

The Pillar Page

P O M P E Y S P I L L A R N A T I O N A L M O N U M E N T

POMPEYS PILLAR HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION—UPDATES & NEWS

2012

UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 22nd

- ◆ Annual PPHA meeting

April 24st, 26th, 28th

- ◆ Volunteer Training Days

May 5th

- ◆ Visitor Center Opens for Season



Pompeys Pillar Historical Association (PPHA) held its annual meeting on April 22nd, 2012. During the meeting several reports were given and Jeff Kitchens, Monument Manager, presented on the history of the BLM.

At the annual meeting, board member Gloria Wester retired. Gloria began her involvement with the Pillar in 1990 when the property was offered for sale. She and others worked hard to ensure the Landmark became public property.

After the purchase by BLM was arranged, Gloria and oth-

ers formed the Committee for the Preservation of Pompeys Pillar (later to be renamed Pompeys Pillar Historical Association). Gloria and Jim VanArsdale were the founding co-chairs.

Since the early 1990s Gloria

has continued to support the Pillar by serving in various board positions. Her greatest contribution was sharing her talents and knowledge in the area of publicity and public relations. She has worked tirelessly to spread knowledge and information about this important historic site throughout the area and the entire country.

The Board will miss her creativity and eternal optimism; but we know that she will continue to be a resource when needed. Thank you Gloria for more than 22 years of service!



Gloria Wester with thank you gift along with Jeff Kitchens and Susan Barrow
Photo courtesy of Milton Wester

POMPEYS PILLAR NATIONAL MONUMENT

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BILLINGS, MONTANA 59101
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VISITOR CENTER OPENING SOON!

May 5th is just around the corner and the staff at Pompeys Pillar National Monument have been working at a fast pace to get everything ready for another season.

On April 24th, 26th, and 28th the BLM and PPHA are

jointly hosting volunteer trainings. Seasonal staff have begun the return and with them comes the sound of weed whackers, hammers hitting nails on the boardwalk, and equipment run-

ning in the maintenance shop.

Please help us share the word that we are opening soon. Thank you.



Save the Date Clark Days 2012 is July 28th—29th

P O M P E Y S P I L L A R N A T I O N A L M O N U M E N T

MEET THE NEW PILLAR STAFF



Sonni Hope - Visitor Use Ranger

Photo courtesy of BLM

If you come out to the Pillar lately you probably noticed a few new faces. We wanted to take this issue to introduce you to these new folk who are already making a significant difference. The first is Sonni Hope, whom many of you may remember from her seasonal work over the last several years. Originally from Big Horn, Mt, Sonni started working for the Pillar in 2004 as a seasonal. Since then she has returned annually. Sonni says the reason for this is “the commitment and sense of community among volunteers and staff has

brought me back every year”. Sonni was hired as the monument’s lead park ranger for visitor use and fees under the Student Employment Program and will be returning to school in the fall to get a second bachelor’s in history.

Another new face that you may see hanging around the Log Cabin is that of Wes Tavegia. He was born and raised in Helena, MT. Wes, who graduated in 2000 from University of Montana in Missoula with a degree in recreation resource management, is the new lead interpretive ranger. Wes went



Wes Tavegia— Lead Interpretive Ranger

Photo courtesy of BLM

into the Army after college in Fort Hood, Texas after which he started his career as a seasonal ranger in interpretation with the National Park Service. Since 2005 Wes has worked at several national parks including Grand Canyon, Everglades, Yellowstone, and most recently Isle Royale National Park. He comes to us with a great deal of experience and energy.

Finally, I would like to introduce you to Jerad Werning, Pompeys Pillars new maintenance work and facilities lead. Born in Edgar, MT, Jerad joined the MT Army National Guard while attending College in 2000. In 2004 he deployed to Iraq for an 18 month tour, which he refers to as “one of the greatest experiences of his life”. Upon returning from his tour he completed a degree in Wildlife Management from MSU-

Bozeman. The last two summers Jerad has been a seasonal range technician for the Billings Field Office’s wild horse and burro program. He is excited to be working for Pompeys Pillar and the



Jared Werning— Maintenance Worker

Photo courtesy of BLM

Billings Field Office.

When you come out for your next visit please take a few moments to please meet and greet our new and exceptional employees. We are so excited to have them here.

MANAGER’S CORNER

Spring is in the air. For those who have had the fortune to come out lately the leaves are peeking out, flowers are beginning to abound, and the marmots have started to come out of their burrows. Overall, it was a short and mild winter, but one full of activity and progress.

The maintenance yard was fenced, remnants of

the old farm buildings removed, and several trees planted. Along with these projects the Montana Conservation Corps held two chainsaw training classes at the Pillar. The MCC thinned and removed dead and wind damaged cottonwoods along the old entrance road.

In late March BLM staff participated in the

MT Environmental Education Associations annual meeting. Our staff also helped out with the Girl Scout’s 100th anniversary celebration in Billings by helping cook smores for over 400 people. It was a great winter and we are looking forward to another active summer.

Thank you.
Jeff Kitchens,
Monument Manager.



Montana Conservation Corps crew leaders who participated in saw class.

Photo courtesy of MCC

