



Arts in the Parks at Bird Creek Campground



Artist Vladimir Zhikharatsev from Fairbanks provides a watercolor demonstration for Arts in the Parks participants.



Artist Douglas Yates speaks with Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott and his wife, Antoinette "Toni" Mallott.



Group photo!



Andrea Patton leads a painting workshop during the "Arts Along the Arm" Arts in the Parks event.

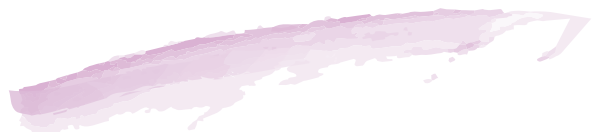
Alaska State Parks offered a full weekend of art-focused events at Bird Creek Campground in Chugach State Park last month.

Alaskan artists chose locations in Chugach State Park along Turnagain Arm and painted all weekend. The theme of the event was titled "Arts Along the Arm," and was part of the Arts in the Parks program launched by Alaska State Parks in 2011. The public was invited to attend and participate in a variety of family-friendly activities scheduled throughout the weekend.

The Arts in the Parks program is a initiative that provides a great opportunity to be outdoors and participate in some unique art-based activities, which included kids' arts and crafts, mushroom identification, and painting workshops by local artists.

Many of the participating artists used a style of painting and drawing known as *en plein air*, a French expression that means "in the open air," and they painted at different locations up and down Turnagain Arm, including McHugh Creek, Bird Point, and Beluga Point.

Events like this are a wonderful opportunity for Alaskans to enjoy their state parks, showcased through art. Participants in each of these events have a full weekend to find creative inspiration and enjoy the recreational opportunities available in our parks. At this event, Lt. Governor Byron Mallot even stopped by to say hi and meet some of the artists.



Rebirth of Ketchikan's Calamity Triathlon



Kayakers at Totem Bight SHP prepare for the Calamity Triathlon start.



Left: Elizabeth Einset (second to left, wearing black and yellow), Jennifer Benedict (third to left with sunglasses on her head), and Debby Spence (second to right, wearing white-rimmed sunglasses) put on their medals after winning first place in the women's team category. On the left, race director Diane Gubatayao checks her notes.



Bill Elberson came in second place overall, finishing the race in 1:25:22. The Ketchikan Daily News quoted Bill as saying, "The new course is a great course...It's nice to be able to use our own state parks..."

On a Saturday in late July, the "rebirth of the Calamity Triathlon" was held on a brand new course on Ketchikan's road system and in Alaska State Parks. The race was co-sponsored by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Parks and Recreation, the Ketchikan Walking and Running Club, the Friends of Ketchikan Alaska State Parks, and state park staff. Proceeds from the race went to the Friends group. Diane Gubatayao, a member of the Friends of Ketchikan Alaska State Parks group, was the race director and also the past Calamity Triathlon director.

The race course included approximately three miles of kayaking from Totem Bight SHP around Danger Island to Refuge Cove State Recreation Site, a 5K run from Refuge Cove through the nearby neighborhood back to Totem Bight, and eight miles biking from Totem Bight to Settlers Cove State Recreation Site. The race was a great way for participants and their families and friends to appreciate and enjoy the beauty of our state parks.



Above: Cameo Lutz, soloist, reaches the finish line, coming in at eighth place
Left: Jared Gross was the first kayaker to land at Refuge Cove SRS, finishing the first leg of the race in 00:27:25.

Northern News

- A rash of thefts have been occurring in the Fairbanks area. At the Northern Area parks maintenance shop, three ATVs were stolen in July. Two weeks later, Ranger Dane Happ apprehended a suspect in the maintenance yard and arrested him for criminal trespass and attempted vehicle theft. Immediately prior to the arrest, the suspect was witnessed handling several ATVs and other DNR-owned equipment while wearing rubber gloves.
- Northern Area staff met with representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Fish and Game to discuss a river bank restoration project in Chena River State Recreation Area. The project consists of armoring 400 linear feet of stream bank using root wad construction. This fish-friendly barrier will protect Rosehip Campground from being eaten away by the Chena River.
- Park Specialist Jackie Cheek is busy this month cleaning up the maintenance yard at Harding Lake State Recreation Area. She issued a media release for free fire wood and used building materials. "After more than 20 years of accumulating stuff, it was time to free up some space," said Park Superintendent Brooks Ludwig.
- Chief Ranger Ian Thomas responded to several search and rescue operations in Chena River SRA last month. He played a key role in directing a black hawk helicopter to two victims. The Alaska State Troopers invited Ian to a meeting about search and rescue operations hosted by the Interior Alaska Legislative Delegation. The Interior Delegation was very appreciative of the park ranger support.



Thanks to the hard work of Park Specialist Brian Charlton and volunteer Alisha Lutz, the dining hall at Twin Bears Camp in Chena River State Recreation Area has a new deck and railings.



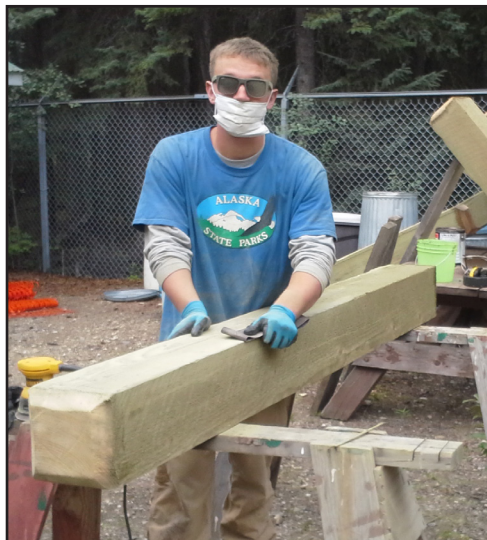
Trail crew leader, Mike Hitte, loads gravel to shore up muddy sections along Stiles Creek Trail in Chena River State Recreation Area. The project was funded through the Recreational Trail Grant program.

Josh Barr vs. Wood Post

Park specialist Jaclyn Cheek took some pictures during the fee sign post replacement project at Harding Lake SRA to show why she was so eager to get this project done.



Parks volunteer Josh Barr demonstrates the extent of the rot at the base of the fee sign pole.



He didn't waste any time getting a new post ready.



The fee station sign is finally on sure footing thanks to Josh Barr's hard work.

Camera Lost in Chugach State Park Finds its Way Home

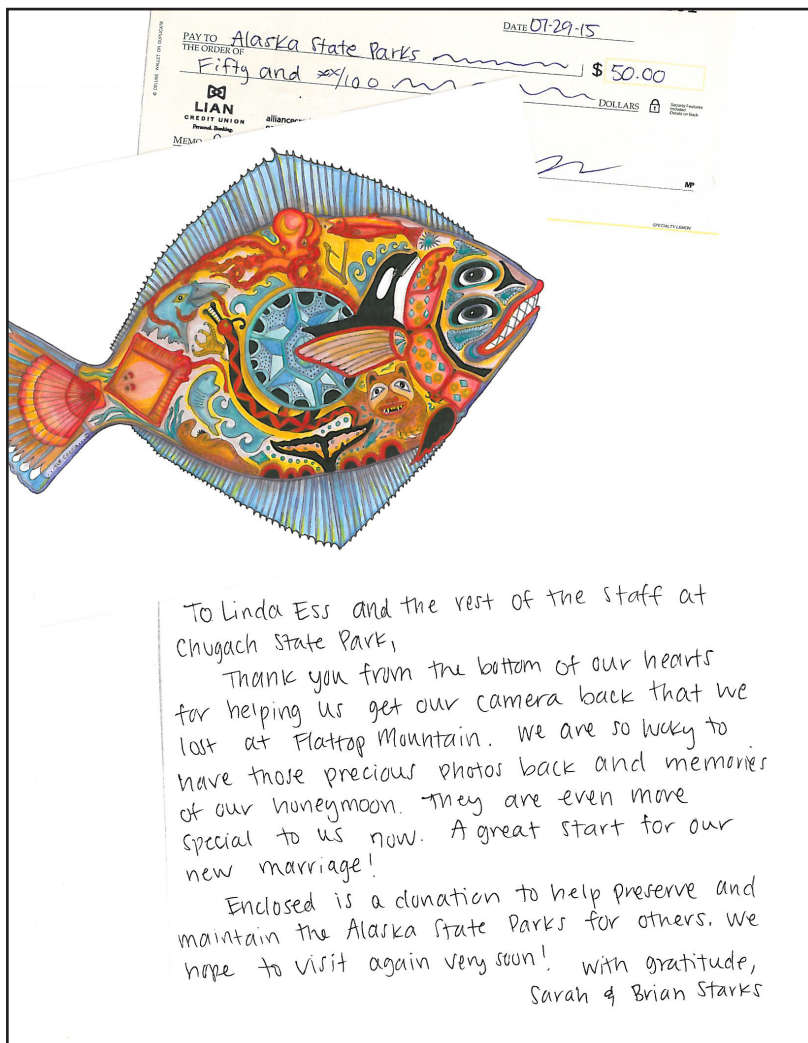
Chugach State Park headquarters received a thank you card from a couple who lost their camera on their last day of their Alaskan honeymoon. The camera contained all of their honeymoon memories and was lost in a ravine on the way down from a hike on Flattop Mountain.

The couple stopped by the office and explained their plight. Upon learning of their story, an employee and a park volunteer hiked up the mountain to look for the lost camera. However, search efforts were not needed as a Good Samaritan found the camera and turned it in within a few days enabling Chugach SP to return the camera to the grateful couple.

A Candid Moment with the Governor



Tom Anthony holds his daughter for a photo with Governor Bill Walker and First Lady Donna Walker. Tom and his family were at Soldotna Park when they saw the First Couple.



Card and donation received by Chugach State Park staff

