

Mountain Park NEWS

Winter 2017 • Vol. 18 Num. 1

Pueblo Mountain Park: My Breathing Space

Yesterday's warm winds have been replaced by a blast of Arctic air – bone-chilling cold, increasingly grey skies, and a stillness that is permeating more and more of me with each breath that I take. I am sitting in one of my sitting spots that I have throughout the park. I've been coming to these spots – to write, reflect, contemplate, or just be – for decades. I haven't been to this one, about a half-mile up the Northridge Trail on a south-facing hillside, in quite a while.

Knowing it would be cold, I brought along a thermos of hot tea. I figure the tea will assist the early December sun, now and then weakly working its way through the cloud cover, in keeping me warm enough to sit here for a while to take in this dry winter landscape. A flicker flies by; I hear its wings cutting through the crisp December air. I pause and look out at the cold hard granite that makes up the east side of Devil's Canyon. That flicker is sticking around, squawking every now and then. That is the only sound I hear except for the pen moving across the page of my journal.

American naturalist John Burroughs wrote, "If you were to sit under an oak tree for an entire day, you would have enough information to write an entire book." Well, I am not under but next to an oak – a scrawny Gambel oak with a few brown leaves clinging to its dark skeleton-like branches. Except for the green of the conifers, various shades of brown are the dominant colors out here. The color white, which one would expect to see a fair share of this time of year, is conspicuously absent. We've just been through the driest September/October/November in at least the last four decades. December is about to grind into its second week and we've yet to see the first measurable snow – a record for latest measurable snow. I suppose this record dry-spell would be a part of the book I could write if I sat here all day.

"PERHAPS
THAT IS WHAT
PARKS ARE –
BREATHING
SPACES FOR A
SOCIETY THAT
INCREASINGLY
HOLDS ITS
BREATH."
~ TERRY
TEMPEST
WILLIAMS





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MPEC's Mission is to provide
environmental education for the
community in order to create
a citizenry that understands,
respects, enjoys, and cares for
themselves, their families, their
community and the natural world.

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I hear the rustling of some leaves coming from down the hill in front of me. It sounds like a spotted towhee is looking for something in the duff. I don't see the bird itself, but that sound is typical of the pretty, red-eyed bird that calls this park home year-round.

My back is leaning against the grey remains of a fallen tree that hasn't been alive in a long time. I know this tree; it's been on this hillside far as long as I've been coming here. It reached a height of about 30 feet before it quit growing. It's hard to say for sure, but considering the spacing and placement of the stubs that were its branches, as well as this particular habitat, I'd say it is – or was – a white fir. Based on my estimated calculations – it's been lying on this hillside for thirty years, it stood dead for ten, and it was fifty years old when it died – this weathered backrest started growing ninety years ago. In 1926, just six years after this square mile of land became Pueblo Mountain Park, this tree that is now slowly decomposing was a tiny young seedling. Through its years, it watched the park's trails being built, it listened to the sounds of the workers who installed the railing at Lookout Point, which sits just across the drainage, it witnessed countless generations of birds and deer and bear come and go. Talk about having enough information to write an entire book!

I suspect Burroughs wrote that little quip about sitting under an oak tree on a nice, warm summer's day. In spite of the hot tea and the weak sun that has disappeared, I've about reached my limit for how long I can sit here and write. The cold Arctic air has now joined the stillness that is permeating my body. As I put the thermos and journal in my pack, I see that the thickening clouds look like they actually could bring some snow. That sure would be nice.

~ Dave Van Manen, December 6, 2016



HORSESHOE LODGE & RETREAT CENTER

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Reflecting on the Past, Present & Future

By Jonathan Pilarski, Executive Director



We are approaching the end of the year and are in the midst of the Holiday Season. The month of December also marks one year since

Mountain Park Environmental Center's Board of Trustees hired me as Executive Director. One often takes moments like these to reflect.

The past year has been a combination of transition and growth for MPEC. When I began my position as Executive Director at the end of 2015, I became the fifth person to fill that role since the end of 2013. The constant flux in leadership resulted in a number of fits and starts over the past few years, but as this year has progressed, MPEC has settled into consistency, continuity, and stability.

Despite the challenges presented by transitioning new leadership, MPEC has still been able to offer quality programming. This fall, we entered our fifteenth year of offering Earth Studies to fifth-grade students from Pueblo City Schools, and the quality of that program is as good as it has ever been. This year, we also started a brand-new program: Forest School for Little Rangers. Forest School was highlighted in our last newsletter and it basically takes the model for Earth Studies and applies it to pre-school children, except with the addition of a

parent education component. MPEC has also begun the process of developing a stronger and more robust relationship with the Beulah School of Natural Sciences, and the kids from Beulah can regularly be seen at the park.

How has MPEC been able to continue to offer quality programming and expand new programming while going through a challenging transitory period? The answer is simple: it is because of you!

Our fantastic donors and members have remained committed to our mission and faithful to our organization throughout this period. You have ensured that the quality of our programs remains unchanged. You have ensured that our organization remains on strong financial footing. You have helped us continue to have positive impacts on the children of our community, and you have allowed us to expand our reach to additional groups of children.

And so, I conclude, as I so often do in our newsletter, by thanking you. Thank you for your continued support of Mountain Park Environmental Center. Thank you for helping us have a positive impact on the Pueblo County community. Thank you for making 2016 a great year. I look forward to working with you in 2017 to ensure that this momentum we have been building remains. 🐾

"THE SIMPLICITY OF WINTER HAS A DEEP MORAL. THE RETURN OF NATURE, AFTER SUCH A CAREER OF SPLENDOR AND PRODIGALITY, TO HABITS SO SIMPLE AND AUSTERE, IS NOT LOST WITHER UPON THE HEAD OR THE HEART." ~ JOHN BURROUGHS



MPEC SENDS WARM THANK YOU'S to Kathryn Higgins and Motherlove for donating such amazing herbal salves for Women's Winter Solstice Day; Shawna Shoaf for all the great graphic design work; Dave Overlin for helping out with all sorts of park projects; Health Solutions for donating a portion of the parent class cost for the Forest School for Little Rangers program; Steve Douglas for always being engaged in the forest stewardship efforts; Cyndi Hart for donating the snowshoes; and Tami Montoya and Mary Hopkins for helping out with getting Forest School for Little Rangers off the ground.

Guided Hikes - Winter

"I HAVE TWO
DOCTORS, MY LEFT
LEG AND MY RIGHT."
~ G.M. TREVELYAN

A great way to beat the winter blues is to get outside, and a Guided Hike in Pueblo Mountain Park is a great way to be outside. Snow cover is hard to predict – it may be snowy (in which case we'll snowshoe) or it may not. Either way, it is best to dress in layers and wear good hiking shoes. Also, bring along plenty of water, and maybe a snack on these moderately strenuous hikes that are educational and fun. Unless otherwise noted, most hikes last from two to three hours and are appropriate for adults and children over 12. MPEC members free, non-members \$5. **Note:** If snow conditions are right during a scheduled hike, the hike may become a snowshoe outing (we have snowshoes if you need them). **Registration required:** www.hikeandlearn.org

Keep your eye out on our website and Facebook page for carpe diem' snowshoe hikes when winter snows arrive!

- ❧ **Sat, Jan 7, 1pm, First Hike of 2017** A great way to begin the New Year -- be outside, get some exercise, meet some new friends, learn some things about Nature - start the new year off right!
- ❧ **Sat, Jan 14, 1pm, "Zuke's" January Walk Your Dog Hike** A perfect opportunity to bring your canine friend with you on a guided hike (or a snowshoe, weather permitting – and we have the snowshoes if you don't). Dress warm and be ready for fun and exercise. Dogs must be leashed.
- ❧ **Sun, Jan 29, 1pm, An Afternoon Winter Hike** Maybe there will be snow on the ground, maybe there won't. Either way, we'll be out along the trails, seeing what the land looks like in late January.
- ❧ **Sat, Feb 11, 7pm, Full Moon Snowshoe Hike (with optional Candlelit Dinner before the hike)** Venture out on a guided snowshoe hike under the full moon and the pines of the Mountain Park. Optional: Enjoy a delicious dinner at the Horseshoe Lodge's Arthur's Kitchen at 6pm before heading out on the hike. Snowshoes available if you need them.
- ❧ **Sun, Feb 26 11am, Winter Wildflower Hike** By this time each year, the park's first species of wildflower, spring beauty, is sometimes blooming (sometimes as early as late January), so we'll be looking for them! Flowers or no flowers, it will be a terrific late morning hike.
 - ❧ **Sat, Mar 11, 1pm, "Zuke's" March Walk Your Dog Hike** Another opportunity to enjoy a winter saunter with your dog(s), guided by Ranger Sandy. Dress warm and be ready for fun and exercise. Dogs must be leashed.
 - ❧ **Sun, Mar 19, 1pm, Spring Equinox Saunter** The sun is halfway on its sky-climbing journey between its December low point on the winter solstice and its June high point on the summer solstice. We'll be searching for signs of spring as we acknowledge the equinox on this hike.



OTHER WINTER PROGRAMS AT MPEC

For all the details, pricing, and to register for these programs, go to MPEC's website at www.hikeandlearn.org and click on PROGRAMS. If you need assistance with registering on-line, or if you do not have access to a computer, please call 719-485-4444.

- ❖ **Winter Solstice Drum Circle** Bundle up and enjoy a drumming circle around a warm campfire! **Sun, Dec 18, 6:30-8pm**

- ❖ **Evening Yoga at MPEC** Julie Emmons is our facilitator for these Thursday evening yoga classes appropriate for all levels of yoga experience. **Session 1: Thursdays, Jan 5 - Feb 9, 6:00 -7:15pm; Session 2: Thursdays, Feb 16 - Mar 23, 6:00 - 7:15pm**

- ❖ **Nature Toddlers** Little ones get to experience the wonders of Nature with music, exploration, fun! Dress to be outside! **Fridays at 10am: Jan 13, Feb 17 & Mar 17.**

- ❖ **A Walk through Three Seasons: Nature Writing Workshops for Budding Writers** Join Ranger Pine (Dave Martin) for one, two or all of these morning workshops as he walks you to some of the parks' most remote and inspiring locations where you will observe and write with like- minded individuals to help fuel the creative process. Hot Lunch option available. **Saturdays, Jan 28, Mar 25, May 20, 10am – noon.**

- ❖ **Healing Yoga Workshop** Join Yoga Instructor Julie Emmons for an afternoon of restorative yoga for healing and relaxation. Class includes gentle to moderate restorative yoga session, discussion on using yoga as a tool for health and well-being, and guided deep relaxation. Appropriate for beginning as well as experienced yoga practitioners. **Sunday, Feb 26, 1-4pm**

- ❖ **Spring Equinox Drum Circle** Drum in the spring around the fire circle! **Sun, Mar 19, 6:30 – 8pm**

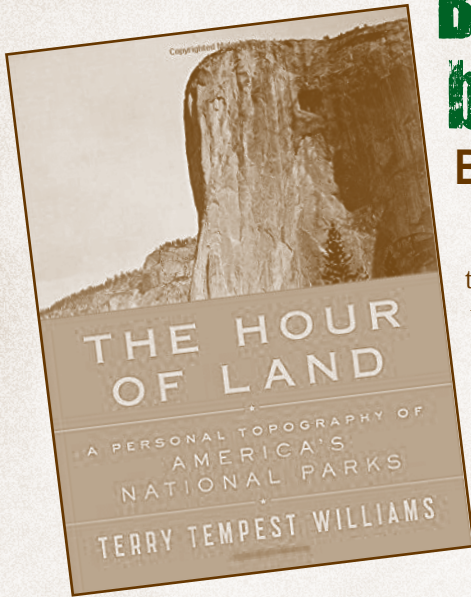
- ❖ **Forest Spring Break Camp (Grades 2nd-4th):** Campers will hike, explore, and participate in a variety of other Nature Activities with MPEC Rangers. Round-trip transportation from Pueblo. See website for price and other details. **Mon – Fri, Mar 20th-24th, 8am-3pm.**



"EVEN THE
STRONGEST
BLIZZARDS
START WITH
A SINGLE
SNOWFLAKE."
~ SARA
RAASCH

Book Review: The Hour of Land by Terry Tempest Williams

By Dave Van Manen



When you think of the term “Nature writer,” who comes to mind?

Thoreau, Muir, Emerson, Leopold, Carson – these are among the authors that would be on most people’s list. Each of these individuals, none of whom is still alive (Rachel Carson died

most recently, in 1964), wrote eloquently of the natural world and the human relationship with it. Each was also an important figure in the world of conservation and had significant influence – which continues to this day – on the way our society views the natural world.

Moving forward chronologically, the list may also include Edward Abbey, Barry Lopez, Rick Bass, Craig Childs, and my favorite author, Terry Tempest Williams. All except Abbey, who died in 1989, are still alive and still writing. I discovered Terry Tempest Williams, Utah native, author, activist and naturalist, through her acclaimed memoir, *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place*. Published twenty-five years ago, it weaves the heart-breaking story of her mother’s death to cancer, which Williams believes was caused by nuclear bomb testing in the 1950s, with threats to the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge through the rising waters of Great Salt Lake.

Her latest book, *The Hour of Land: A Personal Topography of America’s National Parks*, provides a literary journey through twelve parks. Coinciding with the centennial celebration of the National Park Service in 2016, the book is not a field or tour guide, but instead a personal meditation on the meaning of parks and wild lands to America, and to Williams herself. Interspersed with poetry, stories, and conversations, *The Hour of Land* explores the complex relationships that our nation has with its parks and wild places.

I was not two pages into *The Hour of Land* before I reached for my journal. Williams has a way of saying things that just click for me, and so my journal is now graced with many quotes from the book. Here are a few:

“Humility is born in wildness.”

“Perhaps that is what parks are – breathing spaces for a society that increasingly holds its breath.”

“Collaboration is the only way forward.”

“Our public lands – whether a national park, wildlife refuge, forest, or prairie – make each one of us land-rich. It is our inheritance as citizens of a country called America.”

“My heart found its home long ago in the beauty, mystery, order, and disorder of the flowering earth.” (This last one is by Lady Bird Johnson and the book’s opening quote.)

Williams tells of visiting Theodore Roosevelt NP in North Dakota with her father, John Tempest. A “man’s man” who practiced Roosevelt’s “doctrine of the strenuous life,” Tempest spent much of his life running the family business of laying pipe for natural gas throughout the West. Williams describes her father as “a champion of the working man.” His bucket list included visiting Theodore Roosevelt NP, partly because of its proximity to the Bakken oil fields. Along with producing millions of barrels of oil, Bakken is seriously encroaching on the beauty and integrity of the park and surrounding communities. Park superintendent Valerie Naylor: “It’s like the California Gold Rush – there’s no real process, no organization. It’s a free-for-all, random and chaotic, and everyone wants to make a quick million and get out.”

Williams’ father provides an interesting counterpoint to his daughter’s passion for protecting wild places. Never afraid to confront or address controversial issues, Williams shares snippets of her father’s views. “That’s the price of energy independence. You environmentalists... can’t have it both ways. Terry’s against the war in Iraq – and against oil and gas development here at home.” Yet, he also thinks that “this country up here is too pretty to be an oil field.” These chapters illustrate how people, even family members, can disagree, yet still get along and treat each other with respect. “I watch my father focus on the horizon. He is a beautiful man.” A lesson we as a people here in America could sure take to heart.

Acadia, Gettysburg, Canyonlands, Big Bend, Gates of the Arctic and Glacier are among the other parks Williams visits and writes about. Each chapter has its own feel, its own style, its own angle – a testimony to Williams’ many gifts as a writer.

“Our national parks are blood,” say Williams. “They are more than scenery, they are portals and thresholds of wonder, an open door that swings back and forth from our past to our future.” If parks and wild places and good writing are important to you, then *The Hour of Land* should be at the top of your reading list. 🐾

"Hey Ranger, I have a Question!"

By Ranger Sandy Christensen

Fifth graders come alive when they are put into the natural environment of fresh air, natural light, and the sounds and smells of the outdoors. Our human senses guide us into our surroundings and stimulate our thought processes. When we are able to actually be in the natural world of wind, sunshine, trees and animals, we are suddenly feeling our connection with it the world that we live in.

I have been teaching Earth Studies for seven years and in that time I have noticed when children have the opportunity to explore their natural environment, they ask very thought-provoking questions. Here are just a few:

"Hey Ranger! Am I going to get eaten by a bear out here?" Answer: Not if you can run faster than the last person in line! In reality- never run from a black bear. Make yourself bigger by raising your arms and clap your hands and they will likely run away.

"Hey Ranger! What is that huge looking nest up in that pine tree?" Answer: What you are seeing isn't a nest, it is called a witch's broom, and they only develop in white fir trees. It is like a scab over an injury that the tree makes over itself and the gnarled ends of the scab grow to look like the end of a witch's broom.

"Hey Ranger! Are there really leeches in this pond?" Answer: Yes. The scientific name for a leech is *Helobdella stagnalis*. They feed off of the blood of fish and other water animals.

"Hey Ranger! What are those black rabbits running around in the woods?" Answer: Those black rabbits aren't actually rabbits at all. They are Abert squirrels that live in the ponderosa pine ecosystem. They can come in a variety of colors including grey and red, but are most easily identified by the tufts of fur on the tops of their ears.

"Hey Ranger! Are you trying to get us lost?" Answer: Yes, but I'll never lose you!

"Hey Ranger! What are the blue beetles lying around and what do they do? Answer: They are called pleasing fungus beetles and they help decompose fungus on the dead trees and branches which in turn adds nutrients to the soil.

And finally, the most common question and answer combination, "Hey Ranger! What time is lunch?" Answer: Lunch Time.

At the end of the day, when I hear, "I don't ever want to leave this place", I feel that the human senses of the child have been nourished and the silent thought of the child will be, "I can't wait to come back." ❀



Yes!!!

I want to join the Mountain Park Environmental Center and be a part of an organization that helps folks of all ages connect with Nature! Members receive the *Mountain Park News*, a discount on bookshop items and program fees, and the satisfaction of supporting an organization dedicated to the promotion of ecological literacy. Your Support is tax-deductible!

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Forest School for Little Rangers is Up & Running!



MPEC now has an on-line donor page at our website. You can easily and securely renew your membership or make a donation using your credit card at our new web link. Just go to **www.hikeandlearn.org** click on **Help MPEC Grow**. Thanks!



Meet our Forest School Teachers



Debbie Wellen has worked in the early childhood field for the past 38 years. “Miss” Debbie has been a licensed childcare provider in the state of Colorado in Canon City for 15 years and in Pueblo for 23 years, including being an Instructor at PCC teaching child-care classes. She has always been passionate about getting the children in her care to play outside, growing and eating organic gardens, playing with Nature’s play dough (mud), spraying snow with water colors, free play and art. Debbie enjoys spending time with her nine grand children, traveling, walking, bike riding, gardening, playing the auto harp and singing. Her dream has always been to teach in an outdoor classroom setting and sharing nature with future earth keepers. Debbie has worn many hats over the years and is now proud to be called, “Ranger Deb.”

Sheila Cover-Rydell graduated from Western State College with degrees in Elementary Education and Art Education. Sheila taught school for 27 years, 25 years in kindergarten and 2 years in 2nd grade. She loves teaching art enrichment classes to elementary school children. Sheila, who

has lived in Colorado for 40 years, is a mother of three grown sons, a daughter-in-law and has one grandson. She loves hiking, being in the outdoors, traveling, walking her dog and doing art. Sheila is so excited about her new job working in Nature and sharing her love of Nature with Little Rangers. 🐾

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VuJa De

By Dave Van Manen

This issue begins the eighteenth year that I've been writing for and creating the *Mountain Park News*. As soon as an issue is back from the printer and prepared for mailing, I am thinking about what articles will be in the next issue. Along with articles on our education programs, I always try to include an article on some aspect of natural history in each issue. I can recall articles on all sorts of birds and wildflowers, bears, trees, mountain lions, pronghorn, bobcat, pleasing fungus beetles, squirrels, owls, biological soil crusts...but, surprisingly, I don't recall ever writing about one of the park's most common and iconic species, *Odocoileus hemionus*. If my memory is correct, the pages of *Mountain Park News* have never included an article specifically about mule deer. As of issue one of year eighteen, that is no longer the case.

There has been much statewide press about the significant population decline of mule deer in Colorado over the past decade. According to a recent Denver Post article, mule deer population estimates in Colorado are down about 36 percent, from 614,100 in 2005 to 390,600 in 201 (compared to a 10% decrease across the entire western US). Disease, habitat loss due to development encroachment, and road mortality are among the likely reasons for the decline according to Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Well, maybe they should do a count in Beulah; considering how many deer with the big ears and short, black-tipped tail there are in the valley, maybe all those missing mule deer are all hanging out here. It is a rare day that I don't see several mule deer while driving or walking in Beulah, including Pueblo Mountain Park.

Just the other day, on a windy and chilly late afternoon walk in the park, I came across eight deer – one young buck, a few does, and several adolescents – that watched me but hardly seemed concerned about me as I walked by within around 20 feet of the closest one. A couple weeks ago, I was walking down the steps to my house (which is just across the road from the park). Looking at my mail and not paying much attention as I've walked down these steps a million times, I looked up to see a doe no more than ten feet in front of me, standing on the steps. I stopped. She turned and took a couple of step towards me.



Hmm. I've seen video clips of how aggressive deer can be. So I backed up a few steps, made some noise, and she finally ambled off. Slowly.

The lack of snow so far this season is keeping the dried forbs and grasses readily available for our area's mule deer to fatten up on as the winter approaches. When the snow cover is deep, shrubs and trees make up most of their diet. I recall many times being out in the park on skis or snowshoes on cold days with the landscape covered in deep snow. Working hard to keep myself warm, I'd watch deer bite the needles off ponderosa pines and wonder how many calories they were actually getting from those needles that would get them through the cold night ahead. Mountain mahogany and Gambel oak are also common winter foods for mule deer in the park.

Yes, mule deer are common and I see them pretty much every day. They are a very familiar part of my daily life here in Beulah. Hence, mule deer give me daily opportunities to apply *VuJa de*. The opposite of *Déjà vu*, the sensation that an experience currently being experienced has already been experienced, *VuJa de* is the act of seeing something familiar with a fresh view. I love keeping the idea of *VuJa de* alive in my life. It helps me to see the familiar – my home, my loved ones, my everyday world – with fresh eyes. *VuJa de* reminds me to see each day and everything in it as a special gift. Because each day that I am alive, each day that I get to see my home, my family, my world, and mule deer, is, indeed, a special gift. 🐾

Sparking Connection

by David Anthony Martin aka Ranger Pine

"It only takes a spark, to get a fire glowing . . ."

Ah, the old church-camp fireside song . . . a little too close to home, perhaps, for those of us living in the small forested communities of the Wet Mountains this year. With two forest fires back to back, we know all too well this year that it only takes a spark to start a fire if the conditions are right. Fires which spread easily from tree to tree and from dry blade to dry grade of grass under our recent end of summer drought conditions, made worse by an ever-warming planet. This has also become allegorical for much of the work done at MPEC to increasing environmental literacy.

Our most recent education sessions have been focused on park history, geology and soils. Our day is spent explaining, illustrating, asking and answering questions about how soil is created from the decomposition of the dead biotic material in each ecosystem and how that soil is unique in comparison and contrast with the soils from other ecosystems we visit. We explain that the plants and animals draw their nutrition, food and energy from the soil and later die and are broken down by decomposers into smaller and smaller pieces, eventually becoming the rich and nutritious ingredients comprising the soil.

Last week, I had a very satisfying moment when a boy raised his hand with a question. He began his query with the words, "So let me get this straight . . ." and proceeded to parrot much of what I had been explaining in bits and pieces over the last 20 minutes; namely that the trees and plants take from their environment materials needed to build their bodies and to grow larger by absorbing and reassembling the nutrients and minerals and water from the soil and using the sun as an energy source to do this work . . . and that when they die, they fall down and break down through interactions with weather and decomposers and all of those things, these nutrients and biotic matter return to the soil again, like compost or fertilizer to replenish the nutrients of the soil?"

I said, "Yes, exactly." He asked, "And then new trees reabsorb these nutrients in the same manner?" "Exactly," I said.

"Oh," he said smiling, "So, it's kind of like a circle then," to which I agreed. "Yes, a circle. A funny shaped circle, maybe, but yes, a circle."

And a number of other students chimed in unison (I kid you not), "The Circle of Life" and another explained to me, "Like in the movie The Lion King."

I couldn't have been happier. It is these small connections and realizations, heard from the mouths of these children, or at times, simply seen on their

faces or in their eyes, that satisfy me as an environmental educator.

MPEC's environmental educators feel so blessed to be able to do the work we do, to provide the information and experiences for these children. What we provide through the Earth Studies program is something that many of us never received through our elementary schooling. Those of us who were not raised in a rural environment by outdoorsy parents who camped or hunted never really experienced Nature the way these students can. Often the knowledge and understanding of the connections and workings of Nature came to us in college or through years of outdoor sporting activities, experience or inquiry.

When we were young, there were no environmental educators other than our parents, University professors and Nature herself. Another point to note is that there were also far fewer distractions, technological or otherwise in our childhoods. We spent a lot of time playing outdoors, even if it was a neighborhood, not a forest.

As teachers and environmental educators working with the youth of today, we often feel our words and examples, *our work*, is being lost or so easily forgotten in short time by these students, whose lives are so filled the myriad distractions of endless television channels, video games and phone apps. We know that we are introducing children to new concepts, providing experiences that become parts of their personal life stories and helping them understand how everything is connected, and that this is something they may recall at any point in their futures. But we feel that satisfaction of a job well-done most strongly when we can experience it in real-time. When this happens, we see the environment we have guided them into and the sparks we have provided come together and ignite a fire within the mind and eyes of a student we are blessed to share time, space and energy with.

Not only are the rangers and environmental educators of MPEC modeling values, such as patience & respect, and land ethics such as conservation, preservation & leave-no-trace, we are also, and perhaps most importantly, lighting fires of connection in the minds of our youth. ❀



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~ TERRI
GUILLEMETS

MPEC's 2017 Summer Camps

Summer may seem like a long way away, but it is not really too early to plan your child's summer camp experiences. Summer camps provides children with days filled with Nature fun and life-long memories. Transportation from Pueblo is included in MPEC camps, and our amazing scholarship program can help those who need financial assistance. Here is our 2017 camp schedule; descriptions, prices, and many other details can be found at our website, www.hikeandlearn.org, including applying for a scholarship and registering. Please do not wait to register, as many camps fill up!

- ❖ **Cubs Camp (Entering K-1st Grade)** Day Camp, 8am – 1:30pm; Jun 12th-16th OR Jul 17th-21st
- ❖ **Nature Explorers (Entering 2nd-3rd Grade)** Day Camp, 8am – 3pm; Jun 19th-23rd OR Jul 24th-28th
- ❖ **Intrepid Adventurers (Entering 4th-5th Grade)** Day Camp, 8am – 3pm; Jun 26th-30th OR Jul 30th-Aug 4th
- ❖ **Survival Camp (Entering 5th-6th Grade)** 3-day/2-night overnight camp; Jul 5th-7th
- ❖ **NEW!!! Gear-Up Mountain Bike Adventure Camp (Entering 5th-7th Grade)** 3-day/2-night overnight camp; Jul 11th-13th
- ❖ **Mission Wolf Camp 1 and 2 (Entering 6th-8th Grade)** 3-day/2-night overnight camp; June 20th-22nd OR July 18th-20th
- ❖ **Mission Wolf Camp 3 (Entering 8th-10th Grade)** 3-day/2-night overnight camp; Aug 1st-3rd
- ❖ **NEW!!! Water and Rock (Entering 6th-8th Grade)** 3-day/2-night overnight camp; Jun 27th-29th
- ❖ **NEW FOR GIRLS ONLY!!! Young Women Inspired by Nature: Art and Yoga Camp (Entering 6th-9th Grade)** 3-day/2-night overnight camp; Jul 17th-19th
- ❖ **Greenhorn Wilderness Survival Camp (Entering 7th-9th Grade)** 3-day/2-night overnight camp; Jul 25th-27th



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"WINTER IS THE SEASON IN WHICH PEOPLE TRY TO KEEP THE HOUSE AS WARM AS IT WAS IN THE SUMMER, WHEN THEY COMPLAINED ABOUT THE HEAT."
~ AUTHOR UNKNOWN

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mountain-Park-Environmental-Center>

MPEC FACEBOOK

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