

Park Service seeks minorities' support as it marks 100 years

Parks want more diversity

By FELICIA FONSECA and BEATRIZ COSTA-LIMA
Associated Press

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK, Ariz. — When Asha Jones and other Grand Canyon interns arrived for their summer at the national park, they were struck by its sheer immensity, beauty and world-class hiking trails. Soon, they noticed something else.



AP Photo/Brennan Linsley

Hikers descend a ridge inside Rocky Mountain National Park, near Estes Park, Colo. The National Park Service celebrates its 100th birthday Thursday.

"It is time for a change here, specifically, at Grand Canyon and in the National Park Service in general, to get people who look like me to your parks," said Jones, a 19-year-old black student at Atlanta's Spelman College.

The National Park Service, which oversees more than 131,000 square miles of parks, monuments, battlefields and other landmarks, thinks it's time for a change, too.

As it celebrates its 100th birthday Thursday, the agency is facing some key challenges ahead. Among them is reaching out to minority communities in an increasingly diverse nation and getting them to visit and become invested in preserving the national parks.

"If public lands aren't tell-

ing their story, and they don't see themselves reflected in these beautiful places, they may not support them," Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said. "They may not recognize that these are their assets and protect them for future generations."

The National Park Service doesn't track the makeup of its visitors, but commissioned studies have shown about three-quarters are white. The agency's workforce is less diverse, at 83 percent white, a figure that can fluctuate with temporary employees.

Minorities are expected to eclipse the country's white population before 2050.

The problem of lack of minority engagement is long-

standing and complex but can be tied to two main factors, said Myron F. Floyd, a leading scholar on race and ethnicity in outdoor recreation at North Carolina State University.

The first relates to cultural traditions. Outings to national parks generally aren't passed down through generations in minority communities, he said, and few minorities grow up with an appreciation for such sites. Also, for many years, African-Americans were excluded from national parks and other public resources, he said.

Barriers to visiting national parks also can be as simple as not knowing they exist, or not having a way to get to them or enough money for entry fees and gear, said Jose Gonzales,

Latino Outdoors founder.

Asian-Americans, meanwhile, can be reluctant to travel outside their ethnic circles, and they might find few billboards or brochures in their language at national parks, said Mark Masaoka of the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council.

"It may not seem welcoming or as inviting to go to a place where there are hardly any visitor centers, few signs, and you're left to figure it out," Masaoka said.

The Park Service has made some changes to address these issues, including recruiting minority interns and producing videos and brochures for Spanish-speaking audiences. Its employees spend time in schools with large minority populations to encourage children to visit the outdoors.

The agency also has pushed to designate more sites that highlight the history and contributions of minorities. Some of its newest locations include the Cesar A. Chavez National Monument, established in 2012, and New York's Stonewall Inn, the first national monument to gay rights, in June.

National parks need more support than ever because years of tight budgets have left them with a lengthy and growing backlog of maintenance projects, officials say. The list of needed repairs totaled almost \$12 billion as of last year.

Coast Guard plucks two men from sinking boat on Columbia River

The Daily Astorian

The U.S. Coast Guard rescued two men from the Columbia River after their 14-foot boat ran aground near Desdemona Sands and began taking on water Tuesday afternoon.

A 29-foot response boat crew from Station Cape Dis-

appointment in Ilwaco, Washington, pulled the two men from their sinking boat minutes before it capsized using an emergency heaving line to pull the men aboard. The men were taken to the Skipanon Marina in Warrenton with no reported injuries.

A concerned mariner called

911 and was relayed to the Coast Guard just after 1 p.m., saying a small Smoker Craft fishing boat with two people on board had run aground and needed assistance. The boat crew approached the troubled mariners, who were wearing life jackets, but had to stay 20 to 30 feet back to avoid shoal water.

"Life jackets were an essential part of this rescue," said Petty Officer First Class Mike McQuade, coxswain for the case. "If the men had not been wearing them, we probably would not have been able to save them before their boat sank."

Shortman takes a second shot at Gearhart mayor

County GOP chairman runs for top spot

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — Bob Shortman came close — very close — to winning the 2012 Gearhart mayoral election. He lost to Dianne Widdop by only five votes. In November, Shortman is giving it a second try. He'll be facing Matt Brown, a golf pro who announced his intent to run early this month.

"So many people have asked me to run again that I feel it's my civic duty to do so," Shortman said. "Gearhart is one of the most desirable places to live. Even the elk have moved in. My goal is to keep the small-town feeling we have while managing growth."

A general contractor since 1980, Shortman, 63, also worked as a union carpenter, a tree trimmer and a commercial fisherman. A full-time Clatsop

County resident since 1979, he is semi-retired and manages long-term rental properties. His wife, Lynn, is a semi-retired teacher. Their three children were raised in Gearhart and attended Gearhart Elementary School.

A former chairman of the Gearhart budget committee, Shortman continues to serve on the finance panel. He also served as chairman for the Neacoxie Watershed Committee as chairman.

"My goals are to have our city business transparent, open and friendly," he said.

Shortman said his strengths are dealing with people and listening to them.

Future goals include supporting the police and fire departments, keeping beach access open and bringing groups together, he said.

"We have to support our businesses here," he said. "We're only zoned for so

much. It's not like we're going to have a Walmart in Gearhart."

Shortman said he would miss a grocery store if the Gearhart Grocery transitioned to a brew pub, "but somebody has to produce income in a business."

Short-term rental owners should have been better notified of the city's intention for regulation, Shortman said. "They got notices, but I don't think the city ever communicated with

these people personally — it was sprayed with a fire hose. When they talk about communication, I see a lack of it. And when the people that are running hardly seem to notice there's a problem. But when 100 people show up mad,

there's a problem. As mayor, I'd like to review it."

Shortman said he had already contacted short-term rental owners about the new rules and "would like to hear what they have to say."

He said the city should talk about things before "throwing down laws." If a new firehouse or other facility is sought, he said he would like to see it brought in on budget and on time.

Shortman, the chairman of Clatsop County Republicans, said he did not intend to inject national politics into the role of mayor. "The city mayor's nonpartisan," he said. "I don't want to inject any politics in the mayor's position. I see it as a business and management position. I feel it's outside the scope of some mayors to inject bigger agendas."



Bob Shortman

COAST

The UW Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team is looking for volunteers to help monitor marine debris on the WA coast.

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Q: When and where is the Doggie Fashion Show for the Dog Day Afternoon?

A: A benefit for Clatsop Animal Assistance, the Doggie Fashion Show will be at the Astoria Sunday Market at 1 PM on August 28th. It will be held on the patio on the east side of the American Legion building. The theme for the fashion show is Astoria Clowns in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Astoria-Megler Bridge. So bring your canine and come clown around! There will be awards and prizes for best dressed and other honors! Also, 4-H Classy Canines are bringing their agility course so you and your dog can learn new skills!

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Christie Taylor

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Stefanie Cao
Medicare Market Manager

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Q: What's covered by Medicare Parts A and B?

A: Part A is hospital insurance. It covers you if you're a hospital inpatient, or you're discharged from the hospital to a skilled nursing facility. It also covers hospice and some home health care. Part B is medical insurance. It covers outpatient care like doctor visits, screenings and tests, shots, physical therapy, some counseling and some durable medical equipment.

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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