

The Tent Peg

Western Carolina University

Parks and Recreation Management Program

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A note from the Editors:

Fall usually indicates the change of one season to another, bringing about a spectacular and vast array of colors. While the dusk of winter promises the dawn of spring beauty, we can look forward to new beginnings. For Western Carolina University, this may represent the end of our lives as a student, and the beginning of a career as a professional. As a major part of the Parks and Recreation Management curriculum, we strive to become the best professional we can. Though class work is a large part of our lives, we can only strive to better ourselves through personal excursions, discussions, involvement, and active learning. Because these experiences play such a large role in our personal and academic lives, we are driven to share our thoughts and values with others. In this semester's Tent Peg, we have offered many of our own stories and life lessons to provoke others to think, and want to learn from our adventures. The following pages are filled with memories and matters that have a large impact on our lives. We as a department thank you for your support, and deeply appreciate the time you devote to the success of our program.

Sincerely,

Kayla Chipley and Jennifer Stogner-Lee

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Closing of our National Parks

By: Dr. Ben Tholkes

In my PRM 250 class, Foundations of Parks and Recreation, we spend a great deal of time discussing the value of our parks and recreation areas. I feel the PRM 250 students need to clearly understand the value of recreational lands because some day they will be advocates for these recreation land areas. We discuss the fact that recreation lands provide areas for physical growth, social interaction, and educational opportunities, as well as economic benefits for the surrounding communities. A good example of the importance of recreation lands was demonstrated during the recent government shutdown.

When the government shutdown was looming, people immediately thought about the national parks. What will the shutdown mean to the national parks? Can we still drive through parks? Will the campgrounds and restrooms remain open? Can we hike the trails if the park is closed? Will Old Faithful still erupt? Who will feed the bear and elk? There were not many federal agencies that the public expressed concerns about, but the closing of our national parks (and forests) caused great concern.

When the government shutdown was implemented, all the news agencies showed closed signs at national park areas. People cared and did not want to see the national parks closed. In fact, as the government shutdown dragged on, state governments and private individuals were willing to spend their money to reopen the national parks. The state of Tennessee was willing to spend \$300,000 to reopen Great Smoky Mountains National Park for 5 days. Luckily, the government shutdown ended shortly after Tennessee made this generous offer.

What lessons can we learn from the government shutdown? One, we should never

shutdown the government again. Two, the American public supports and values our national lands. Three, this support should be demonstrated through adequate funding for park facilities and personnel. Four, I could tell that the elk were very happy to see me return to my patrol duties last Saturday night.



A Soul Awakening

By: Emily Shapiro

As the sun peaked its way above the land, the intense rays felt like glass across my eyes, causing me to squint. I felt as if I had been awake for days, though I had only been up a few hours earlier than the sun. The loud hum of the bus was almost soothing as it was the only familiar sound. As my eyes tried to adjust to the new light, I began to capture the images of my surrounding environment, as dust began to flood the bus and my throat felt like sand paper with each swallow. Though the sun was still intense, I couldn't peel my eyes away from the window, and with each

passing moment I tried to take a snapshot of all that I was seeing. I was desperate to hold onto this moment; I had waited for it for so long. Once I arrived in the slums, the land was bustling with people, all of which seemed to be looking directly at me. There were no longer any establishments, and it seemed that our bus was one of the only vehicles to have ever entered the area. As we passed by the many groups of people, I began to feel bothered. Looking into each of their eyes produced in me an emotion that I had never felt before. It was as if their whole world had just come crashing down on them and no matter what strength I was bringing to them, I was destined to fail. Suddenly the word came to me, nearly slipping out of my mouth and breaking the deep silence of the bus - hopeless. I felt hopeless.

I tried to take in a deep breath, as if breathing in would bestow on me some sort of will and power to make it through. As my feet touched the hard ground, I was immediately assaulted by an intense smell. The stench was awful, almost causing me to gag; I took a deep gulp and dismissed the intense feeling. The land was so desolate. Around me were large fires burning. It was as if they were attempting to burn away what was only barely hanging on. People came from every corner. Many women passed with large jugs of water on their heads and I watched as they walked bare-footed past me. Though the water seemed heavy and their feet sore, the look in their eyes made me understand that this was one of the easier journeys they had traveled in life. In small parts of the land there were tiny shacks. Most of them were made of milk cartons and small scraps of tin. It was as if an American had emptied their trashcan on the ground and these people called it home. I felt sick. My stomach began to turn in knots and my eyes started to well up with uncontrollable tears. I tried to swallow as I didn't want the people to feel pitied.

As we were led further into the township, I was in a state of disbelief. I began to feel like I was watching someone else walk through the slums. It was as if they weren't my eyes capturing it, but rather, I was watching a recording of

someone else's experience. With each step, my heart grew heavier and heavier. It was nearly unbearable, and I felt as if my knees may simply give out from under the weight. As we passed the small shacks, many people would come out to stare at us. By the looks they gave me, I knew in all certainty that I was an alien to this place. As we were led by an associate, a native Kenyan who had lived and worked in the slums, he continually shouted out facts about the people and their way of life. Before coming to Kenya, I had read many things in an attempt to educate myself and prevent any sort of unexpected surprise. The facts, however, seemed different now. I now saw them not as words on paper, or in an article, but viewed them as beating hearts. I found myself only catching bits of what he was saying. He explained that the small shacks housed anywhere from three to seven people. He also explained that nearly one hundred percent of the people living in the slums were infected with AIDS, and that he himself had AIDS. My mind tried its hardest to grasp the information while my heart struggled to dismiss it. The deeper into the slums we went, the more the burden weighed on me. I could feel the cold sting of truth and the unbearable weight of reality.

As we turned the corner to what seemed like another path towards destruction, I heard an unfamiliar sound. The sound began as a faint buzzing and as my ears tried to grasp it, it turned into a symphony. I suddenly became frantic to find the source. My steps changed from a shameful drag to an eager sprint. The sound was so close, nearly piercing now, and I knew that I was about to find the answer to the many questions that I had yet to ask. As I came over the hill I saw what, to this day, is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen. There in the midst of such sorrow stood hundreds of children singing and calling for us. Seeing this evoked in me an emotion that I had claimed to know for so long, but knew that this was the first time I had ever truly experienced it. It was hope.

I quickly ran into the swarm of children, inspired by their joy. I began to hold them and play with them, breaking every social boundary. I

didn't speak their language, or know their stories, but somehow I found that love was the clearest way to communicate. I knew nothing about these kids, only that I was completely and utterly captivated by them and that I would never to be the same again. As I held the hands of a future that I didn't know and couldn't foresee, I realized that it was I who was the "poor one." I was ridden with the disease of materialism and had numbed my heart from undergoing a true soul awakening. I knew then why I had come to this place. I came to be saved: Saved from the idleness of life, saved from the numbing of my heart, but mostly, I had been saved from myself.

Finally free from my self-inflicted chains, I spent the summer in pure joy and contentment. I began to forget the world outside of Kenya and continued to live in hope. I learned throughout the summer that all of the kids I worked with were orphans. Most did not even have a place to lay their heads. Many were ill and grew sicker as the summer went on, and I felt myself suffering with them. And yet, the hope that they brought to me continued to burst through the seams of my soul. I realized that I couldn't live without them and that despite all of the barriers, they had become my family.

Once the summer came to a close, I felt the harsh burn of reality. I didn't know how to leave. I knew that leaving meant the possibility of never seeing them again. I knew that leaving meant becoming enslaved by the emptiness of life without them. Though I haven't been back for some time, I still see their faces every day. I remember every feeling, every laugh and every tear. Though I went to Kenya with the will to change the world, it was my world that was forever changed. I know now that the joy and peace I found in them was a sanctuary for my soul. I know now that it is I who am the orphan, destined to someday find my way back home.



The Importance of Experiential Education

By: Sam Judson

Perhaps some people learn well by sitting in lectures all day long, but I am certainly not one of those people. I am currently taking two lecture classes to fulfill liberal arts requirements and the greatest challenge of my week is simply mustering the energy to pay attention throughout them. All of my Parks and Recreation classes and the Recreation Therapy course I am attending are either completely based on student projects or devote large portions of the contact time between professor and pupil to actual practice of the studied topic. The amount of material that I retain after one of these classes is less linked to the material covered than to the method through which it is presented. Even a course that covers interesting material pales beside the course that is taught in an effective manner.

When I talk of experiential education, I do not want to only discuss popping outside and hiking or boating or participating in group development exercises. I also want to include working to build a program proposal or a risk management plan. A teacher can talk about building a program or working through one process or another, but the student comes away

with nothing. It is far easier to understand how to secure equipment for a program by securing equipment than it is to learn from discussing it in a sterile learning environment. For the most part, our Parks and Recreation Program does an excellent job at providing us with these opportunities.

However, experiential education should not simply be the domain of outdoor professionals. Chancellor Belcher was quite thrilled to recently announce that over 10,000 students were enrolled for the fall semester and that freshman retention had risen to nearly 79 percent. While these are admirable accomplishments, it could still rise. One of the simplest solutions that I see is to get low level courses, especially those attached to the liberal studies curriculum, more active in the learning that is taking place. To come to University and to be greeted by a large classroom where one sits for an hour-long lecture strikes me as a poor step up from previous educational experiences. There should not be classes that students just have to grin and bear the burden. Challenge should definitely be present in the university classroom; boredom should not.

Mountain Bike Safety

By: Dalton Payne

As a person who mountain bikes frequently, I think it is important for one to take certain safety precautions. These can be things like always wearing a helmet when riding a bike, or having good judgment on trails that may be too difficult for you. Taking these safety precautions when mountain biking can make the ride much more enjoyable, and helps keep the person riding away from injury or fatalities. Biking is a great exercise, but is also something that can be enjoyed in the outdoor recreation area. It is important to keep mountain biking safe and enjoyable.

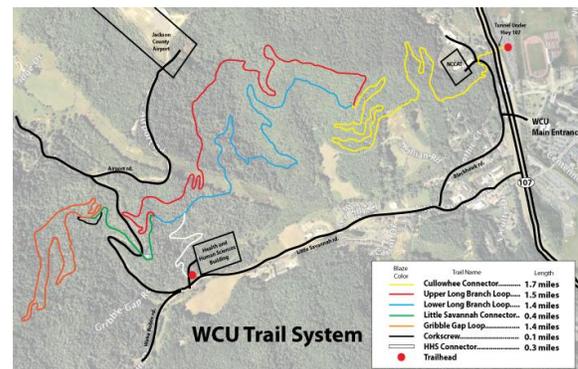
When purchasing a helmet, it is important to get the right size. If one were to buy a helmet that is too loose for one's head, it may easily come off while riding and may not be protective if the person were to crash and land on his or her head. If a helmet is too small, it may be uncomfortable to

the person and can cause major problems while riding on the trail, like affecting blood flow around the head. It is also important to try to buy a helmet that is in good quality, and not one that has been used or is in bad condition.

Judgment on the trail is very important. There are many trails with not much difficulty to them, but some other trails may be vigorous and have areas that may be more difficult than the riders' skill levels. If one were to come upon a creek crossing on the trail and feel any doubt about one's ability to make it across by bike, then that person should dismount and simply walk across. A person should only do trails that match that individual's skill level, and build up to more difficult trail levels instead of going straight to a trail that is much too difficult for him or her.

Safety is important in mountain biking, and it should be stressed to every rider in the world. It is good to have rules and regulations at every trail in regard to safety of the riders. If riders follow these safety guidelines, then they have a much better chance of steering away from injuries and are able to enjoy their ride.

The WCU trail system is a great trail for beginners and also can be a great trail for more experienced riders. There are quite a few sections on the trail that can test a biker. There are many different long climbs and many short and steep climbs. There are also great downhill sections as well. The trail consists of different colored markings on the trees. Each colored marking represents which trail branch a biker is riding, and there is also a map at each of the trailheads.



Have You Ever Been Hiking?

By: Clayton Johansen

Have you ever been hiking? You can go just about anywhere as long as it's outside. One of my favorite places to go hiking over the summer was Silver Run Falls outside of Cashiers, NC. I would also go hiking at Cullowhee Falls outside of Glenville, NC over the summer.

I would go to Silver Run Falls all the time, because it was less than five minutes from the restaurant Cornucopia where I worked over the summer. The first waterfall is less than five minutes from the road, making it a great hike if you have young children or want to take anyone elderly who wouldn't be able to accomplish a regular hike that normally takes longer.

When you pull off the side of the road, leave your car and follow the path; there is a little bridge to cross and then there are two paths on the right to get to the waterfall and swimming area. If you keep going straight instead of turning right, you hit a mountain wall with some roots hanging out of it. Something that few people know is that if you're feeling brave, adventurous, and prepared enough; you can climb that wall and it leads to a second waterfall.

Now getting to the second waterfall can be a little challenging, or you can take the easy way. You can follow the path for a few minutes and then let it drop you off in the river feeding the first waterfall and follow the river-bed up to the second waterfall. That's the way that I learned and like to do it, but it needs to be warm outside to go that way because you will get a little wet. If you go left and keep following the trail, you can make it all the way to the second waterfall, passing an area cleared for a little campsite.

You can continue to follow the trail past the second waterfall, and it will take you to a road that has the river feeding the waterfalls crossing over it. I have no clue where the road comes from or where it leads; I guess that will have to be a hike for another day.

If I ever got a day off of work and felt like hiking, I would go to Cullowhee falls. It's a longer hike than just going to the first waterfall at Silver Run Falls. You pull up and there is a fence blocking the driving path; you just park your car to the left of it, get out, and start following the path down. You go across a little bridge and keep going. Once you make it back up from the valley, the trail shrinks and you continue.

Now you continue down into the valley, which does take a little while. Along the way, you go through tiny little creeks sending water to the river, or really long patches of mud because the ground stays so wet in some places. When you're trying to cross the long patches of mud it can be fun; and you can turn it into a game like when you were a kid, pretending like the mud is hot lava and that you have to cross without getting any on you.

Once you've reached the valley floor, just keep following the trail and you'll get to a place where you can turn right: there is the first waterfall. If you return to the path and keep going straight, you'll get to some large rocks that you have to climb over; once you're over them, you'll see the second waterfall. The second waterfall is a lot better than the first; it has two tiers, and you can climb up to the second tier and look out over the valley floor. Getting to the second tier of the waterfall can be a little tricky, because you climb up a bunch of rocks that are piled on top of each other and you have to cross slick areas of rock where they stay wet from the waterfall's spray.

Hiking is something that can be easy or hard, and is something that all age groups should go out and try to enjoy. I love to go every chance that I get, and hope I always live somewhere that I can go hiking when I feel like it.



Journey to Cullowhee Falls

By: Drew Smith

It was the perfect afternoon for hiking; a few of my buddies and their furry friends were all geared up for our first hike to Cullowhee Falls in Cullowhee, NC. A clear blue day in Cullowhee pulled in piercing blue skies and a breeze that was dawdling off of the mountain tops, eager to cool us off. We packed up a couple of cars and hit the road in the direction of Cashiers, following the directions that we had memorized from a friend who had been there once before. It was five friends with the sun in our faces and the wind at our back: ready to enjoy a beautiful Western North Carolina mountain afternoon.

We were prepared: all of us wearing various assortments of Chacos, Merrells, flannel, headbands, and bugspray. We had plenty of snacks packed to keep us energized throughout the day, and our Camelbaks were filled for the trip. We were at the will of the mountain, ready to see where the winding curves of our hike took us; and we were so excited to face it head on!

Then came that fateful wrong turn: the turn that turned our beautiful day into a 4-hour long escapade of wishing we had cell service, kicking ourselves for not bringing my 4-Wheel Drive vehicle, and generally complaining about the situation. Once we turned down the driveway, I knew something was off. The road became almost impossible to navigate with a terrain covered in large rocks and loose gravel; one I knew would never release the grasp it now had on the Chevy

Cruze and Honda Civic that were slowly creeping down the mountain. We had made a mistake; that much was apparent now. There was no turning back after we started down the road, so we continued forward slowly, once our inspections revealed a house at the end of the long, steep road. Surely, if someone lived here, we could grab some directions and get back on the right path; and we hoped that the car would make it to the house and back out of the alternate driveway we hoped to find. We were wrong.

We did make it to the house, and lucky for us, a very nice gentleman lived there. Unlucky for us, he let us know that there was no way out without 4-Wheel drive, and that even some tow trucks had been stuck down his driveway. You guessed it; there was no alternate driveway and no cell service.

Of course my buddies and I had to give getting back up the driveway a good ole "College Try" – an unsurprisingly unsuccessful one. The realization of our situation started to set in, and we had to depend on the gentleman who lived there to lend us a phone to call two tow trucks. Four hours later and \$500 less in our wallets, we were back at the top of the road, and the day of hiking had slipped right out of our fingertips.

While my friends and I didn't have the best of luck, it made me realize just how easy an uncalculated move can throw a whole day into a spiral; especially when it comes to dealing with Mother Earth. What would we have done if that man hadn't been home? Or worse, what if there hadn't been a house there? We thought we were prepared and we were sorely mistaken. The importance of hiking preparation doesn't stop at sustenance, hydration, and clothing choice; and it is important to realize how easy it is to take a wrong turn in the mountains. While my experience wasn't all that I had wished, that one day taught me a very important lesson in outdoor preparedness. Now I make sure to bring a compass with me on my travels, and my car is armed with a satellite telephone. I also make sure to look up directions through a few different

maps, search engines, and friends; because there is too much beauty to be explored in our backyard for me to waste time being lost in it.

Fishing at WCU

By: Seth Lewallen

A great way to have some fun is going fishing. Fishing is relaxing and very peaceful if you want to get away from the stress of school. You can go by yourself if you want some peace and quiet or bring a bunch of friends to enjoy the excitement of catching fish. If you don't have patience then fishing probably isn't for you. Sometimes you can be there for hours and not catch a thing, but other times you get lucky and pull in a great amount of fish. That's why they call it fishing and not catching.

There are a few things you need to be able to fish. Most importantly you need a fishing license. There are coastland, inland, and trout licenses. To be able to fish in the local area, you need to purchase inland and trout licenses, which include bass and trout. After you get your license, you'll need some fishing gear. The fishing rod I use is a Spinner rod, but most people around here use a fly rod. You will also need some fishing line, weights, swivels, hooks, and bait. Once you get all the equipment you need, go out and enjoy the streams and rivers.

Be sure to lookout for the restrictions in certain areas. Some rivers may have posted signs that say only single hooks and no live bait. Other places may say no restrictions, which mean anything is fair game and you can use live bait, artificial bait, artificial fly, crank baits, and treble hooks. Although I would not recommend a treble hook because sometimes it will kill the fish if it gets hooked the wrong way.

Western North Carolina has many incredible places to fish, including the Tuckasegee River, Pigeon River, Bear lake, Cherokee, and as well as many others. The views are amazing and the fishing is even better. I love bringing friends to fish with me. It makes it an even better experience. The best way to have fun at Western Carolina University is by fishing. The fish are huge and it is the best way to relax and have a blast.

We have some of the best areas to fish here in Western North Carolina. There are so many places to go within this area. The trout in the Western part of the state are very fun and challenging to catch. The best feeling is having that big trout on the line and

bringing him in. It is an amazing feeling and an even better experience. There are many people who love the sport of fishing and should keep on fishing. It is a very fun time and I will continue to do it for the rest of my life.

Yosemite Trip

By: Michael Milideo

It had been close to fifteen years since I had been to Yosemite National Park. Staying up all night in order to catch the bus out of San Francisco was beginning to take its toll, but the excitement of being back was keeping me awake. Disembarking from the bus, I was a bit shocked. The amount of people that were in the park was almost overwhelming. Then I was saddled by further bad news. The rangers in the valley strongly suggested that I not attempt the thru hike of the John Muir trail due to the record snow that had fallen over the past winter, and that some of the trails weren't "passable". Not to mention, the campsite was full, and I would have to camp outside of it, and try to get in on a first come first served basis. My plans were shattered.

While sitting on a log by the buses, contemplating my options, a fellow camper came by and suggested heading to Tuolumne Meadows, which had recently opened for the season. So after sleeping through that bus ride, I arrived and settled down into an open \$5 backpacker campsite. The next morning I woke up, got some breakfast and lunch from the camp store, and headed out to explore some of the most beautiful country I have seen. Five days I struck out on different trails. Going from being "slightly" lost in snow banks by Cathedral Peak, to relaxing in an eddy pool above Waterwheel Falls, or taking in the Tuolumne Highlands from on top Lembert Dome.

The guilt of camping in a backpacker site, and only day hiking was beginning to weigh on me, so I felt it was time to make the three day trek back down to the Valley. I had to be at the ranger station early to ensure that I got my permit to travel across the park over three days and nights. The trail was hard going for the first day, walking uphill in the soft afternoon snow in order to ascend over a ridge in order to head down to into the valley. I camped by a small lake that had a closed down camp facility. It was here I received my first bitter lesson about not having a bug net hat. The next morning I rode the sun and gradual

downhill into what I thought was going to be my campsite for the night, but getting in so early, I decided to go for a quick swim and try to head for Little Yosemite Valley a few miles down the way. It was on this leg I learned my second lesson about bug hats. I arrived into Little Yosemite Valley at a half jog (as fast as one can go with 40lbs on their back) waving my trekking poles frantically in the air around my head and bare legs, with the buzz of the mosquitoes chasing me the entire way.

That night I met a nice family by the communal campfire, and since I had an extra day to kill due to my earlier decision to keep going, I took their suggestion to head up the famous Half Dome. It was a longer hike up than I thought it would be, and I didn't arrive until the afternoon. At the base of the "harder" parts there was a ranger checking trail hikers for their permits allowing them to summit Half Dome. After feigning some ignorance, and smiling, the ranger decided that it wouldn't be any extra harm to let me up, even without the right permit!

Nothing had prepared me for what was next. The last leg of the hike looked straight up the backside of Half Dome. Going up its back were two steel cables, a little over shoulders width apart. I sat, snacked, hydrated, and watched what looked like ants go up and down these cables. I do not favor heights to begin with, and as I stand at the bottom of these cables and put on the best pair of worn out gloves to grip the cable with I wonder if this is a good idea. It couldn't be if a gentleman and his son just got off because he thought he wouldn't get all the way up right? I put on the gloves and look up one more time – ants disappearing over the crest of the dome. With a deep breath and a death grip I hold on to those cables, wishing I was clipped in to something. It was a bit nerve racking passing people less than two feet away going the opposite direction, or finagling past people stuck or taking a break. The pay off was unbelievable. Being able to look over Yosemite Valley was a view I will never forget. Some water and another snack while wondering how in the world those chipmunks got all the way up here, and then I was off back down those frightful cables. At the bottom, I took a deep breath and took off the now all the way worn through gloves, and head back down for my campsite.

The next day I made it back into the Valley, and made my way to the taco, and pizza

stands, and was barely able to finish my beverages before I had to catch the bus back to civilization. I had been in Yosemite with my family as a child, and still have some fond memories from that trip. Being able to come back, and have a trip of my own was something special as well. I am happy to have had the opportunity to experience both.



Climbing Bukhan San: Korean Attitudes Towards Outdoor Recreation

By: Jennifer Stogner-Lee

Moments after departing the city bus on the outskirts of Seoul, we passed a quiet Buddhist temple and ascended the steep, rocky slope of a mountain named *Bukhan San*. It was a cold and clear January morning, and dozens of Koreans were already geared up and hiking single-file at a fast clip, without stopping to look at scenery. To Koreans, the activity that I called hiking but they knew as "mountain climbing," was exercise and a social gathering. Nature existed as an outdoor gym, rather than the main attraction. In fact, there were actual man-made gyms on the mountain itself, with many middle-aged and elderly men and women pedaling away as fast as they could go on stationary bicycles, elliptical machines, and resistance machines; all to the tune of frenetic, high-pitched, traditional music which played outdoors at the mountain gym all day.

To Americans, nature is often a place to experience solitude and meditation. It can also be a place to enjoy with friends; but the trees, mountains, waterfalls, and fresh air are all a part of what we are visiting. We watch the animals play, examine the plants, take photographs, and swim in the water. We look out over the vast

expanses and take stock of our lives. We stare up into tall Redwoods and feel small.

To Koreans, nature is the backdrop against which they count calories and gossip with friends and family. Some of them roll out a blanket and get drunk, offering up a glass of *makeoli* to passersby. During our ascent, one already drunken old man raised his bottle and inquired of me, “*Meeguk Saram?*” I smiled and practiced the first full sentence I had learned in the language, “*Na nun Meeguk Saram imneeda.*” He was offering to share his alcohol because I was American. Through conversations with my Korean friends and American expat friends living in Korea, I gained the understanding that the idea of anyone going solo anywhere is perceived as odd and perplexing by most Koreans. It is a very social culture and the point of a day trip to the mountain is to spend the day with other people, not with the mountain.

On *Bukhan San*, I was struck by the absence of squirrels or songbirds. My native partner explained sadly that his people had long ago killed off most of the wildlife in the entire country. I later learned that the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea is, ironically, the most protected piece of temperate zone wilderness in the world. It is the only small patch of land on which wild animals still roam free and mostly undisturbed in Korea. It may well be the only place where the Siberian tiger and Half Moon bear might still be found alive in the entire Korean peninsula. However, calling it a wildlife preserve would be a stretch, as the animals are not protected against the old landmines which still remain there to this day. The ones that survive can often be seen walking around with one or two limbs missing. The danger of landmines pales in comparison to the danger that faces them in other parts of Korea, where hunters and vehicles, in addition to the long-forgotten landmines, all combine to threaten wildlife outside of the DMZ. The hidden landmines from a sixty-year-old war still occasionally maim or kill human hikers, particularly in the Eastern part of the country. A few natives are concerned about the plight of the animals, and there have been efforts to track Siberian tigers in the DMZ and to re-introduce the Half Moon bear into the wild.

Overall, I found it interesting that nature was so integrated into life in Seoul, yet most people were still so disconnected from it. The

metropolis was generously sprinkled with parks, green spaces, miniature forests, statuary gardens, indoor botanical gardens, and even an underground subway garden. But the average citizen seemed more interested in man-made things and social contact. In Seoul, as may be the case in many cities worldwide, nature had become a backdrop for social interaction.



It Is Not Just For Park Rangers

By: Madison Hearne

A majority of the conversations that I have with people that start out with the question, “What is your major?” end with the other question, “Oh, so you want to be a Park Ranger?”

Park Rangers are wonderful and hold an essential position within the Park and Recreation profession, but that is not all that Parks and Recreation Management entails. This goes to show how little awareness that society, in general, has about Parks and Recreation. The lack of awareness about the entirety of the profession can directly result in a lack of respect, understanding, and appreciation for the profession and its professionals. That is why it is our job and duty as Parks and Recreation majors, and soon-to-be professionals, to educate all with whom we come in contact that our job and our passion is not limited to one job; that it is so much more. Parks and Recreation is a lifestyle, a passion, and should be taken more seriously than it is. This requires understanding that can only be accomplished through education.

Parks and Recreation Management at Western Carolina University is a major that revolves around experiential education. This means that each class involves hands-on experiences and learning opportunities through which students can learn by doing. As a senior in the PRM major, every class that I have taken has involved projects where we were applying our knowledge to the “real world.” I have created and facilitated major programs, created a business, gained certifications, learned and practiced valuable skills, and so much more. I have also had the opportunity to gain many relationships with fellow classmates and instructors that will benefit me in a professional career.

Within the Parks and Recreation Management major are four focus areas. These include Community Recreation, Outdoor Leadership and Instruction, Commercial and Resort Management, and Recreation and Resource Management. These focus areas allow students a chance to dig deeper into their passions to find their calling. I am focusing in Community Recreation, and the classes that I am taking at Western are leaning towards that side of Parks and Recreation. The classes offered in the major are not just general outdoors or wilderness classes but classes that directly apply to our futures as professionals. There are classes that are required of all Parks and Recreation majors; however, there is also some room for students to choose the classes that they feel would improve their knowledge and experience. We are encouraged by our professors to take classes outside of Parks and Recreation to broaden our knowledge. I have taken leadership classes, physical education classes, and hospitality classes; and I am a sociology minor. I believe that all of these classes have helped me in Parks and Recreation and will continue to help me after graduation.

There is a lot more to Parks and Recreation than camping for months in the woods or working for the National Forest Service. While these are, indeed, aspects of the profession; there is so much more of which people are unaware.

We, as Parks and Recreation professionals, have studied and understand what it is that we do; so who better to educate the public than ourselves? Seek every opportunity as a chance to grow and learn. The next time you have a conversation with someone about Parks and Recreation, use that as a time to express your passion and what it is that you do, *exactly*.

Parks and Recreation Management at WCU: When a Program Becomes a Family

By: Jordan T. Davis

Fall, 2012 was the start of my sophomore year at Western Carolina University, but it also started my first year in Parks and Recreation Management. My first year as a college student, I planned on studying Computer Science because I did computer work in high school, and there will always be a job out there in that field. With each line of code I typed, I became more and more dissatisfied: the program was not cutting it for me. This was not what I wanted to do.

During this first year, I took a huge interest in rock climbing: first at the gym, then outside. All I ever wanted to do was to play outside and climb. One day, while in the gym, I was sitting down and resting in between climbs and I got to talk with a fellow climber. He studied Parks and Recreation Management, or Parks and Rec for short. This student talked of the wonders of what he did in the program and what the knowledge gained would allow him to do; I was so mesmerized by his experience that by the end of my freshmen year I had changed to Parks and Rec.

The first class I took was PRM 250: Foundation of Parks and Recreation with Dr. Cass Morgan; she was a “young gun” with a vision and the motivation to accomplish anything. During the course of that semester I learned the basics of the program and field, but I also experienced something which I’d never had the chance to experience before: loving the work I was doing. The papers, the homework assignments, the projects, the group work; I was loving it all! Dr. Morgan also brought something to the table that I

rarely see; and that was passion. The love she showed for her field and her work was inspiring, and I wanted to be just like that.

The class assignments continued to increase, as did the workload, but so did my love for the work. Projects and papers got longer, explanations became more in-depth, assignments became more independent; but the result was the opposite of what you would normally think. I was having a blast! Now you're probably thinking, "There has to be more than just this overly joyous college student out there who enjoys this program." Well, you would be right. Everyone I work with, engage with, converse with; they all love the program and everything they do. With this shared love, passion, and interest; the students begin to become friends with not just each other, but the professors as well.

These friendships and informal interactions result in a more relaxed and enjoyable classroom environment with more easygoing interaction with staff and an increase in fluidity that I have not experienced or witnessed in any other professional environment. The moment I step foot into Reid building I immediately feel at home, where my family is PRM.



Outdoors versus Technology

By: Jason Williamson

This summer, I had the pleasure to spend an ample amount of time in the backcountry of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. One of my favorite aspects of being out in the backcountry is the solitude of not hearing my phone ring or alert me of a text message. As we all know, technology is a great amenity to everyday life; but we do not realize how detached from nature we are until we experience nature without technology.

Every day, as I walk across campus, I see fellow students peering mindlessly into their mobile devices. Occasionally, you will see one of these hypnotized phone zombies walk into a closed door, a wall, another phone zombie, and, yes, the list goes on. Heaven forbid if you were to take their cell phone away or if they were to lose it. It is as if they are completely lost and cut off from humanity.

To these people, their cell phone is an addiction. Some of us who are older and those who have more to do than be connected to a phone might say it is ruining their generation. It is appalling when there are rehabilitation centers that focus on technology addiction such as a cell phone.

I hate to say it, but these people need to experience more of Mother Nature and reap the benefits of our natural surroundings. Every day, the majority of us can be accused of using technology too much, but I know for myself, I can go to the backcountry and hit the reset button. You never realize how nice it is not to have someone calling or texting all the time.

The great outdoors is for all of us to enjoy, and there is something to be found for each and every one of us. I encourage you, next time you see friends or loved ones constantly engulfing themselves in their cell phones; encourage them to go on a hike, a camping trip, or even a picnic in the backcountry. By doing so, you could change their lives for the better.

The Great Island Camp

By: Jarred Burcham

Tucked away out of sight is an island most people only know about because of the majestic lighthouse that sits on one of its shores. What people don't know is that beyond the light house is another twenty or more miles of preserved beach. Toward the north end of the beach is a campsite full of cabins, ranging anywhere from a two person cabin to a huge sixteen person cabin; all of them without power. That's where my father and I, along with our neighbor and his son, stay.

We spend the whole year before making sure our cabin is in line and getting fishing equipment checked and stocked. We also start getting our food together a month in advance. This involves going to the store and getting deli food and also helping the women in our lives cook us delicious meals for dinner, like baked spaghetti and chicken pie. I eat better in a powerless cabin than I do at home.

The real fun begins with a drive down from a small podunk town, starting at midnight so we get to the ferry service right as the sun is coming up. This helps us start out the trip with a beautiful sunrise over the island where we are going to be staying for a week. Usually we arrive at the ferry service about an hour before it opens, so we hang out soaking in the beauty and petting the neighborhood dog.

After everything is open, we get gas, pay for the ferry tickets, and start heading across. After the vehicles are loaded onto the boat, it takes forty-five minutes. Unloading near our cabin, we are welcomed by an old sign that says "Great Island Camp" on it. Not being too far from the cabins, it doesn't take long to meet with the park ranger and get settled in our cabin.

From the cabin, we are able to see the waves of the ocean crash into the dunes and they tempt us to hurry up and get out there with our fishing rods in our hands. We spend the whole

day out on the beach, driving around and finding deep holes where fish might gather. If we start having no luck anywhere a lot of the time, we head back to the cabin and kick back, play some poker, and dive into some home-cooked food that was made for us before we left.

Our trip is not all about catching fish, which is good since sometimes we will get in a slump and not catch anything more than a croaker all week. Then there are some weeks that every time you cast out, a fish is latching onto your bait. Either way, it is a great time every time we head out to the Great Island Camp.



Parasailing

By Megan Luke

The past four years, I've worked at a water sports facility called Kitty Hawk Kites Water Sports in Duck, North Carolina. Along with other water sports activities, one of our biggest sellers is parasailing. Now, when our participants attend a session, they have a much different experience than me or my co-workers. The boat can only hold 6 passengers at a time, and usually one run takes an hour. So once their time has come, participants come right up to our booth, faces shining and ready to fill out their waivers and be offered a picture package on a CD that holds about 80 photos. Next, they have to watch a safety video; this usually clears their minds of any concerns they have. Usually, they think that it's still the 60's and that they will have to run and jump off the beach to get into the air. These days, you simply lift right off the back of the boat. Next, the very

happy and understanding employees send them down to the dock, on their way to an experience they will never forget. I, as an employee, am part of this experience; so it's my job to make it a good one.

At first glance, you may assume that this experience is much more exhilarating than the actual experience. Once you walk down our dock, you are greeted by our captain and mate. They do all they can to make your experience as nice as possible, so they put your shoes in a nice secure area, and always assist in putting your PFD's on before they leave the dock, then they play some music as they make their way out into the middle of the sound where they start to "harness you up."

You can either fly single, double, or triple. Once you have decided what you would like to do, you take a seat on the dock and they connect you to the bar to which the chute is hooked and slowly let you out. You are either going to go 600, 900, or 1200 feet; this really is not the correct height you will be going, it is only the amount of line that is being let out. Once you're up as high as you like, you realize that this is one of the most relaxing experiences of all time. You float in a big swing surrounded by water while looking across this tiny island at the ocean; it is one of the most beautiful things that you can experience. Finally, after about 12 minutes of this wonderful experience, you and your companions are slowly let down. Once at the bottom, the captain will dip your feet into the water and then gently set you back onto the boat where you began. Once everyone has been up, they head back to shore. While on the way back, they burn the CD's with all of the photos. Back at the dock, they return your shoes and send you back on your way, much happier than when you arrived.

Summer at the Cashiers Recreation Center

By: Maggie Lee

This past summer, I worked as a day camp counselor in Cashiers, North Carolina. The campers were between six and twelve years old. It was actually a good thing to have such a large age range of children. The older children were always helping the younger ones, and this helped us counselors out a lot. It also gave me the opportunity to work with children of different

ages and gain experience on how to work with them.

Over the course of the summer, we went on many field trips and participated in activities that the community had to offer. On Mondays and Fridays, we would go to the pool. On Tuesdays, a nutritionist would come and speak to the children and offer activities for them. Wednesdays were fieldtrip days; and on Thursdays, we would walk to the library and watch a movie. Most of the field trips were nature oriented and interactive. This was really beneficial for the children because not only were the field trips educational, they were also fun. The campers really enjoyed being able to go to the pool. It was a great way for them to get exercise and take a break from the summer heat. The library offered programs throughout the summer in which we were able to participate. In addition to the movie days, they offered a magic show, a bird show, and a reptile show. These were all interactive and so much fun for the children as well as us counselors. Most of our activities were based outside; so we always had to have a back-up plan in case of inclement weather, which unfortunately happened a lot.

Our camp was located in the community center, so we had access to the gym. Many of our substitute activities would be held in the gym, and we would play organized sports or have free time. We would also watch movies or play other games and color. I really enjoyed working as a camp counselor. I have always enjoyed working with children of all ages, and plan on continuing to do so even after college. I was involved in the planning of the camp from the beginning. It was a great opportunity to be able to apply what I have learned in school to a real world setting, and also to be a counselor and actively participate in the camp that I helped organize.



No Hoof, No Horse

By: Kimberly Trapp

As in all sports, the equestrian world is divided when it comes to certain ways of doing things. A seemingly small detail, yet one that every equestrian has an opinion about, is whether or not to shoe your horse.

In recent years, there has been a rise in “Natural Horsemanship” which involves, among other things, natural treatment of the hoof without using shoes. The overall idea is to try and keep the horse as natural as possible, as if they were in the wild, which is considered more humane. This idea would have merit, except for the fact that horses are no longer in the wild and no longer kept on natural terrain. Today, horses often walk over asphalt or gravel, things that are not found in the “wild.” Horseshoes are designed to protect a horse’s feet from things they are not accustomed to crossing. This refers not only to terrain, but also to different activities that we ask horses to perform now. For example, horses do not naturally jump several obstacles in a row; they generally try to avoid those things, only jumping if necessary. This can be detrimental to their legs, especially without the added support and protection of shoes. Jumpers commonly have the problem of crumbling hooves, and shoes help keep the hoof wall together.

In some instances, letting a horse go barefoot is fine. If a person plans on riding only a couple of hours a day on soft dirt or grass, shoes

are not necessary. It often depends on the horse. For example, my horse needs shoes at all times. His feet are very sensitive, and even a short walk over gravel causes him pain.

Many people decide not to shoe their horses because of the price. Blacksmiths, also known as farriers, generally charge about \$100 for four shoes and a trimming; most horses need their hooves done every six weeks. Some won’t put on horseshoes as a personal preference, although most will because of the increase in profit. Your blacksmith is the best person to ask about whether or not your horse should have shoes put on. Many times, a horse will have orthopedic problems that can be fixed with specialty shoes.

An old adage in the horse world is “No hoof, no horse,” meaning without good feet, a horse is basically useless. We have taken these magnificent animals from their natural world, asking them to work in unnatural ways on unnatural surfaces. Because of this, it is our responsibility to help protect and care for them, and one way to do this is by using horseshoes.

With Liberty and Recreation for All

By Hilary White

Imagine doing your favorite recreational activity; whether it be canoeing, hiking, archery, basketball, soccer, or tennis. Now imagine that being taken away from you.

Many times, people with disabilities are excluded from being able to participate in recreational activities. There are many reasons for this; be it the participant’s parents, the other participants’ parents, or the coaches/recreational leaders. Many times, people are afraid to allow someone with disabilities the opportunity to participate in recreational activities because they do not want the person to get hurt. Another common reason that people with disabilities are excluded is because coaches or recreational leaders will have to “dumb down” activities to accommodate special needs. The important thing is: people with disabilities are people first, and they want to be included and allowed to participate in activities just as much as anyone else. Honestly, if you were the one really wanting

to do the activity, and someone wouldn't let you; you would be very upset, wouldn't you?

There are certain disabilities that would make it a little harder for an individual to be able to participate in certain activities, but technology has come a long way. There are so many more pieces of adaptive recreational equipment being made these days that there should be no reason someone would not be able to participate in an activity. These items can be fairly pricey, though. Although prices have gone down in recent years for some equipment, it's not enough to make people go out and stock up on these items. A lot of people do not realize there is funding available to recreational leaders who would like to buy adaptive equipment to use in their activities. People just need to be willing to put in a little extra work in order to make everyone included and to provide more positive experiences for all participants. You may be surprised at what kind of talent someone may have, if you have already judged them on what you think they can't do.

It is unfair to exclude people from anything just because of their disabilities. After all, what kind of example are you showing children if you exclude a child with cerebral palsy from their soccer team just because she may not run as straight or as fast as the other participants? Excluding people with disabilities from recreational programs, especially when the excluded ones are children, gives the impression and mindset that it is okay to exclude people with disabilities from everything in society.

Be the difference. Make the change. End the prejudice.

The Importance of Advocacy

By James Yates

What if you had a chance to create a brighter future for outdoor recreation in your community? Guess what? You do. Western North Carolina is revered for its abundant and diverse natural resources. Many of us chose to attend school here for the added benefit of enjoying

outdoor recreational activities in the beautiful mountains, forests, and rivers that surround our campus. For most Parks and Recreation majors, outdoor recreational activities are more than a pastime. They are a passion. Passions come with responsibility, and if you truly are passionate about outdoor recreation: It's more important than ever to become an advocate for it. There are many ways you can become an advocate. Advocacy begins with knowledge. Being well informed and helping to spread the word to others about the many outdoor recreational opportunities in Western North Carolina is a great first step. Joining organizations that promote awareness is another way to be an advocate. There are many great organizations in our area that are already doing a great job.

Here are just a few of the local organizations:

- Friends of Panthertown: <http://panthertown.org> Call (828) 269-4453
- Friends of the Smokies: <http://www.friendsofthesmokies.org/> or 800.845.5665
- Carolina Climbers Coalition: <http://carolinaclimbers.org/>

Becoming an advocate for outdoor recreation means sharing your knowledge with others. Tell your friends, your family, and everyone you meet about the great outdoor recreation activities available in this area. Word of mouth, especially when the words are passionate, is still the most effective way to increase awareness. Awareness attracts tourists. Tourists spend money on outdoor recreation. Money spent on outdoor recreation boosts our local economy, something that benefits all of us. Even more important to individuals majoring in parks and recreation management, money spent on outdoor recreation creates outdoor recreation jobs. Becoming a part of the important efforts of an advocacy organization is not only a way to give back to the outdoor recreation community areas we enjoy, it's also an opportunity to network with many individuals who are already making important decisions about the recreational areas we use; not to mention the fact that you may meet someone who could be a resource for future employment!

My Experience with Tourists

By: Danielle Russell

Over this past summer, I interacted with tourists on a daily basis through working at Chimney Rock State Park and Lake Lure Tours. Some tourists were happy, some upset, and some simply did not care. The slightest inconvenience can change a tourist's day. Whether it is rain, something broken, being at the right place at the wrong time, or getting lost; it affects their experience and participation levels in recreation.

The majority of the 2013 summer was filled with rain and humidity. This affected both Chimney Rock and Lake Lure Tours due to limited amounts of visitors willing to be outside in the rain with limited views, considering that sight-seeing is the main attraction of the area. Trying to sell admission into the park and tickets on the boat tours were fairly difficult tasks since the tourists were unhappy with the weather. However, on occasion, we would have moments of sunshine when everyone flocked to both locations.

Another problem that some tourists encountered was the broken elevator at Chimney Rock. Even though it was broken for the second half of the summer, visitors felt greatly inconvenienced from only having the option of hiking up 491 stairs to the top of the chimney compared to a 30 second elevator ride. Some visitors were physically unable to complete the hike, while other visitors were too lazy to attempt the hike, and some came back frequently to complete the beautiful hike up and down the Outcroppings trail.

I have come to realize that tourists have their own schedules, and the majority of tourists seem to think that when they are on vacation the entire world revolves around them. What I have taken away from my experience is that it is physically impossible to cater to everyone's wants to make them happy; you make the best of the situation you're given.

*“In every walk with nature
one receives far more than
he seeks.”*

-John Muir

