

April - June 2015

Parks Quarterly Report

jeffco.us/parks



Lookout Mountain Nature Center Naturalist Alicia Vermilye leads a family oriented discovery hike on the grounds of the Preserve.

Jeffco Open Space

NATURE EDUCATION

Nature education programming reached about 24,000 people through nature visits and group and public programs during the second quarter.

June's Wildflower Festival was one the most successful with 700 people attending (pictured below).



Lookout Mountain Nature Center staff and volunteers participated in several large outreach events including Earth Day, Dinosaur Ridge Day, and National Get Outdoors Day at City Park in Denver.

PARK PLANNING

Jeffco Open Space recently completed master agreements with 6 local landscape architecture firms. Each master agreement is good for one year and can be renewed for two years, in one year increments. These agreements provide staff with a prequalified pool of talented landscape architects, greatly increasing the speed with which future projects can be completed.

Mortar work at Pine Valley Ranch Park's historic lodge has begun. The Baerden needed missing mortar replaced, chinking of the logs, re-tuck pointing between the stones, in the walls and chimneys. Work will be completed this September. Grading and drainage project was completed in May at the Baerden. Work also included installation of a stormwater system to the upper parking lot, attaching downspouts on the building, and regrading the road and upper lot to drain away from the structure and downhill trails. Additionally, a volunteer event in June involved staples being removed from the hardwood floors.

RANGER REPORT

Rangers have responded to several situations or incidents in the first six months of the year. These

include three swiftwater rescues along Bear Creek (all three involved dogs), five canine heat distress calls over a two week period, property damage, illegal camping, two suicidal individuals, two wildfire/ smoke checks, illegal fireworks, two mudslides, three search and rescues, closed area violations, indecent exposure, illegal discharge of firearms, minors in possession of marijuana, and seven medical emergencies, one requiring helicopter evacuation from Meadowlark Trail at Deer Creek Canyon Park.

Contacts made through various channels and events include:

- Ranger Education Programs: 1,851
- Ranger Social Media: 26,118
- Ranger Other Media (TV, publications): 227,500
- Ranger Informal Stewardship Contacts: 6,465
- Events: 777
- Stewardship projects: 55

In May, Urban Coyote Safety and Awareness was featured in a talk at the International Urban Wildlife Conference in Chicago. The presentation included study results from hazing activities at Crown Hill Park.

MULTI-MEDIA EFFORTS

With the spring rains, **Ride Dirt, Not Mud** and muddy trail etiquette received great coverage from CBS 4, Fox 31, and the Golden Transcript. All covered muddy trail stewardship through TV, print and their social media channels.

New Camping Guidelines initiated a positive Denver Post/YourHub article. According to White Ranch resident ranger, John Queen, the new guidelines have created a whole new visitor experience; one of peace and stewardship, compared to last year's chaos in the campgrounds.

Rangers have made contacts with visitors attempting to or actively flying drones in our parks. One contact at Van Bibber prompted a new Share and Care poster, **No Drone Zone**, which reminds visitors that drones negatively impact wildlife and the visitor experience. The poster was featured in a mountain bike internet forum.

Ranger staff completed an interview with the Mayor of Lakewood on the **Love 'em Leash 'em** campaign for community television Channel 8. Communications completed a series of four, 15 second videos for

Instagram and YouTube encouraging visitors to leash pets in the Parks for a variety of reasons.



Protect your pet, wildlife and fellow visitors. Obey the leash law.

Share your photos
#dogonleash



Jefferson County
Open Space
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Ranger staff completed a segment on rattlesnake safety and awareness for 9KUSA-TV's Colorado and Company show on April 1. A new **Rattlesnakes Happen** poster is now appearing in our Parks.

COMMUNICATIONS RECOGNITION

At the 2015 National Association of Government Communicators Annual Conference held in Memphis Tennessee June 2-4, Jeffco Open Space received a Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Awards second place honor in the category of electronic publications for the 2013 Preservation in Progress Annual Report. Primary contributors were Will Lebzelter and Bob Eriksson.

GOCO INSPIRE INITIATIVE

In June, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) announced the Inspire Initiative as part of their Strategic Plan. The Inspire Initiative is a five-year strategy aimed at inspiring Coloradans, particularly kids and families, to appreciate, enjoy and take care of our great outdoors. This initiative aligns with objectives outlined in 2014-2019 Jeffco Open

Space Master Plan Goals 5 & 8. To participate in this initiative and jointly pursue funding from GOCO, a collaborative of 29 different agencies and organizations have come together in Jefferson County. The group plans to complete a proposal to obtain a \$100,000 planning grant designed to set pilot communities up for success. A second round of grants in 2016 up to \$5 million would assist in implementing a larger "Inspire" effort by the collaborative.

ELK MEADOW PARK DOG OFF LEASH AREA
Safety Enhancements implemented at this popular destination were featured on Denver Post social media. They covered our new safety regulations and site enhancements implemented May 1 at the Elk Meadow Park site. Park Services, Rangers, Planning and the Region Supervisor Matt Cox worked to improve safety for people and their pets by installing fencing, gates and establishing a safety zone where leashes are required.

PARK CONSTRUCTION

Temporary bridge repair was completed at Lair o' the Bear Park to limit hazards and erosion. Flooding and storm water projects include restroom repairs at Lair o' the Bear and White Ranch Parks, inspections and a collaborative drainage project with County Road and Bridge at Pine Valley Ranch Park's Baehrden.

Miscellaneous repair and maintenance to structures include signs, flagstone retaining walls, office configuration and remodel, and drinking fountain/ bottle filler installations.

HISTORY EDUCATION

History education contacts in the second quarter reached 10,621 through Hiwan Homestead Museum visitation, special events such as the Evergreen Rodeo Parade. Garden Expo, education programs, outreach, and History in the Parks at Lair o' the Bear Park and Pine Valley Ranch Park.

Program highlights include Legendary Ladies, a first-person portrayal of six strong and self-reliant women from the days of the Colorado frontier, including Mother Jones, Prairie Rose Henderson, and others.

"We Can Do It: Jefferson County in World War II" opened on the anniversary of Victory in Europe Day in the former Pioneer Workshop building. Despite threatening weather, about 60 people attended the opening, including Dick Over, veteran of the 10th Mountain Division. An honor guard from the American Legion presented the colors. The exhibit was assembled with the help of local veterans, collectors, and museums and will run through the end of 2015.

In a complimentary program to the "We Can Do It" exhibition, Judy Winnick portrayed Miep Gies, a Dutch woman who was the lifeline for the Anne Frank family while they were in hiding from the Nazis. This program was also very successful, with about 40 people attending inside the museum.

Jefferson County Historical Society organized an antiques appraisal with five appraisers evaluating antiques brought in by local individuals. The event brought about 200 individuals to the museum grounds, many of whom toured the museum.

The children's summer day camp, "Pioneerpalooza" counted 225 participants, with programs on cowboy life, traditional music, quilting, and many others. Older day camp participants visited five different Open Space parks to attend education programs given by the Rangers. The camp was held from June 22-26.

Jeffco Fairgrounds

With the year's revenue goals set at an all-time high of \$511,500 and projected expenditures remaining flat at \$1,108,699, the Jeffco Fairgrounds is on pace for another stellar financial year at the midway point of 2015. Relying on a solid mix of new and annual events to maintain guest numbers and usage, the facility hosted a number of highlighted events during the second quarter.

In April, the Jefferson County High School Rodeo hosted its annual event at the Fairgrounds. The event, held completely indoors at the Event Center, was attended by hundreds of family members, friends and rodeo fans.

Over 500 folks enjoyed amazing BBQ, a silent auction, live auction, the Tyler Walker Band and more at the 4-H Barn Dance on May 2. Thousands of dollars were raised for this youth organization.



Pictured above, the Fairgrounds hosted two Westernaires' shows in June, the Interclub Show and White Division Show. The precision, horsemanship, skill and training of this amazing organization was proudly on display at these popular shows.

The Newlon / Mile High Bull Riding Series continues throughout the second quarter. A few hundred fans have been drawn to the Rodeo Arena on Tuesday evenings throughout June and July. The finals are scheduled for August at the Fairgrounds.

In May, dozens of tow truck personnel attended the Towing Recovery Professionals of Colorado Training, Conference and Trade Show. Safety demonstrations, all the latest technology, information and fellowship was shared during the week-long event, pictured below.



Operations at the Fairgrounds have been bolstered with the addition of two-way radios as a more efficient form of communication for staff, volunteers and event organizers at the facility. These radios have helped enhanced event services, safety and communication for staff, camp hosts, event managers and organizers.

Boettcher Mansion

Year-to-date, reservations for 2015 have surpassed our 2015 goal by \$50K with the remainder of the year to go. More than \$100K has been secured for social events held in 2016.

In this quarter, we hosted 21 weddings & receptions, 16 rehearsals and more than 106 site tours.

Conference bookings have been on the rise, perhaps due to a new listing in Unique Venues, an online service. During the last three months we accommodated a dozen paid meetings, already surpassing this year's goal of \$15k in revenue. Clients included Aurora Mental Health Center, Avista Adventist Hospital, Colorado Department of Labor & Employment, Colorado School of Mines, McKinsey & Company Regis University, St. Anthony's Hospital and University of Colorado-Denver (UCD).

The Colorado Arts & Crafts Society (CACS) held its annual "Gathering of the Guilds" at the Mansion on Sunday, April 26th. Attendance hit an all time high of 330 visitors.

The Jefferson County Historical Commission (JCHC) co-hosted a Symposium focusing on historic preservation with the staff of History Colorado at the Mansion on Colorado History Day, Saturday, May 2. There were 64 participants.

Students from University of Colorado-Denver enjoyed a presentation on heritage tourism in April.

Spirit Paranormal Investigations based in Littleton, CO helps businesses and individuals capture and document paranormal evidence and rule out natural causes. Following an investigation at the Mansion, the company shared the results in recording many mysterious voices, whistles and other sounds inside the Mansion (which various staff members have also heard, usually late at night or in the early morning).