

Wyoming Press Kit

Spring/Summer 2009

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NEW

Links to online video clips



Teton Park Eclipses 80

As anniversaries go, 80 years is quite an accomplishment. February 26, 1929 was the day President Calvin Coolidge signed the bill creating Grand Teton National Park. Native Americans might not see the “Big 80” as such a big deal. Their ancestors are known to have summered in Lupine Meadows 12,000 years ago. And who could blame them? Three great rivers of the American West all have major tributaries with headwaters in the mountains around Jackson Hole. Water meant life in the West then as it does today.

The Mountain Men, beginning with John Colter, arrived in the first half of the nineteenth century. Later days brought such trappers and explorers as Jedediah Smith, Jim Bridger and David (Davey) Jackson for whom the valley, or hole, was named.

The late 1800s saw British men of leisure – gentleman hunters – trekking about the countryside with “an eye for the curious and beautiful,” wrote Jack Turner in his book *Teewinot*.

No better words than curious and beautiful could be applied to the Teton Mountain Range as its glorious protrusions skirt the sky in close-up view of all passersby. You can return again and again for... well, twelve thousand years, and the range will never look the same.

It is now possible to gain greater understanding of the park environment and enjoy your time in the Tetons even more by spending time with what Turner calls the “most recent tribes” – rangers and guides. Numerous services are available. Check in at the new visitor center in the appropriately named Moose, Wyoming for starters. Many outdoor options such as wildlife viewing, hiking, mountain climbing, photography, horseback riding and several other exciting adventures are offered.

Here are a few good websites for building your Teton attack plan:

www.nps.gov/grte

www.gtfc.com

www.tetonscience.org

www.wyomingdra.com

www.jacksonholechamber.com

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What's New

Ken Burns' Documentary "The National Parks: America's Best Idea" to Air on PBS This Fall

The winter season in the park is winding down. A couple of special visitors who saw the wonders of winter in Yellowstone this year are the principals behind a new documentary about our national parks that will air nationally this fall on PBS. Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan have delved deeply into the Civil War, the sport of baseball and World War II among many other subjects. A January visit to Yellowstone was Burns' first winter tour of the park. The video depicts their winter visit.

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New Summer Adventure Packages in Yellowstone



Yellowstone Couples Getaway is a five-night package beginning each Saturday, June 6 through October 3, 2009. Guests will explore various thermal features and villages in the park hosted by a Xanterra driver/guide with a one day trip into Grand Teton National Park. Couples return to the park and spend the night in the historic Old Faithful Inn. Yellowstone Couples Getaway includes five nights of accommodations, in-park transportation, five breakfasts, three lunches, five dinners and welcome "Sweets Basket."



Once Around the Park is offered twice per week from June 6 through August 11, 2009. Participants depart their hotels for a day of exploration and activities such as the Old West Dinner Cook-out, the scenic cruiser tour of Yellowstone Lake and walking tours of various geyser basins. This package includes four nights of accommodations, in-park transportation, four breakfasts, three lunches and four dinners and a welcome gift.

Reservations: 307.344.7311 or toll-free 866-GEYSERLAND (1.866.439.7375) www.travelyellowstone.com.

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Wyoming Center at Cam-Plex Draws Attention

The Wyoming Center, recently opened in Gillette, provides the community and visitors with a new complex for special events, recreation and shows. The footprint of the facility is 123,000 square feet with an additional 54,000 square foot mezzanine level which can be used for spectator seating, trade show booths and additional meeting space.

The beautiful red brick facility also claims the most modern ice skating facility in the region offering an icy adventure to those who love to skate. The Wyoming Center is the newest of seven CAM-PLEX facilities, capable of hosting local, state, national, and world-class events. This summer they will be the host to the Campbell County Fair & Rodeo as well as the national Fleetwood RV Rally both of which expect to draw large crowds.

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www.cam-plex.com/building-wyomingcenter.htm



MORE OF What's New

Transcontinental Railroad - Mapping a Legacy

The Golden Spike was driven into the ground on Promontory Summit in the Utah Territory 140 years ago on May 10, 1869. This spike symbolized completion of the first transcontinental railroad, joining the nation from coast to coast. Cheyenne, Wyoming happened to be the half way point from Omaha to Promontory Point and now visitors can revel in a granite, multi-colored floor that lays in the lobby of the Cheyenne Depot Museum. Built by Wayne Hansen, costing \$100,000, the 12 x 42 foot display was based on a historic Union Pacific Railroad map.



Steam engine fans can hop aboard the Union Pacific steam train that runs along this line each year. The train departs Cheyenne on April 11, 2009 and returns May 12 with a stop in Medicine Bow recognizing their centennial milestone. The train also runs during Cheyenne Frontier Days from Denver to Cheyenne July 18-19, 2009. Visit www.upsteam.com for a complete schedule.

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The Bow Hits Century Mark



Union Pacific Railroad transferred its ownership to the town in 1909 and Medicine Bow, Wyoming was incorporated. The area had already been brought to the attention of many by writer Owen Wister's best seller "The Virginian." A hotel, bar and eating establishment is today named for the book and its main character. During one of his stops in Medicine Bow, Wister is believed to have overheard a poker game conversation that led to perhaps the most famously remembered line out of the Virginian's mouth. He was called a SOB by another card player sitting at the table. The reply: "When you call me that, smile."

There's not been a lot to smile about for the hardy folk of Medicine Bow. Once one of the major cattle shipping points in the West and later located along a busy Highway 30 (The Lincoln Highway) that came to be largely usurped by Interstate 80, the town hangs on with a few businesses and true grit.

For those who like to walk in the history of the American West, Medicine Bow is most worthy of a visit. You can wander and stay at The Virginian – maybe even reserve the Owen Wister Suite. The writer's log cabin has been relocated to a spot across the street. Jaunt down the main drag to the Dip Bar & Diner. Say "howdy" to Bill and check out his western art paintings that adorn the entire ceiling, walls, and even the floor. You may want to sidle up to the Dip's bar representing the longest such slab made of jade in the world.

Medicine Bow's centennial will be marked by a number of special events during the "Medicine Bow – 100 years of history" weekend, June 25-28. The kick-off event is a showing of "The Virginian." The silent film dating to 1914 was "picturized" by the incomparable Cecil B. DeMille. The movie will be accompanied by a live musician ensemble. There is a world-class quick draw shooting event on the docket along with melodrama, parade, pancake breakfast and street dances. Medicine Bow is located in south-central Wyoming, west of Laramie along Highway 30. Town information is at: www.medicinebow.com

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MORE OF What's New

Whitney Gallery of Western Art Marks 50 Years with a Re-Opening

To commemorate this significant milestone - events, publications, gallery renovations and the addition of a new artist's studio are in the works. While visitors can certainly appreciate the beautiful paintings and sculpture currently within the gallery, the artwork does not speak for itself. A new installation and interpretation helps put the artwork into context – making it come alive. The installation is going to encourage visitors to make connections across cultures and time to see the old masterworks in a new light.

The new building gives prominence to “Buffalo Bill – The Scout” framing the statue through a large picture window in the gallery. The Whitney Gallery reopens to the public on June 21, 2009.

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Moondance Diner

A once-popular New York City eatery and gathering place has found a new life in a tiny town of 430 in western, Wyoming. It took 18 months and many trials and tribulations to open the Moondance Diner. The Wyoming Tourism video team captured the essence of this unique undertaking with a real Wyoming moon as the start of our story:



Media contact: Cheryl Pierce, Owner; 307.260.6503; www.historicmoondancediner.com

Taking Chance

A film that premiered on HBO in February has its roots in a small Wyoming town called Dubois (pronounced DOO-boyce). "Taking Chance" recounts the escort of a young Marine's remains from the Dover, Delaware military mortuary to Wyoming. The movie will be available on DVD in May.

Robin Wiltshire of Dubois is pictured below handling the buckboard wagon and team of horses that carried Chance Phelps coffin through town to his gravesite in "Taking Chance." Wiltshire performed the real-life duty with dignity for the Phelps family in April of 2004. The Wiltshires', Robin and Kate, are originally from Australia. Their Turtle Ranch located outside of Dubois is headquarters of their animal training program. Robin has provided animals for a number of motion pictures and trains the famous Clydesdales that are used in the Anheuser-Busch beer commercials. Some beneficial changes have just been made in Wyoming's film incentive program. You can find them by way of the Wyoming Film Office website.: www.wyomingfilm.com



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For information about veteran's assistance programs and more details concerning work being done in memory of Chance Phelps visit www.chancephelps.org



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www.wyomingtourism.org