.

This year's Heartland Region offered something that appealed to both the seasoned interpreter and those just getting started within the profession. It seemed the 70-plus attendees were able to "Catch the Spirit" in North Dakota as they found time to network, meet new friends, re-connect with those they haven't seen in a long while as well as getting re-energized and re-inspired to return to the field of interpretation with new ideas and research.

The next Heartland Region Conference will take place in Deadwood, South Dakota April 5-9, 2017 where "The future is now…the rest is history!"

Anyone interested in obtaining information pertaining to the National Association of Interpretation can visit the Heartland Region's website at http://naiheartlandregion.weebly.com/ or like the NAI Heartland Region on Facebook.

2016 Special Event Calendar

Beaver Lake State Park

701-452-2752

blsp@nd.gov

May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
July 16: Visitor Appreciation Day /Picnic Social
Sept. 24: National Public Lands Day

Cross Ranch State Park

701-794-3731

crsp@nd.gov

May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
June 17-18: Missouri River Bluegrass Festival
July 30: Bluegrass Goes Pink

Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park

701-667-6340

falsp@nd.gov

May 1: Interpretive sites open
May 8: Mother's Day Hike
May 20: Campground full services
May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
June 10-12: Halloween in June
June 19: Take Dad to the Park Hike
July 4: Blockhouse Fireworks Viewing
July 17: Beat the Heat Hike
July 23: Summer Celebration
July 23: Custer's Color Charge
July 30: Evening at On-A-Slant
Aug. 14: Dog Days of Summer Hike
August 27: Corn and Frank Fest
Sept. 18: Fall Colors Hike
Sept. 25: Interpretive Sites Close
Oct.: Haunted Fort (Various Dates)
Oct. 23: Little Monsters Kids Bash
Nov. 6: Blaze Orange Hike
Dec. 10: Custer's Christmas Dinner
Dec. 11: Light up the Blockhouse

Fort Ransom State Park

701-973-4331

frsp@nd.gov

May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
June 10-11: Halloween at FRSP
June 25: 40th Anniversary and Customer Appreciation Day
July 9-10: FRSP Sodbusters Show
July 22-23: Christmas in July
August 5-6: Kids' Weekend
Sept. 10-11: FRSP Sodbusters Show

Fort Stevenson State Park

701-337-5576

fssp@nd.gov

May 28-30: Sky Fest Over FSSP
May 30: Military Appreciation Day

June 4: National Trails Day
June 11: National Marina Day
June 25-26: Frontier Military Days
June 26: Visitor Appreciation Day
July 4: Independence Day Celebration
July 15-16: Governor's Cup
July 16: Junior Governor's Cup
July 30: Club de Skinautique Water Ski Show
August 27: Beach Party
August 27: Fort Stevenson Regatta

Grahams Island State Park

701-766-4015

dlsp@nd.gov

May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
June 24-25: Devils Lake Chamber Walleye Tournament
August 19-20: Masters Walleye Circuit Walleye Tournament

Icelandic State Park

701-265-4561

isp@nd.gov

May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
June 12: Sunday Afternoon in the Hall
June 17-18: Historic Preservation Tour
July 21: ISP Color 5KWalk/Run
August 12-14: Kids' Weekend
Sept. 11: Pioneer Machinery Show
Sept. 18: Book Discussion
Nov. 20: Christmas Open House

Lake Metigoshe State Park

701-263-4651

lmsp@nd.gov

May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
June 25: Great American Backyard Campout
July 3: Bike Parade
July 9: Beach Olympics
July 29-31: Halloween in July
Aug. 5-7: NDG&F Becoming an Outdoors Woman Workshop

Lake Sakakawea State Park

701-487-3315

lssp@nd.gov

May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4:National Trails Day
June 18: BNI Walleye Classic
August 19-20: Great Planers Salmon Derby

Lewis and Clark State Park

701-859-3071

lcsp@nd.gov

May 23: Victoria Day Weekend
May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 3-4: Safe Play: Safety Weekend
June 4: National Trails Day and Friends of LCSP Picnic
June 10-11: Halloween Weekend
July 1-4: Independence Day Weekend
July 29-30: Christmas in July
August 5-6: Family Fun Weekend

Turtle River State Park

701-594-4445

trsp@nd.gov

May 22: Fish n' Fun
May 30: Military Appreciation Day
June 4: National Trails Day
July 15-17: Halloween in July
July 22-24: National Moth Week Kick-Off Celebration

NDPRD presents annual awards

The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD) presented its Merit, Special Merit and Cal Renner Award of Excellence during its All Staff meeting in December

The Cal Renner Award of Excellence is the department's highest award named after Cal Renner, the NDPRD's carpenter whose commitment to excellence year in and year out, combined with his ability to work with a variety of individuals, employees and volunteers set an outstanding example for excellence.

The 2015 Cal Renner Award winner is **North Eastern North Dakota Heritage Association (NENDHA)**. The NENDHA has been a part of Icelandic State Park over parts of the last four decades. The organization is a driving force in interpreting and preserving the ethnic heritage of northeast North Dakota.

The North Eastern North Dakota Heritage Association was recognized by NDPRD with the department's highest honor, the Cal Renner Award of Excellence. In the picture (from left to right) are Ernie Olson and Alfred Byron (president) representing the NENDHA), Icelandic State Park Manager Justin Robinson and NDPRD Director Mark Zimmerman.

The Special Merit awards are presented to those people and organizations outside the NDPRD who go "above and beyond" in their support of the agency and its objectives. This year's Special Merit Award winners are:

The **JakeStar Foundation** is recognized for its extraordinary effort in Off-Highway Vehicle safety certifications. For three years the Foundation has sponsored the OHV safety simulator in LaMoure and Oakes, ND. This year JakeStar sponsored every OHV course conducted by North Dakota Parks and Recreation. The organization paid for the certification of over 200 kids.

Cashman Nursery was recognized not only for their work in helping ND Parks and Recreation with providing the required trees and shrubs needed for the Department's 50th Anniversary Tree Plantings, but also for the outstanding business relationship with the Department throughout the years.

Cloverdale Foods is honored for its instrumental partnership in the success of the department's 50th Anniversary Celebrations. Cloverdale foods provided at no charge, thousands of hot dogs, brats, and all the paper products needed to serve them at every celebration across the state.

Sara Lee Bimbo Bakeries consistently went out of their way week after week this summer to make sure the buns were fresh and available. Even through the numerous changes in preorders, Store Manager Kelly Roberts accommodated the ND Parks and Recreation Department by opening the store early and providing high quality products with an enormous smile and excellent customer service.

Pride Dairy topped off the 50th Anniversary Celebrations throughout all the state parks by not only donating 100 percent of its product, Smore's Ice Cream, but also by creating an ice cream flavor specifically for the ND Parks and Recreation 50th Anniversary.

Old Dutch Foods is recognized for its commitment to providing single serve packages of potato chips for all 50th Anniversary Celebrations in every state park, the majority of which was donated.

Lawrence Gapp II, who is a member of the US Customs & Border Protection's Honor Guard, took it upon himself, while working through his chain of command, to gain approval from the US Customs & Border Patrol to travel, using their own funding and equipment, and to solely train the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department Honor Guard.

The **Mandan Lions Club** and its members Kevin Vannett, Jeff Erickson and Bill Schott for their part in initiating a campaign to purchase a "people mover" trailer and for the transfer of ownership of the trailer to Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park. This transportation enhancement for park campers and day visitors has proven to be a popular and much appreciated service.

The **Duttenhefner Family** embodies the volunteer spirit through their assistance at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park. Over 100 volunteer hours have been logged by Darryl, Kathy, Robyn, Jenna, Jessica, and Kassidy in helping with Haunted Fort, monthly hikes, 50th Anniversary Tree Planting, and natural disasters. In the aftermath of destructive wind storms this year, the entire family immediately worked with park staff in checking all campers, taking reports, and helping to remove downed trees, as well as feeding all park staff working the recovery.

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Learning about syrup making at FSSP

A breezy spring day greeted visitors to Fort Stevenson State Park on April 2, there to participate in the park's Maple Sugaring Event, and the educational experience is on its way to becoming an annual event at the park under the guidance of Park Manager Chad Trautman.

"It was a pleasure to host the Maple Sugaring Event, I really enjoyed seeing all of the families running around in the park," Trautman says. "We will be expanding the event next year with more activities."

About 400 people made a trek to the park to participate in the activities which included tapping the trees, collecting the sap and processing it into syrup. The Fort Stevenson Foundation gave tours of the Guardhouse and Jesse Hanson brought his team of horses and a wagon to give rides throughout the park.

"During the event we gave tours on the process at Fort Stevenson State Park, starting with the history of maple sap, how the park collects the sap and how we process the sap into syrup," Trautman describes. "We collect sap when the nights are below freezing and the days are above freezing during the spring. The sap season typically runs for six weeks or until the trees begin to bud."

Crowds of 30 or more people ranging in age from small youngsters to grandparents gathered around Trautman who demonstrated the collection process and provided a history of making syrup. The park taps 16 box elders and four silver maples found in the park. The trees are related to maple trees and Trautman says the box elders are actually referred to as "Manitoba maples" in Canada.

FSSP Maintenance Supervisor Mitch Olson demonstrates how the syrup in processed.

FSSP Park Manager Chad Trautman explains how maple trees are tapped to start the process of making syrup.

"I get many comments from people saying that box elders are not maple, when in fact, box elders are maple trees.

"Each day we collect the sap and keep it refrigerated," he explains. "Once we get a stock pile we boil down the sap. We boil the sap until it reaches 219 degrees, at this point it is considered maple."

Members of the crowd had an opportunity to taste the sap as it came out of the trees and they found it's nowhere near as palatable as it is when finally processed.

Tapping a tree for sap, explains Trautman, is similar to taking blood from people and that they will take only about 10 percent of the total sap running through the tree. A greater amount will eventually damage the tree. The tapping season typically runs for six weeks or until the trees begin to bud.

The park allowed visitors to taste the final product, providing a breakfast

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New faces and changing places at NDPRD

During the course of the past two years there have been several new faces joining the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department staff. There were also some promotions and employees moving to new parks. Here's a look at new faces and old faces in new places.

Hagen

Tupa

Kolbow

Balaban

Matzke

Olson

Cardino

At Turtle River State Park in December, **Larry Hagen** became Park Manager replacing Steve Crandall who retired. Hagen managed Lake Metigoshe State Park for 24 years. **Sonia Acevedo-Tupa** is the new Administrative Assistant, also joining the staff in December of 2015. Earlier that year in May, the park hired **Erika Kolbow** as the Park Interpreter.

Tonya Balaban is the new Administrative Assistant at Fort Stevenson State Park joining the staff on January 1 of this year. **Jarod Matzke** is the Park Ranger at Fort Stevenson, effective November of 2014 and **Mitchell Olson** was hired as Maintenance Supervisor in December of 2015.

Tamy Cardino became Administrative Assistant at Icelandic State Park in January 2016 joining Park Ranger **Matthew Korhnak** who was hired in November of 2015.

Korhnak

Demming

Tratebas

Lee

Phillips

Binstock

Modlin

William Demming, the long-time Park Ranger at Lake Metigoshe State Park, was promoted to manager effective April 1, as Larry Hagen moved to Turtle River State Park. **Susan Tratebas** became LMSP's Administrative Assistant in November of 2015. Replacing Demming as Park Ranger is **Chris Lee** who had been Park Ranger at Lake Sakakawea State Park since February 2015.

At Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park **Penny Phillips** was hired as Administrative Assistant in November of 2015.

Former Icelandic State Park Park Ranger **Char Binstock** made a move to Cross Ranch State Park to take a similar position.

Tyler Modlin, formerly Maintenance Supervisor at Fort Stevenson State Park, was promoted to Manager of Fort Ransom State Park in March of 2015. He replaced John Kwapinski who retired many years with the NDPRD.

Several new faces are found at the NDPRD Headquarters in Bismarck. **Audrey Kroll** became Administrative Assistant in April 2014 and then in August of that same year **Julie Koth-Grabar** became Administrative Officer replacing Carol Jorgenson who retired. **Brendan Ternes** was hired in January 2015 as Maintenance and Project Coordinator. **Pearl Schneider,** who formerly worked at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park joined the Headquarters staff in June of 2015 as an Administrative Assistant.

Kroll

Grabar

Ternes

Schneider

Kirkey

Hanna

Smith

Elsner

O'Conner

With the addition of Washburn's Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan to the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department several "new" employees were added to staff including Site Supervisor **Kevin Kirkey,** Interpreter **Robert Hanna** and Administrative Officer **Rhonda Smith**. Former Fort Stevenson State Park Maintenance Supervisor **Wade Elsner** joined the LCIC staff as Maintenance Supervisor in August of 2015.

Terry O'Conner is the new Maintenance Supervisor at Lewis & Clark State Park.

Syrup making continued from page 7

with pancakes and sausage at the de Trobriand Bay Lodge. Various local groups helped out with preparation, cooking and serving including the Fort Stevenson Foundation, Garrison Boy Scouts, Garrison Optimist Club, Garrison Fire Fighters, St. Nicholas Catholic Church and Relay for Life.

"I felt the event went very well," Trautman says. "The weather could not have been better. We fielded many positive comments on how the event went and many people asked if we are going to do more next year."

The park has invited school groups to come out to Fort Stevenson State Park where staff will put on a demonstration of how maple syrup is made.

Construction continued from page 1

structures are not.

"The new comfort station at Fort Stevenson will be replacing the structure on Fort Stevenson's east campground loop which is undersized for the amount of use it gets," Hanson says. "The new comfort station will double the number of showers available."

Along with the normal separate facilities for men and women, there will be a family assisted restroom with a toilet, sink and showers. This will be of real benefit to families with younger children.

The situation at Icelandic State Park is much the same, according to Hanson, with the existing facility being maxed out by visitor use. The two comfort stations will have the same floor plans and should be completed by Oct. 1 of this year.

Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park is seeing a major repair project on its paved roads and walking path along with the upgrade of 18 primitive camp sites to electrical. There will also be a project to widen the road to Cavalry Square and pave the parking lot adjacent Cavalry Square. Most of the work was needed because of water damage related to the 2011 flood.

Cross Ranch State Park is seeing the upgrade of 35 of its camping sites from primitive to electrical in the main camping area. Prior to this only the Sanger Campground, located south of the main campground, provided electricity for campsites. The park is also getting a full-service yurt, similar to those at Fort Ransom State Park.

Awards continued from page 6

After the devastating fire at Cross Ranch left Park Manager Eric Lang and his family with very little, **Kristen Olson, Laura Gardner and the Labor of Love Helping Hands** organization stepped up to the plate. Volunteers from the organization immediately provided the family with essentials while Eric and his family could focus on the bigger issues of dealing with the loss of a home. They also planned a benefit fundraiser to help with the financial difficulties of replacing countless items lost, and opened their hearts to offer their support and a friendly caring smile.

North Central Electric Cooperative has promoted a volunteer work day for several years. Each May, approximately 20 NCE employees and their family members show up, rain or shine, at Lake Metigoshe State Park to provide a "shot in the arm" and help get the park on track by building docks, repairing and upgrading playgrounds, sprucing up trails, repairing picnic tables, and general park clean up. Over 600 hours of volunteer labor have benefited Lake Metigoshe State Park over the years.

The **Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation** generously supported the NDPRD Photo Challenge as part of the 50th Anniversary Celebration by providing lodging, two rounds of golf at Bully Pulpit, two tickets to the Pitchfork Fondue, two tickets for the Medora Musical, and two tickets to the Medora Salute Show.

Sara Prout, of Grand Forks, is one of those business contacts that is so very much appreciated and valued by NDPRD for her part in coordinating donations and help for special events at Turtle River State Park.

Keri Wanner, has worked tirelessly advocating safe, groomed snowmobile trails and snowmobile safety education for many years. ND Parks and Recreation recognizes her efforts in working with the non-profit Snowmobile North Dakota as well as her support and advocacy for all ND trails, and her work on the Recreational Trail Program Advisory Committee and numerous highway vehicle clubs and non-motorized user groups.

Merit Awards are presented to those employees of the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department who go "above and beyond" in their support of the agency and its objectives. This year's selections were:

Terry Anderson for his dedication and willingness to give up family time during his scheduled time off to assist in the renovation of the Park Manager residence at Fort Ransom State Park.

Gabe Sattler has worked diligently to make sure the ingenuity, outside of the box thinking, and unorthodox techniques for subcontracts are following the quality control standards necessary to build two full-service yurts at Fort Ransom State Park.

Brendan Ternes was put to the test to oversee construction of the new residence at Cross Ranch State Park when the former home was destroyed by fire.

Matt Gardner for his outstanding efforts in guiding the operations and management of the transition of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan to NDPRD.

Grahams Island State Park and **Icelandic State Park** are commended for their work in the establishment of upgraded park interpretive amphitheaters in their respective parks.

Fort Stevenson State Park for its efforts in a special interpretive event of tree tapping and maple syrup making from the Box Elder trees in abundance at the park.

Brad Pozarnsky for his role in developing the NDPRD Honor Guard.

Justin Robinson, Char Binstock, Ryan Nelson, Erik Dietrich and **Ryan Gardner** – members of the NDPRD Honor Guard – for their dedication and perseverance to complete the strenuous Honor Guard training requirements.

2016 Order Form

North Dakota State Park Annual Vehicle Permit

The 2016 Annual Vehicle Permit for North Dakota state parks can be ordered by mail at a cost of $25 each. ND residents ages 65 and older can receive a discount price of $20. Permits come with a card and envelope making them ideal for gift giving. Make checks or money orders payable to the ND Parks and Recreation Dept. and mail to:

North Dakota Parks and Recreation Dept.
PO Box 5594
Bismarck, ND 58506-5594

Name_____ **Phone**_____

Mailing Addresss_____

City_____**State**____**Zip**_____

e-mail address_____

Vehicle license number(s) on which permit will be used:

_____

Quantity	Cost	Total
_____2016 annual permit	$25/each	$_____
_____ND resident 65 and older Date of birth required for senior discount.	$20/each	$_____
_____number gift envelopes		

If permit is given as gift please provide the permit holder's above information

Disabled veterans and former POWs must apply in person at parks or Bismarck office to receive special discount.

The North Dakota Parks and Recreation encourages the use of its internet site www.parkrec.nd.gov for the purchase of Annual Vehicle Permits. Secure sales can be made through either credit or debit cards online.

North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department
PO Box 5594
Bismarck, ND 58506-5594

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