



# Yellowstone Interpreters' Newsletter

NUMBER 6

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

NOVEMBER 1971

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YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, WYOMING

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The elk have ceased their bugling and have begun congregating on their winter range; the bear have gone into their dens; all roads in the interior of the park are closed to park visitors; and the seasonal interpretive staff has dwindled to 0 -- Winter has come to Yellowstone.

## The Close-Out Crew

With the promise from on high of a little bit more cash in our pocket for fall operation, a few facilities were kept open longer than anticipated. Gary Vequist held down the fort (Yellowstone that is) until the end of October. Tom Pittenger braved the cold weather at Norris until mid-September. Rick Hutchinson became so interested in the thermal changes taking place at Norris that he switched to the Maintenance Division in order to be able to stay longer. Kurt Topham and Barbara Burchett kept the hot dog stand in operation at Old Faithful until it was moved out from under them around the first of November. Tim Bywater, Steve Clement and George Algard kept Grant open until September 11. Ted Parkinson closed Fishing Bridge down on Labor Day and Becky Truesdell stayed at Canyon until September 26 trying to explain why all other facilities in the Canyon area were closed!

Bob and Cathy Schultz have migrated to Death Valley for the winter; Barbara Burchett to Everglades National Park and Ed Griggs is working at Grant-Kohrs, a newly acquired NPS area.

### Weather This Fall

About the only thing that can be said about the weather this fall is that it has been very unpredictable. We experienced light, early snows interspersed with periods of Indian Summer. The roads in the South District closed to the public on November 1. The road from Mammoth to Old Faithful and West Yellowstone has been open and closed several times. It is now closed and will remain closed to permit the snow to accumulate and the snowmobiles to start operating in the park as soon as possible. Approximate snow depths in the park are as follows: South Entrance 25"; Lake and Canyon 18"; Old Faithful 17"; Madison Junction 15" and Mammoth 13". According to the weather report another good storm is on the way and should add the final touches to the changeover to winter operations.

### Fall Activities of the Permanent Staff

Bill Dunmire has been working hard and long on the Yellowstone Master Plan and Wilderness Proposal and has spent more time in the Washington and San Francisco offices than in the park.

Dick Lake spent two weeks in a Management Training Course at the University of Oklahoma, will spend two weeks in the Midwest Regional Office and a few days in Denver. This will wrap up his Mid-Level Management Training Program.

John Stockert has been busy acquainting himself with the problems of the West District.

Bob Woody has been on the move keeping up with developments in the Old Faithful area, occupying the new visitor center and laying in a store of groceries for the winter.

Stan Canter spent three weeks in early September visiting relatives in Ohio.

Dick Lake, John Whitman and Stan Canter spent several weekends hunting this fall. John found a poor, sick, lame deer and put it out of its misery. Dick and Stan decided, considering the apparent shortage of deer and elk, the only proper thing to do was to relinquish their freezer of meat this year. Besides that they didn't see anything!

Thea finds her biggest problem is that she has more projects than time. She plans to take her furlough in January and possibly spend the month as a ski instructor at Jackson.

### Nitty-Gritty of New Developments

**West District:** The chief news items from the West District are the arrival of John W. Stockert who replaces John Douglass as West District Naturalist; the arrival of Robert E. Woody who fills the newly-created permanent Sub-District Naturalist position at Old Faithful; and the opening of the new Old Faithful Visitor Center in mid-December for winter visitors.

John arrived here September 19 from Badlands National Monument, South Dakota, where he was Interpretive Specialist for five years. A native of Ohio, he graduated from Capital University in 1955 with a major in Natural Science. He taught school for three years and was a seasonal naturalist before joining the National Park Service in 1962 as a permanent employee at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. John met his wife during his next assignment at Montezuma Castle National Monument. They have two children - Mary, who is in the first grade, and Jeanne two years younger.

Early in September Director Hartzog visited Old Faithful and recognized the need for a permanent naturalist position. As a result, Bob and Donnie Woody with son, Thomas, arrived here October 13 and have taken up residence in the quadruplex at Old Faithful. They come to us from Antietam Battlefield where he was a park ranger for a year and a half. Previous assignments have been Vicksburg Military Park and Everglades National Park. Bob's first permanent assignment with the National Park Service began in July 1967 as a park ranger trainee at the National Park Service, Horace M. Albright Training Academy. He received a BS degree in 1967 from North Carolina State University at Raleigh where his main interests were in wildlife, conservation, and natural sciences.

For the first time evening programs and guided snowshoe Geyser Hill walks will be offered at Old Faithful this winter. The 100-seat auditorium in the new visitor center will be used for afternoon and evening programs featuring slide programs, movies, and other programs which present an environmental message about Yellowstone National Park.

Opening of the visitor center will coincide with the opening of the park to snowmobile traffic in mid-December provided there is adequate snow cover. In addition, the Campers Cabin building at Old Faithful - renamed the Snow Lodge - will open at about the same time with accommodations for approximately 100 visitors.

Construction in the Old Faithful area has been halted for the winter months. Work remains to be done on both visitor center satellite auditoriums and the boardwalks in front of Old Faithful geyser. The movie which is being made for use in the three auditoriums will be available in the spring.

On November 17, a two or three year old grizzly was trapped adjacent to the Old Faithful Lodge after he severely mauled an unmanned parked snowmobile and was showing interest in taking his long winter nap under a ramp leading into the lodge. He was released in the Lamar Valley.

As you probably have heard, considerable change in the thermal features at Norris Geyser Basin occurred in September. Most of the activity, including publicized Muddy Sneaker, has died down although there are notable exceptions. Thanks to Rick Hutchinson, we have a detailed report of hydrothermal changes through October 2.

South District:

Uncle Tom's Trail - Lower one-third of trail removed.

Uncle Tom's Parking - New overlooks at Upper Falls Viewpoint - some landscaping with new and improved trails.

Rerouting of North Canyon Rim road completed.

Fishing Bridge Bypass dropped from 1972 program. Park Service personnel are taking a closer and longer look at the wisdom of the Fishing Bridge Bypass proposal.

Lake Bypass - Bad weather prevented the scheduled fall completion - will be completed in spring of 1972.

West Thumb Bypass - Delays common - bad weather, poor material - to be completed in Fall of '72.

Red Rock Trail - upgraded in fall.

North District:

The Mammoth Museum will be open throughout the winter on an unmanned basis. All concessions except the grocery store are closed for the season.

A travertine base has been installed at the main overlook on the Upper Terrace Drive. The new exhibit should be in next spring. The old exhibit structure at Obsidian Cliff has been modified with some additional basalt stone work to accept a new exhibit.

Plans are developing for the construction of a sewer line from Mammoth to Gardiner, thereby eliminating the need for a sewage treatment plant in the Mammoth area of the park. A new plant will be constructed north of Gardiner to handle both communities.

A contract will be let for bid about December 1 for the purchase of additional AM radio transmitters. We anticipate about 35 stations in operation next summer.

Miscellaneous:

Among the numerous enclosures accompanying this newsletter you will find a copy of Management Objectives for the park. This list, approved by the Director of the Service over a year ago, serves as the basic guide to future development and visitor use of the park. The Yellowstone Master Plan, which will be presented for public review later this winter, is an expansion of the guidelines expressed in the Objectives.