



Hands on the Land

A National Network of Field Classrooms Linking
Students, Teachers, and Parents to their Public Lands



Special Seasonal Edition



As we prepare to bid farewell to 2006 and usher in 2007 we wanted to take a look at how several Hands on the Land sites are celebrating and incorporating the season into their programming.

Alder Creek Children's Forest (ACCF) in Oregon is getting ready for the New Year by preparing sites for new trees. In November and December students will be out cutting blackberries with loppers and piling slash to facilitate planting spots for Ponderosa Pines that will be planted in January 2007. They will also be spreading native grass seed on exposed areas from this past summer's road and trail work. Joe Ross, a staff member at the site, says they "plan on undertaking these activities with plenty of holiday cheer. We might even decorate one of the trees there, have some holiday cookies, or heat up some apple cider for all the students, teachers and other volunteers who come."



Students learn how to do timber cruising and forest inventory at Alder Creek Children's Forest.

Petrified Forest National Park celebrates a century of service this holiday season. Beginning on December 2nd, the park participates in the community's Parade of Lights. On December 8th-9th the National Park celebrates its 100 Year Anniversary! A "See Free Day" (no charge for visitors) and an Open House give visitors a chance to learn more about the park and celebrate the holidays including a chance for visitors to make historic holiday ornaments. Also on December 8th, the National Park will be hosting a reception for students and their families who have participated in this fall's Art and Essay contest. Local 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students will showcase their projects to friends, family, and the community.



Keystone Science School students participate in the Snow Science CASE program with classmates. Data gathering combined with snowshoeing and cross-country skiing makes for fun hands-on science.

As the holidays approach and the first large snowstorms move across the country, the **Keystone Science School (KSS)** in Colorado's Rocky Mountains gets ready to introduce its Snow Science CASE Program (Classroom Access to Science Education). Beginning in December, students that study snow science at KSS explore the physical characteristics of snow and avalanches in the Colorado Rockies through hands-on gathering of information about snowpack. Students dig snowpits to examine the different layers of snow and examine properties which contribute to avalanches. KSS hopes to begin incorporating this data gathering activity to Hands on the Land's Environmental Monitoring projects in the upcoming year.



Visit the Hands on the Land website for more information on these activities and sites or contact:

ACCS, Joe Ross at 541-464-3248 or joseph_ross@blm.gov
Petrified Forest NP, Marge Post at 928-524-6228 or marge_post@nps.gov

KSS and Snow Science, Andy McIntyre at 970-468-2098 or amcintyre@keystone.org; <http://www.keystone.org/kss>

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LBL at 270-924-2038 or www.lbl.org

Mt. Baldy at 909-982-2879 or <http://mtbaldyeducation.org>

Historic Trails at 307-261-7787 or www.wy.blm.gov/nhtic



Member Holiday News

Land Between the Lakes

Located in Kentucky, Land Between the Lakes (LBL) has many holiday and seasonal activities planned at their Nature Center, Planetarium, and old-time site, the "Homeplace". November included a "Fall Frolic Weekend" complete with activities like Signs of the Season, Autumn Art, Fall Hayrides, Fall Scavenger Hunt & a Pilgrim Picnic. In honor of winter and the holiday season, Animal Snowflakes will allow visitors and students to add some natural pizzazz to their winter decorations as they make their own animal-shaped, recycled paper snowflakes.

Meanwhile, at the Homeplace, an event called "Christmas in 1850" and "It's Christmas Eve at The Homeplace!" transports visitors back in time with smells of pine and fresh ginger bread cookies, stockings hung over the fireplace, and voices raised in song that celebrate that holidays on the way. Visitors will learn how to make traditional decorations and home cooked goodies, relax to the old-time holiday tunes of the Dixie Volunteers in singing 1800's carols and usher in the arrival of Santa Claus by horse and buggy.

At the Planetarium, a show called "'Tis The Season" features Noah Adams of National Public Radio in a guide through a look at the seasonal, religious, and cultural rituals from around the world, and how the stars and planets have played an important role in these celebrations throughout history. And as visitors have their sights set on the skies, the Audubon Christmas Bird Count takes place as birders nationwide participate in this annual Audubon Society bird count, with one site being Land Between the Lakes.

Mt. Baldy Environmental Education Center

December 2nd is the first Annual Winter Solstice Celebration being held at Angeles National Forest's Mt. Baldy Environmental Education center where visitors can see Tongva tribe members performing some of their traditional ceremony for the upcoming winter solstice. Tongva, "people of the land," also called Gabrielino-Tongva, are native to much of Southern California, particularly around Los Angeles, including four of the Channel Islands. Mt. Baldy offers a "World of the Tongva (Gabrielino)" education program for grades 3-5 and gives students and this special Winter Solstice event will give visitors of all ages a chance to learn about this wonderful local culture during this special event. Then, on December 9th, from 3-6pm at the Visitors Center, guests can take part in the Mt. Baldy Holiday Open House where kids and families can visit with Santa and Smoky the Bear while checking out fun crafts and gifts made by local artisans, make their own fun holiday crafts, learn more about new programs for the upcoming New Year and enjoy holiday music.

Mt. Baldy's reproduction of a Gabrielino-Tongva village is on site along with the Mt. Baldy Schoolhouse, greenhouse, and historic CA Gold Rush camp.



A volunteer "Father Christmas" gives out goodies at last year's Holiday on the Homestead.



National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, in Casper, Wyoming

December 9th is the Holiday on the Homestead celebration, with this year's theme being "A Musical Celebration." The event will feature a variety of young musicians and singers, including the Casper Children's Chorale, the Frontier Middle School Show Choir, and the Eastside Elementary Orchestra. Also on hand will be the Trails Center Philharmonic, a group of Trail Center volunteers playing fiddle, banjo, and guitar. This fun-filled family event will take place from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; admission to the Trails Center and all the corresponding festivities are free to the public that day.

Upcoming Events

West Region of AEE Annual Conference: "Universal Approaches to Experiential Education" March 1-4, 2007

The 16th Annual Conference for West Region (CA, NV & HI) of the Association for Experiential Education will provide a wide variety of workshops based on Outdoor and Experiential Education, entertainment, networking opportunities, all in a fun and supportive environment. For more information, visit aee-west.org.

For more upcoming events, training and resources, check out Hands on the Land's "Program Providers" link available from the homepage or at <http://www.handsontheland.org/manage/hub.cfm>