



FORT
DAVIS NHS

READ ALL
ABOUT IT!:

- The newsletter is back and your feedback will keep it coming
- Fall Monsoon stalled out, but came back great
- We have many people to thank for such a wonderful 2017
- Look for the new rack cards at local visitor centers
- Children's Education Day December 20th



Hospital

Extra! Extra!

Update Time

As we mentioned in the previous issue, the north ward was completely furnished including items contracted and purchased by the Friends of Fort Davis (see back page).

The Dispensary was next on the list and it is moving along rapidly! First a floor was put in, but not just any floor, a floating one. There is still original fabric of the hospital floor which we did not want damaged and definitely not removed. Therefore the new load bearing floor sits just above the original, which will preserve it better and make it feasible to furnish. Next came the fireplace and mantel plus the ceiling. The ceiling was necessary to keep out bats and birds which can cause havoc

on furnishings and the floor in general.

The reason we believe the dispensary is a fascinating room is due to its uses, think of it as the pharmacy on post. This is where medical supplies such as pills, bandages, and oils for ailments were distributed to ill patients. Hundreds of bottles would be stored here including licorice and peppermint oils for upset stomachs and ulcers.



Come see the renovations!



Masons At Work

The foundations at Fort Davis live in a harsh environment. Wind, sun, hail, running water, and many other factors deteriorate our 100+ year old buildings' footings. Two of our interesting foundations are the chapel and guardhouse. The chapel held worship services, served as a school house, and was where Henry O. Flipper was court-martialed.

At the Guardhouse, you can still see the size of the cozy jail cells.

When time has caused damage to these irreplaceable national treasures it's up to our amazing masons to work their magic! Using a technique called "repointing" they remove old and crumbling mortar without disturbing the stone. New mortar is then inserted into each gap



and crevice so the stone will be stabilized in place for years to come. These artists take their job seriously to keep the historic integrity as exact as possible.



New cedar roofs on historic buildings.

"Thank you to staff and volunteers for hosting the summer visitors while I have been away."

*-Superintendent
Barney Riley*

Visitation

October 1st –September 30th is the fiscal calendar year in which the U.S. government operates it's budget and other things.

Some of those "other things" are the numerous reports on personnel, performance, purchases, and worth to surrounding communities. These are all fun numbers that can frankly drag you down the rabbit hole of civil service.

This year our visitation was down after a spectacular centennial ride! Some factors include the extended temporary closures of two big attractions in the area—Balmorhea and Indian Lodge State Parks. A quick look at gas prices and you'll note they are on an upward trend as well. Finally, many Texas residents are going east for vacation, two words, Go Astros!!

We still hosted just over 45,000 visitors and have seen our online-virtual presence go up. One reason people are hearing about us is the PBS film "National Parks of Texas: In Contact with Beauty" made possible by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and many more. We will hold a viewing with members of the NPCA at our park auditorium XX/XX/XXXX.

See you there!

The Old Fort Smells of New Cedar

In the last edition we talked about the new roofs to the Barracks and Hospital, well we're at it again!

15 structures including the officer's homes, kitchen and commissary are currently being re-roofed and are scheduled to be completed in the spring. Shingles atop the structures

are fire-resistance treated cedar and look like the pine that would have adorned the homes in the 1800s.

The kitchen and commissary are quartermaster-red painted tin roofs. We expect these to last at least 20 years in the harsh desert sun.

Come out and see for yourself the improvements

going on and while your at it use the old sniffer to reinforce the memory of real wood shingles!

A big shout-out of thanks to our management, administration, and facilities divisions for making this possible!

Night Tour

The stars at night, are big and
♪ ♪ ♪ bright ♪ ♪ ♪

First off, Fort Davis NHS wants to thank all 48 of our outstanding volunteers for making this year's night tour a success! Even though we cut a tour this go-around, we still had over 250 people show up reflecting that almost every group was at full capacity!

Also, how about that beautiful weather? Despite threats of rain and cold, the sky was clear and the evening pleasant.

With this year's theme being "Current Events" the rangers had a wide range of material to choose from. There was talk of simple things like Tabasco sauce out of Louisiana as well as more serious topics such as effects of prohibition on army posts in

1881. Officers and their wives discussed statehood and monuments nearing completion. Overall, visitors shared their compliments regarding all of the actors, the storyline, the beautiful singing by the Karleen family and the tasty cookies and cider offered at the kitchen.

Thank you everyone for an enjoyable evening at the post!



Ladies scene with talking about the new gift from France, Lady Liberty!

Superintendent's Corner

It is great to be back in Fort Davis after spending 4 months in Denver Colorado as the Acting Chief of Facilities for the Intermountain Region. This roll was the "problem solver" for all things maintenance and construction. Some of those parks include Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, Glacier and of course our little gem here. This gave me the unique opportunity to have the ear of the other regional movers and shakers. Our roof

renovation was done with money not being used by those bigger parks.

Coming home and looking at the grounds everything looks wonderful! Green waving grass, the smell of bee brush, hearing visitors enjoying themselves and finding my office not taken over by the other rangers!



What is something you are excited to see at Fort Davis this year?

IPM



If you search the internet for "IPM" 99% of the results will point you to Integrated Pest Management, and rightfully so. This is a way to "solve pest problems while minimizing risks to people and the environment".

Jennifer Stafford has used her talent and experience to keep check on the creepy crawlies

around the historic buildings. These include clothes moths, silverfish, and furniture beetles which consume fur, paper and wood accordingly. With the number of historical objects the park is charged with protecting, this is not an easy job. There are sticky traps which are examined and logged regularly giving Jennifer the knowledge of critters present and at what life stage they are in currently.

Life stage is important to IPM since not all "ages" of an insect cause damage to our objects. Furthermore she has different treatments in place for the various structures that keep our collections on display safe from harm.

To date we have seen less invasions than in the past. Tapestry and 19th century furniture lovers can rejoice for Jennifer is here!

Rangers Come and Go but are Never Forgotten

This summer season you might have recognized some new faces on post! We had two new rangers in the interpretive division for the summer, Blake Blakely and Paul Peterson. Paul has volunteered here with his family since he was 8 years old and Blake came from the Forest Service in East Texas. Both have been wonderful

assets to the division. We were also fortunate with the return of our favorite cavalryman, Rick Keith.

Unfortunately, we have seen a few familiar and irreplaceable faces leave the park. Frank Cauble, Andy Quiroz, Jessie Garcia, Julian Garcia, and Paul Hanks. Each of these men brought so much talent, hard work and dedication to

this park and provided valuable instruction to other parks' programs. We will miss you all and hope your next journey will be fulfilling whether it is retirement or career change.



Once a Ranger always a Ranger

Friends of Fort Davis

In the North Ward of the Post Hospital you will find exact replicas of chairs and stools that would have stood there 140 years ago. Because of its provenance and a reference that the original chairs were painted so that a soldier could not steal one to replace another that may have broken in the barracks led a Montana native to ascertain he had a specific Fort Davis hospital chair. The Friends jumped at the chance to obtain this chair and contracted an Alpine resident to duplicate it, not just once but 12 times!

Social Media

The group's new and improved website and Facebook pages have been actively spreading park news and encouraging philanthropy in the parks. If you haven't checked them out yet or the new signs about the pre-civil war "First Fort", please do!



www.fofdnhs.org

<https://www.facebook.com/fofdnhs/>

The intricate design makes for a very comfortable chair, test out one in the park auditorium any time you would like!

Some of the Friends Board of Directors were lucky enough to meet with other Friends groups in Austin, Texas this year. The conference highlighted the importance of connecting smaller parks with larger ones to make an alliance of sorts. They also touched upon using grants and what the group can leverage from community members and stakeholders that government employees cannot.



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We're on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/FortDavisNHS

A key post in the defense system of west Texas, Fort Davis played a major role in the history of the Southwest. From 1854 until 1891, troops stationed at the post protected emigrants, freighters, mail coaches, and travelers on the San Antonio-El Paso Road.

Historians today regard Fort Davis NHS as one of the best surviving examples of a southwestern Indian Wars era frontier military post.

It is a vivid reminder of the significant role played by the military in the settlement and development of the western frontier.

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