



# Partners and Friends

## Teaching Children To Take Care of Their Past

*Rowena Harrington, Museum Tech at Nez Perce National Historical Park reports on her experiences working with children on a new exhibit.*

As a museum technician for Nez Perce National Historical Park and an American Indian, I've expressed grief that there just aren't enough American Indians in the museum field. A big question for me is why should American Indians be interested in working in a field that for many years exploited their ancestors? How could a museum attract American Indians into the field? In order to try to solve the problem and perhaps answer my own question I started a project to develop a new exhibit, created by children.

I imagined a small exhibit case, enclosing a diorama portraying a day in the life of a Nez Perce woman. The woman is sitting on a buffalo hide in her tule mat tipi, pestle and hopper in hand, grinding cous, perhaps to make bread. Around her are items that would have been used in the past or perhaps still in use today.

In April, 2003 emissaries went to Lapwai Elementary School to see if the art and history teachers would allow the children to work on the project. The school was unable to provide assistance. I then asked a co-worker if her grandchildren could help and also went to the Lapwai Unit of the Boys and Girls Club of the Lewis-Clark Valley to see if their kids were interested. They were.

*In January of 2004 the children built a mannequin and began to select artifacts for the exhibit.*

The children had to think about what would be in a woman's home perhaps



Cecelia Alvarez (left, in white smock) and Sean Alvarez (right) help Nez Perce National Historical Park museum staff paint the mannequin that is the centerpiece of the museum's exhibit on Nez Perce women.

two hundred years ago? Parfleche cases, cornhusk bags, beads, food, tools like a digging stick were all considered. The kids thought of these items and chose which would be best. When the children were looking at the artifacts they shared information, such as a grandmother having a digging stick or an auntie who has a cornhusk bag that is really beautiful.

For the children who worked on the project it was their first encounter with the other side of the museum. This was not the clean, fresh visitor side but the cluttered, sometimes dusty side of the museum. They ventured into the cold and dim vaults. Before the girls were done with this exhibit they wanted to know when they could get started on the other exhibits!

On May 21st 2004 the Nez Perce children were honored at the Spalding Visitor Center. I asked; "Who better to tell the history, present and future of the American Indian?" Who better to take care of American Indian artifacts than a descendent of the object's creator? Who better to take the "Indian out of the box" than an American Indian? For me this was the best solution. If just one of these kids decides to go into the museum field I will consider myself a success. The most delightful part of the entire project was that it was created by local Nez Perce children (More pictures on page 2).

*Rowena Harrington is a Museum Technician at Nez Perce National Historical Park. She is a member of the Winnebago of Nebraska (HoChunk).*

## New Approaches in Natural Resource Management

Knowing the condition of natural resources in national parks is fundamental to the National Park Service's (NPS) ability to manage park resources "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations". NPS managers across the country are confronted with increasingly complex and challenging issues that require a broad understanding of the status and trends of park resources. The challenge of protecting and managing a park's natural resources requires an ecosystem approach because most parks are open systems, with threats such as air and water pollution or invasive species, originating outside of the park's boundaries. National parks are part of larger ecosystems and must be managed in that context.

In order to address the need of park managers to know the condition of natural resources, Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big Hole National Battlefield joined with eight other national park units in this region to form the Upper Columbia Basin Network (UCBN) for Natural Resource Inventory and Monitoring. The UCBN is 1 of 32 networks across the country formed to implement network-wide natural resource inventory and monitoring (I & M) programs.

At Nez Perce NHP and Big Hole NB, inventories of vertebrates and vascular plants were conducted during the summer 2002. The next major milestone is to complete a monitoring plan, which will guide the parks in identifying priorities for the implementation of monitoring natural resources. The intent of monitoring is to track a subset of physical, chemical, and biological elements and processes that represent the overall health or condition of park resources. The information obtained will have multiple applications for management decision-making, research, education, and promoting public understanding of park resources.

UCBN staff are duty-stationed at the University of Idaho in Moscow, ID. For more information please contact Lisa Garrett at [Lisa\\_Garrett@nps.gov](mailto:Lisa_Garrett@nps.gov) or 208-885-3684.

## Teaching Children To Take Care of Their Past



On May 21, 2004 the children and adults from the Lapwai Unit of the Boys and Girls Club of the Lewis-Clark Valley who participated in the museum exhibit project received special recognition from the park. Standing (left to right): Farren Penny, Cody Spencer, Morning Star, Sally Rhoan, Monice Samuels, Anna Calkins. Sitting in the front row (left to right): Jonae Scabbyrobe, Sean Alvarez, Cecelia Alvarez, Ozzie Rae White, CeCe Bohnee, Alania Gibbs.



Celia Alvarez carefully attaches eyelashes to the mannequin that is the centerpiece of the exhibit.



The children admiring their work on the opening day of the exhibit.

The summer 2004 Visitor Guide for Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big Hole National Battlefield is now available. If you would like to have copies for your institution or office, please contact the editor at (208) 843-2261, ext. 126 and copies will be delivered. A digital version is available at: [www.nps.gov/nepe/NEPE\\_Summer](http://www.nps.gov/nepe/NEPE_Summer).

# News From the Field

## Summer Programs Underway

Memorial Day weekend is the traditional kickoff for the summer visitor season. Nez Perce National Historical Park (NHP) and Big Hole National Battlefield (NB) will offer a variety of summer programs from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

The Spalding Visitor Center is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm daily, through Labor Day. From June 26 through September 12, Big Hole NB Visitor Center is open from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. After September 12 the visitor center begins winter hours and will be open 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. For the first time, Big Hole will be offering special programs every weekend beginning July 3.

For more information regarding summer programs, please visit the parks' websites. Nez Perce NHP is available at [www.nps.gov/nepe](http://www.nps.gov/nepe) and Big Hole NB at [www.nps.gov/biho](http://www.nps.gov/biho).

## White Bird Battlefield Fire

On February 13 a local highway district slash fire escaped onto the adjoining White Bird Battlefield. Unseasonably dry condi-



The fire at Whitebird Battlefield viewed from the overlook on Highway 95 (Photo courtesy David Rauzi, Idaho County Free Press).

tions resulted in the 800-acre Valentine Massacre Fire, a low-intensity burn that blackened two-thirds of the battlefield.

While neither life nor property was threatened, the unintended fire cleared vast tracts of noxious weeds, particularly yellow starthistle, that have long infested the site. In order to stem weed resurgence, the park contracted for aerial herbicide spraying with emergency funding provided through the federal Burned Area Emergency

Rehabilitation (BAER) program.

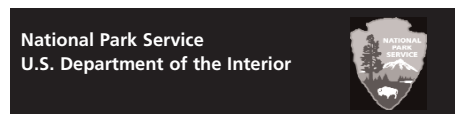
The May 15 spraying resulted in a good weed kill. Pending continued availability of BAER funds, the park will spray again, if necessary, and reseed the land with native grasses later this fall.

## Wallowa Band Interpretive Center

The Wallowa Band Nez Perce Trail Interpretive Center in Wallowa, Oregon has completed a series of bronze plaques that will be installed at their Tick Hill site.

These plaques, funded by a rural business services grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, will be placed throughout the site of the proposed interpretive center. The plaques, in English and Nez Perce, offer reflections on the roots many Nez Perce have in the Wallowa Valley.

For more information, contact the Wallowa Band Nez Perce Trail Interpretive Center at (541) 886-3101 or visit the website at: [www.wallowanezperce.com/](http://www.wallowanezperce.com/).



Nez Perce National Historical Park offers for all Americans an important perspective about our history as a people. It is not the view from the Mississippi River looking west; it is a view from a homeland looking out, witnessing the march of history and change, yet continuing today and tomorrow to commemorate and celebrate Nez Perce culture and traditions. It is a park about a people for all people.

**Nez Perce National Historical Park**  
39063 US Hwy 95  
Spalding, ID 83540  
(208) 843-2261  
[www.nps.gov/nepe](http://www.nps.gov/nepe)

**Big Hole National Battlefield**  
P.O. Box 237  
Wisdom, MT 59761  
(406) 689-3155  
[www.nps.gov/biho](http://www.nps.gov/biho)

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

## Volunteer Weekend at Spalding



Park staff and volunteers work together planting shrubs at the entrance to the Spalding Visitor Center.

On June 6, 2004, fifty volunteers came to Spalding Visitor Center for a day of planting trees and shrubs at the Spalding Visitor Center.

The event kicked off at 8:00 am and for the rest of the morning volunteers worked. The skies were gray, but that did not dampen spirits of the volunteers. After breakfast and some introductory remarks by the Superintendent and company officials from Wal-mart and Unilever, the volunteers went to work.

The event was part of the National Parks Tour, a multi-year initiative sponsored by the Take Pride in America, the National Park Foundation, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. and the Unilever Foundation. The event sponsors donated \$3,000 and helped recruit volunteers from the Lewis-Clark Valley.

For the last ten years, the Unilever Foundation has donated \$20 million for projects in a 124 National Park units. The Tour America program hopes to send 100,000 people to volunteer in parks, resulting in a \$1.5 million in-kind manpower donation to the NPS.



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

**Nez Perce National Historical Park**  
 39063 US Hwy 95  
 Spalding, ID 83540



**Northwest Interpretive Association**  
 909 First Ave., Suite 630  
 Seattle, WA 98104

**EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA**

Partners and Friends is published periodically by Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho and Big Hole National Battlefield, Montana. Printing costs are paid for by the Northwest Interpretive Association.

**Editor**  
 Marc K. Blackburn

**Contributors**  
 Lisa Garrett  
 Scott Eckberg  
 Tim Nitz  
 Robert West

**Photography Credits**  
 Nez Perce National Historical Park  
 Bear Paw Battlefield

**Comments? Write to:**  
 Editor, Partnership Newsletter  
 Nez Perce National Historical Park  
 39063 US Hwy 95  
 Spalding, ID 83540

**Telephone**  
 (208) 843-2261

**E-Mail**  
 NEPE\_Superintendent@nps.gov

## Construction Begins At Joseph Canyon Overlook



Construction began in May, 2004 for the new Joseph Canyon overlook. The overlook is closed until construction is complete.

With funding from the Oregon Trails Coordinating Council and Federal Forest Highway Program, the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service have broken ground on the development of the Joseph Canyon Viewpoint site. Joseph Canyon Viewpoint is a site of Nez Perce NHP and the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail. The canyon land itself is private, but the pullout is owned by the

Wallowa- Whitman National Forest.

Overlooking Joseph Canyon on Oregon State Route 3, north of Enterprise, the site offers prime views of the canyon-bottom-land environment that served as an important transportation route between the Wallowa Country and other Nez Perce populations on the Snake and Clearwater Rivers. A nearby cave was the site of the military's destruction of Nez Perce food caches as the Nez Perce were being forced out of Oregon in 1877.

Construction began in May and is scheduled to be completed this fall. The pullout will have parking for cars and recreational vehicles; restrooms; interpretive signs; and orientation information for Nez Perce NHP and the Wallowa- Whitman National Forest.

For more information please contact Timothy Nitz, the Oregon/Washington Unit Manager of Nez Perce NHP at (541) 432-9452.