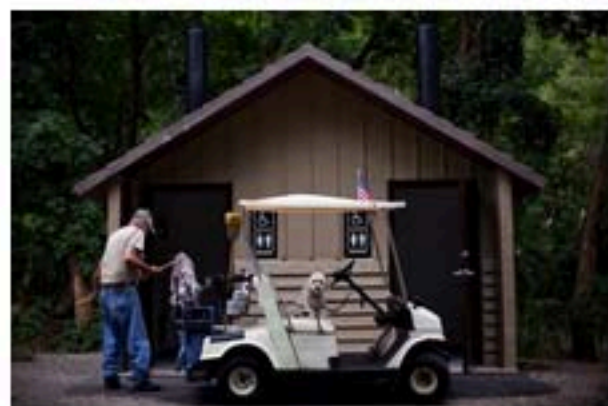


Parks offer introduction to camping program

By **Stephanie Earls** Published: May 23, 2013 | 9:20 am • 0

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Ron Whitney mops the bathrooms as his dog Baby waits patiently on the golf cart while making morning cleaning rounds at Whiting Campground in Maple Canyon near Mapleton, Utah on Monday, July 30, 2012. (AP Photo/Daily Herald, Mark Johnston)

Let us sing a song of camping memories, sleeping bags and the scent of mildly-mildewed nylon, of fireside ghost stories and s'mores - and of tents collapsing, forgotten toilet paper and snakes.

"I think everybody has a certain set of preconceived notions about camping," said Michael Seraphin, public information officer for the Southeast Region of Colorado Parks and Wildlife. "They may remember a story they heard growing up as a kid, or maybe it's a young family that the parents camped when they were kids and now they've got kids and they want to introduce their kids to camping."

Preparedness is the best defense against future bad camping memories. To that end, Colorado Parks and Wildlife's 2013 summer "Let's Camp!" program, with sessions at Cheyenne Mountain State Park and Lake Pueblo State Park, is meant as a camping "confidence builder" and general introduction, covering fundamentals such as tent-pitching, campfire cooking and cleanup.

"It's a nuts-to-bolts coverage of camping, from what to bring with you, how to pitch a tent, where to pitch a tent, how to take down a camp and how to ethically camp so that you leave no trace," Seraphin said. "Anybody who is interested in getting started in outdoor camping but has never gone camping before, this is a good starter course."

"Let's Camp!"

The overnight, day-and-a-half sessions, offered in partnership with The North Face's Explore Your Parks program, run Sunday morning through Monday afternoon June 2-3 and Aug. 4-5 at Lake Pueblo, at a cost of \$34 per group, and June 30-July 1 and July 14-15 at Cheyenne Mountain, at \$40 per group.

Sessions are limited to 10 families or groups of up to six, so early registration is encouraged. Participants should bring sleeping bags, personal utensils and dishes; groups may have a maximum of two tents, one of which will be provided.

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