Association of National Park Rangers

Ranger 49 Rendezvous

2026 Program Guide

October 27-31, 2026 • Westward Look • Tucson, Arizona

Ranger Rendezvous 49

www.anpr.org

Tucson is a popular location for night photography and capturing star trails, especially in Saguaro National Park. The Tucson-based Dark Sky International will be on hand to highlight the local dark sky during Rendezvous 49. Photo: Dark Sky International

THIS YEAR'S RANGER RENDEZVOUS PROGRAM THEME is "Hope on the Horizon," and we *hope* that enthusiasm begins as you step into Tucson's Westward Look Resort to reunite with old friends, and even make new ones! This year's program includes speakers from across the country sharing their expertise and encouragement. We thank them for being a part of our 2026 program.

Planning for a Rendezvous begins literally weeks after the last one ended; this year was no different. A special thank-you to everyone whose donations helped boost this year's Ranger Rendezvous. When you clicked "register," and then added a donation to help fund the Supernaugh Scholar program, or contributed to costs associated with the beverage breaks or hospitality suite, you were helping create the inviting atmosphere that has come to be a hallmark of every Rendezvous. So, a big THANK-YOU, again, for your contributions.

Another thank-you goes to our sponsors and donors, who help with in-kind donations, purchase exhibitor booths or tables, and show us that what we are doing matters. There is, indeed, "hope on the horizon."

Enjoy Ranger Rendezvous 49!

— 2026 RENDEZVOUS 49 MANAGEMENT TEAM: *Bill Wade, Jamie Richards, Tom Banks, Jenn Cook, Colleen Derber, Melissa DeVaughn, Troy Hunt, Mike Pflaum, Jonathan Shafer, Margie Steigerwald*

Check out our exhibitor booths and tables

(Click logos to read more!)

Special thanks to National Parks Conservation Association for financial assistance with our awards banquet, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, and to Pilot Rock and Creative Services of New England for their ongoing advertising support in our magazine.

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ON THE COVER: A cholla cactus, also known as Teddy Bear cholla, populates a trail in the Catalina Foothills of Tucson. Photo: Melissa DeVaughn

Our presenters! Meet the speakers

The 49th Ranger Rendezvous program schedule came together this year perfectly! When we began discussing themes and presenters for the Southwest, we knew we needed to celebrate the dark skies of this supremely special place. We wanted to include indigenous program content to recognize the sacred places the NPS and we as ANPR members hold dear. We needed to address current events — after all, we all know it hasn't been an easy last couple of years for our NPS brethren. But — There is "Hope on the Horizon."

Scroll to pages 10-12 for a complete list of our speakers and presenters in this year's Ranger Rendezvous. We thank each and every one of your for your time and expertise. Meanwhile, highlight your schedule so you don't miss these must-see programs.

— ANPR RR 49 planning committee

Photo: Courtesy Alan Spears

Photo: Courtesy Tom Medema

Photo: Courtesy Jack Gladstone

From top right, clockwise:

Dr. Deni Seymour presents "New Finds in Coronado Expedition Archaeology from Nogales to Quivira" as one of the last programs of Ranger Rendezvous 49, 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31. Seymour found the first verifiable evidence of the Coronado expedition in Arizona.

Bob Krumenaker, ANPR life member, retired Big Bend National Park superintendent, and head of Keep Big Bend Wild, will present "The Fight to Protect Big Bend from Border Infrastructure: An Update," 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28.

Chuck Lennox presents "Taking Care of Our Own in Challenging Times," 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28. Lennox also will present "Top Ten Practices for Walks, Talks and Tours," 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30.

Jack Gladstone, who helped establish "Native America Speaks" at Glacier National Park will give an educational program 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, and keynote address, 8 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 29.

Tom Medema, retired NPS associate director, will present on "America at 250: How National Parks Inspire a More Perfect Union," at 8 a.m. Friday, Oct. 30.

Alan Spears of NPCA will discuss "What Our Crisis Reveals," 9 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 31.

Photo: Courtesy Dr. Deni Seymour

Photo: Courtesy Keep Big Bend Wild

Photo: King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Rendezvous 49: at-a-glance schedule

This is an abbreviated version of the full Rendezvous program. To view details on each program and see an alphabetical list of presenter bios, scan this QR code, or visit **https://www.anpr.org/rr-49-program-guide**

Room Key:
Santa Catalina Ballroom | Mesa
Hospitality Stargazer Suite | Canyon
Sonoran Rooftop | Saguaro

Tuesday, October 27

- **9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saguaro:** Board of Directors meeting
- **2-6 p.m., Santa Catalina Foyer:** Registration opens
- **7p.m., Canyon Room:** Trivia Night
- **8-10 p.m., Hotel Lobby:** "More Than Meets the Eye(piece): Creating an Unforgettable Star Party," Drew Reagan and Dr. Erica Ellingson
- **7-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite:** Hospitality Suite open, Room 332

Wednesday, October 28

- **7:15-8 a.m., Canyon Room** First-timers breakfast with board of directors for first-time RR attendees.
- **8-9:15 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Welcome addresses by ANPR President Mike Pflaum, regional director, local superintendents; State of the Association; BOD reports
- **9:15-9:30 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Beverage break
- **9:30-11 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Keynote Panel: "Latest on What's Happening to NPS and its Employees and What We're Doing About it," (NPCA, ANPR, CPANP, PEER, facilitated by Bob Krumenaker)
- **11-11:30 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** The Honorable Adelita Grijalva U.S. Representational District
- **11:30 a.m.-Noon: Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Board Reports, cont.
- **Noon-1:30 p.m.:** Lunch, on your own
- **1:30-2:30 p.m.: Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "Taking Care of Our Own in Challenging Times," Chuck Lennox
- **2:30-3 p.m.: Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Break, raffle

3-4 p.m.: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

- "The Fight to Protect Big Bend from Border Infrastructure: An Update," Bob Krumenaker **- Santa Catalina Ballroom**
- "Repeat Photography and the Long-Term Effects of Sonoran Desert Wildfire," Jim Malusa **- Mesa Room**

- **4-4:15 p.m.: Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "How Can the National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) Help You?" Sharon Reese
- **4:45-5:30 p.m., Sonoran Rooftop:** President's Reception, open to all
- **6:30-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite:** Hospitality Suite open, Room 332
- **7:30-9 p.m.: Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Jack Gladstone: Montana's Troubadour

Thursday, October 29

- **7:30-8 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Announcements and raffle
- **8-9 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Keynote: "Native America Speaks at Glacier National Park," Jack Gladstone
- **9:15 a.m.-6 p.m.:** Field trips, personal time
- **6:30-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite:** Hospitality Suite open, Room 332
- **7:30-9:45 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "Movie Night"

Friday, October 30

- **7:30-8 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Announcements and raffle
- **8-9 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "America at 250: How National Parks Inspire a More Perfect Union," Tom Medema
- **9-10 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "The Only Resource You Can Restore Overnight — Why the Night Sky Belongs on Every Ranger's Watch," Ruskin Hartley
- **10-10:30 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Beverage break, raffle
- **10:30-Noon, Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Membership Meeting
- **Noon-2:30 p.m.:** Extended lunch break; ***Note:*** *Walt Dabney will chair a working-lunch at a TBD breakout room, to be announced Wednesday and again Friday morning, with a small group with serious interest in making public lands presentations to the public at certain U.S. venues.*

2:30-3:30 p.m.: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

- "Updates from the IRF and the 11th World Ranger Congress," Mark Caughlan **- Santa Catalina Ballroom**
- "Death in National Parks: Why Research and Document this Subject?" Butch Farabee **- Mesa Room**

- **3:30-4 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Beverage break and raffle

4-5 p.m.: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

- "Small Differences, Big Wild Places," Jessica Hearns **- Santa Catalina Ballroom**
- "Top 10 Practices for Walks, Talks and Tours," Chuck Lennox **- Mesa Room**

- **5:30-6:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Awards presentation, open to all
- **6:30-8 p.m., Sonoran Ballroom:** Awards Reception; ticketed guests only
- **8-10 p.m., Sonoran Ballroom:** Live music, open to all
- **8-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite:** Hospitality Suite open, Room 332 (Halloween costumes encouraged, optional!)

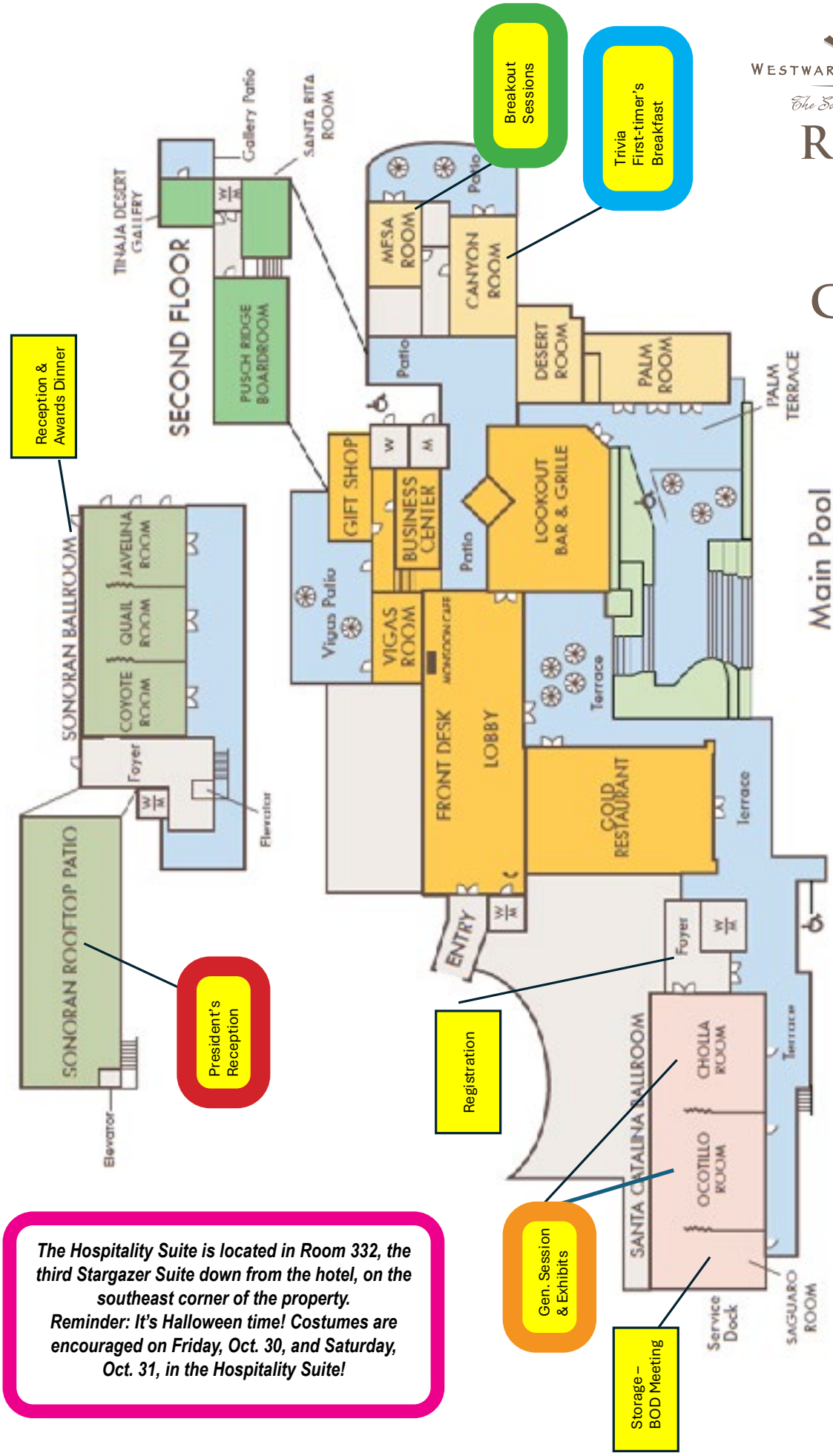
Saturday, October 31

- **7:30-8 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Announcements and raffle
- **8:15-9 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "Framing Nature: Creation of an American Icon at the Grand Canyon," Dr. Yolonda Youngs
- **9-9:45 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "NPCA: What Our Crisis Reveals," Alan Spears
- **9:45-10:15 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Beverage break, raffle
- **10:15-11 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Membership Meeting
- **11 a.m.-Noon, Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "AZ State Parks: Intro & Behind the Scenes Look," Tori Marshall, Malana Starr, Chelsea Ballard
- **Noon-1:30 p.m.:** Lunch on your own
- **1:30-2:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "El Camino del Diablo: The Devil's Highway," Butch Farabee
- **2:30-3 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Beverage break and raffle
- **3-4 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** "New Finds in Coronado Expedition Archaeology from Nogales to Quivira," Dr. Deni Seymour
- **4-4:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom:** Closing Remarks, Mike Pflaum
- **6-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite:** Hospitality Suite (Costumes encouraged!)

WESTWARD LOOK RESORT

The Soul of the Southwest

RESORT MAP & GUIDE



The Hospitality Suite is located in Room 332, the third Stargazer Suite down from the hotel, on the southeast corner of the property.
Reminder: It's Halloween time! Costumes are encouraged on Friday, Oct. 30, and Saturday, Oct. 31, in the Hospitality Suite!

Rendezvous 49: schedule of events

Room Key:

- Santa Catalina Ballroom
- Mesa
- Hospitality Stargazer Suite
- Canyon
- Sonoran Rooftop
- Saguaro

Tuesday, October 27

Registration Opens
- 2-6 p.m., Hotel Foyer

Board of Directors meeting (open to all members)
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saguaro Room

Trivia night
- 7 p.m., Canyon Room

One of our favorite ice breaker activities! Bring your best park-related trivia knowledge, be ready to make new friends, and bring a competitive spirit. Participants will form teams and test their knowledge to be a Rendezvous Trivia Champion. Led by Troy Hunt

More Than Meets the Eye(piece): Creating an Unforgettable Star Party
- 8-10 p.m., Meet in Hotel lobby, to walk to outdoor location

What makes a great star party? From creating awe-inspiring moments behind the telescope to sharing meaningful stories beneath the stars, join DarkSky International's Drew Reagan and Dr. Erica Ellingson of the University of Colorado Boulder as they share practical strategies and tips for planning and leading engaging public dark sky programs. Combining their expertise in astronomy, interpretation, and dark sky conservation, they'll explore how memorable nights under the stars can inspire more than wonder—they can cultivate the next generation of stewards for the night.

Hospitality Suite
- 7-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite, Room 332

Wednesday, October 28

Breakfast with Board of Directors for first-time attendees
- 7:15-8 a.m., Canyon Room

Free breakfast with the ANPR Board of Directors. Come meet your Board of Directors and mix with other RR "first-timers."

Welcome Address
- 8-9:15 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

ANPR President Mike Pflaum, regional director, local superintendents; local dignitaries; State of the Association, BOD reports

Beverage break
- 9:15-9:30 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Keynote Panel: Latest on What's Happening to NPS & its Employees and What We're Doing About it
- 9:30-11 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Facilitated by Bob Krumenaker, including representatives from NPCA, ANPR, CPANP, PEER

The Hon. Adelita Grijalva, U.S. Rep., Arizona
- 11-11:30 a.m.: Santa Catalina Ballroom

The Hon. Adelita Grijalva represents Arizona's 7th Congressional District, the second largest Congressional district in Arizona with a land area larger than seven states, and with its southern boundary along 350 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. This district is also home to four sovereign Tribal nations: the Cocopah, Pascua Yaqui, Quechan, and Tohono O'odham. The Hon. Grijalva will welcome us to her state and share her work on strengthening the NPS.

Board reports, continued
- 11:30 a.m.-Noon, Santa Catalina Ballroom

Lunch, on your own
- Noon-1:30 p.m.

Taking Care of our Own in Challenging Times
- 1:30-2:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Rangers are the public face of an agency or organization when they share the story of a site or protect the resource with or without controversy or challenges. Often rangers, especially seasonal employees, are not prepared for what the public reaction might be to a given "issue of the day" and react based on their level of experience, background or personal values. What support should they be given to address controversy at a site before and after programming? How should we train our team to respond to audiences? What are the best practices? Learn about controversies at sites and what's being done (or not) to support employees in their work. Presenter: Chuck Lennox

Break and raffle
- 2:30-3 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

BREAKOUT SESSION: The Fight to Protect Big Bend from Border Infrastructure: An Update
- 3-4 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Despite having the lowest level of illegal crossing activity of any section of the US-Mexican border, the Department of Homeland Security waived all federal laws that would impede construction of massive security infrastructure, issued a $1.7 billion no-bid contract, and began construction in Big Bend National Park. The almost-universal and bipartisan outrage and court challenges are unprecedented, slowing DHS and forcing it on the defensive. Learn what Keep Big Bend Wild is doing to keep construction at bay, and how, despite the destruction that has already occurred, this is a likely catalyst for permanent legislative protection of the park in the next Congress. Presenter: Bob Krumenaker, chair, Keep Big Bend Wild

BREAKOUT SESSION: Repeat Photography and the Long-term Effects of Sonoran Desert Wildfire
- 3-4 p.m., Mesa Room

Fire is often deadly for the saguaro cactus and paloverde tree, hallmark Sonoran Desert species with a photosynthetic epidermis easily wounded by flames. The mortality of these and other Sonoran Desert species was documented through repeat photography in Arizona locations ranging from Barry M. Goldwater military range at 1,500 ft. in SW Arizona to 3,280 ft. at Tonto National Monument in

central Arizona. Photos show higher mortality at higher elevations in central Arizona, which receives more precipitation than SW Arizona, as well as a greater proportion of their annual precipitation during the cool season. Learn about the invasive species in these locations that can harm the future of native plants and will likely cause dire consequences for the saguaro and paloverde. Presenter: Jim Malusa

How Can the National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) Help You?

• 4-4:15 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

NARFE is the only membership association dedicated to safeguarding the rights of all federal employees and retirees. NARFE provides advocacy, education and the community you need to make informed decisions and maximize the value of your federal service. Learn how this program can help you make the best decisions regarding your benefits, now and in retirement. Presenter: Sharon Reese

President's Reception

• 4:45-5:30 p.m., Sonoran Rooftop, all are welcome

Stargazer Hospitality Suite

• 6:30-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite, Room 332

Jack Gladstone: Montana's Troubadour

• 7:30-9 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Glacier National Park's Jack Gladstone helped establish the "Native America Speaks" program in Glacier – now the longest running Indigenous speaker series in National Park Service history. Since launching his music career, Jack has recorded 15 albums. His latest release, "Native Anthropology," won the prestigious "Best Historical Recording" from the Native American Music Association. Jack will present heartfelt stories and songs about native culture and history and the land.

Thursday, October 29

Announcements and raffle

• 7:30-8 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Keynote: Native America Speaks at Glacier National Park

• 8-9 a.m., Atlantic Ballroom

Presenter: Jack Gladstone

Field trips, personal time

• 9:15 a.m.-6 p.m., field trips depart from hotel at 9:15 a.m. sharp.

Stargazer Hospitality Suite

• 6:30-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite, Room 332

Movie Night

• 7:30-9:45 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom, hosted by Tom Banks

Join us for an evening of cinematic delight. This year's Movie Night features a variety of fabulous short films, including "Out There: A National Parks Story." In the centennial year of the National Park Service, a young filmmaker and his childhood friend set off on a 10,000-mile journey through America's national parks, leaving home with little more than a camera and a desire to understand what draws people to these wild places. What begins as a summer road trip evolves into a stunning journey of discovery, uncovering the stories of those who protect, visit, and find meaning in parks. Along the way, *they meet rangers, conservationists, and everyday visitors whose lives have been shaped by these places. https://www.outthere.film/*

Friday, October 30

Announcements and raffle

• 7:30-8 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

America at 250: How National Parks Inspire a More Perfect Union

• 8-9 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

It has been said that National Parks are the Declaration of Independence applied to the landscape. The Semiquincentennial provides a generational opportunity to explore how the National Park System is uniquely positioned to fulfill and affirm upon our nation's founding ideals. Presenter: Tom Medema

Keynote: The Only Resource You Can Restore Overnight — Why the Night Sky Belongs on Every Ranger's Watch

• 9-10 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

We spend our careers on problems measured in decades — eroded trails, depleted aquifers, species that may never come back. The night sky is the exception. Light pollution is the one form of degradation we can reverse in a single evening, by changing a fixture or flipping a switch. Our presenter makes the case that darkness is a resource in its own right, one that carries migrating birds, pollinators, visitor safety, energy budgets, and the oldest cultural connection humans have to wild places. Learn what the science now shows, what parks across the country are already proving, and where rangers have more leverage than they realize. Presenter: Ruskin Hartley, Dark Sky International

Beverage break and raffle

• 10-10:30 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Membership Meeting

• 10:30-Noon, Santa Catalina Ballroom

Discuss the work of ANPR. Let by ANPR President Mike Pflaum

Lunch, on your own

• Noon-2:30 p.m.

A longer lunch break to explore the area. ***Note:*** *Walt Dabney will chair a working-lunch at a TBD breakout room, to be announced Wednesday and again Friday morning, with a small group with serious interest in making public lands presentations to the public at certain U.S. venues.*

BREAKOUT SESSION: Updates from the International Ranger Federation and the 11th World Ranger Congress

• 2:30-3:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Presenter: Mark Caughlan

BREAKOUT SESSION: Death in National Parks: Why Research and Document this Subject?

• 2:30-3:30 p.m., Mesa Room

There are at least a dozen national park areas that have books written about the deaths in them. Since 1855, some 1,950 people have died in Yosemite and presenter Butch Farabee has chronicled and written a book about them. The park averages 15-20 deaths per year, with 38 meeting their end in 1978 alone. From going over waterfalls, murder, plane wrecks, climbing, hiking, horse and buggy

Rendezvous 49: schedule of events

crashes, rocks and trees falling, suicides, drownings, lightning, and even a 6-year-old being gored by a deer. Yosemite and Yellowstone have rangers who serve as deputy coroners, and Butch was one of them for over seven years. He will explain why it is important to document these tragedies and what we can learn from them.

Beverage break and raffle
• 3:30-4 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

BREAKOUT SESSION: Small Difference, Big Wild Places
• 4-5 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

This talk is about what can happen when you make small differences, over and over again. Through stories from presenter Jessica Hearns' years at Death Valley, she will share the unexpected path from volunteer to wilderness practitioner, the challenges and opportunities along the way, and the people who helped her keep going. She will discuss saying 'yes' to work she didn't yet know how to do, finding mentors, learning from mistakes, taking on projects that felt too big, and discovering that you don't have to be an expert or have a grand plan to contribute something meaningful. Most of all, this is a talk about hope — not the kind that asks us to ignore how difficult things can be, but the kind that comes from knowing that our small efforts matter. We can show up. We can learn. We can make a difference.

BREAKOUT SESSION: Top 10 Practices for Walks, Talks, and Tours
• 4-5 p.m., Mesa Room

We have all suffered through a walk, talk or tour that was a recitation of facts from a long-winded guide, a sage on the stage or a timid leader who could not manage their group. But engaging walks, talks, and tours are the core of the visitor experience! If we can't inspire, engage, and motivate our visitors with core program offerings, we will never be successful in helping the public understand the importance of historic sites, landscapes that sustain us, and stories that explain who we are. Using the results from a workshop of 90 interpreters, we will discuss the Top 10 Powerful Practices that were compiled from the session — What is the best way to begin a program? What are good practices to carry the program? How do we end our program that leaves the visitor wanting more? Presenter: Chuck Lennox

Presentation of Awards
• 5:30-6:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom, everyone invited

Awards Reception
• 6:30-8 p.m., Sonoran Ballroom, ticketed guests only

Celebration Party, Live Music, and Cash Bar
• 8-10 p.m., Sonoran Ballroom, with live music, open to all

Stargazer Hospitality Suite
• 8-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite, Room 332

Halloween costumes encouraged, but not required!

Saturday, October 31

Announcements and raffle
• 7:30-8 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Framing Nature: The Creation of an American Icon at the Grand Canyon
• 8:15-9 a.m.: Santa Catalina Ballroom

Grand Canyon National Park is an international icon of protected areas, attracting some 5 million visitors each year. This presentation will feature the results of over 15 years of fieldwork and archival research behind "Framing Nature: The Creation of an American Icon at the Grand Canyon" (2025). The book reveals how the Grand Canyon became an iconic symbol of nature that shaped national policies on environmental management, water resources, wildlife conservation, park visitation,and environmental justice. The work is informed and fortified by the presenter's decade as a professional commercial whitewater raft guide across rivers of the American West and more than 20 years working in and researching national parks across the United States. The book includes a unique mixed-methods approach combining visual content analysis, interpretation of archival documents, and critical landscape analysis informed by extensive fieldwork in the Greater Grand Canyon Region (GGCR). This examination of 150 years of thousands of popular photographs, postcards, and maps provides insights about how environmental perception influences stewardship, sustainability, and biodiversity and how places, especially national parks, are transformed into national symbols. Presenter: Dr. Yolonda Youngs

NPCA: What our Crisis Reveals
• 9-9:45 a.m.: Santa Catalina Ballroom

Our national parks and public lands have been under an unprecedented assault for the last 18 months. Efforts to resist the softening and sanitization of our history, the evisceration of Section 106, and the decimation of the federal workforce has been robust, but not nearly as widespread as necessary. During this crisis we've learned a lot about how the public views national parks and public lands. Those lessons have not always been affirmative. They do, however, provide critical insights into what our work has gotten right and where we have utterly failed to engage the public in ways that win. Presenter: Alan Spears, NPCA

Beverage break and raffle
• 9:45-10:15 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Membership meeting
• 10:15-11 a.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

To include BOD nominations. Led by ANPR President Mike Pflaum

Arizona State Parks: An Intro and Behind the Scenes Look
• 11 a.m.-Noon., Santa Catalina Ballroom

The vision of Arizona State Parks and Trails is to be the national leader in sustainable outdoor recreation, by preserving natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. They aim to be indispensable to the state's economy, local communities, and natural environments, by connecting people to the outdoors and history to create lasting memories. Overseeing 33 state parks (and still counting!), and a number of internal offices, including the State Historic Preservation office and a robust community grant program; AZSPT is taking great strides in creating a workplace culture that is dedicated, educated, diverse, and skilled, while also creating new

Rendezvous 49: schedule of events

opportunities and innovations for training, growth and retention. Join park rangers for a brief history of the state park system; highlighting a few of our Southern Region parks that are within close visiting distance to the conference, and also delve into recent innovations, projects and partnerships that are helping to make Arizona State Parks and Trails a fantastic place to work and prosper. Presenters: Victoria Marshall, Malana Starr, Chelsea Ballard

Lunch, on your own

• Noon-1:30 p.m.

El Camino del Diablo: The Devil's Highway

• 1:30-2:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

On the National Register of Historic Places is a brutal, 200-mile long, prehistoric and historic route from Northern Mexico to Colorado River in California. Used for over a millennium by Native Americans, conquistadors, miners, undocumented aliens and modern-day adventurers, El Camino crosses three large federal areas in the extreme desert southern Arizona, which is the focus of this presentation. A reputed 400 to 2,000 travelers navigate this very isolated and wild part of the Arizona-Mexico border, encountering heat, exposure, and a desperate lack of water. This is part history, part travelogue, and part informational overview of this humbling but fascinating area. Presenter: Butch Farabee

Beverage break and raffle

• 2:30-3 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

New Finds in Coronado Expedition Archaeology from Nogales to Quivira

• 3-4 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Dr. Deni Seymour has found the first verifiable evidence of the Coronado expedition in Arizona. Eighteen archaeological sites have been recorded along two route segments that include overnight encampments, the two-month-long 1539 Díaz encampment at Chichilticale, and the 1541 Spanish town site referred to as Suya. The range of site types and artifacts is unprecedented. Each site includes artifacts that are recognized as diagnostic of this expedition, and Arizona now has more Coronado expedition sites than all others combined. This new evidence provides insights into the organization of the expedition, the nature of social groups who traveled together, the character of their camps, the range of artifacts lost, their interactions with Native groups, and the precise routes they chose. The addition of tangible archaeological evidence allows new interpretations of the documentary record, demonstrating how multiple lines of evidence assist in selecting between the varied ways narrative accounts can be interpreted. Her team has also found a new site in Texas, and she has recently verified the first definitive Coronado expedition artifact in Kansas. She is currently assessing apparent finds in New Mexico and Oklahoma. Presenter: Dr. Deni Seymour

Closing Remarks

• 4-4:30 p.m., Santa Catalina Ballroom

Presenter: ANPR president Mike Pflaum

Stargazer Hospitality Suite

• 8-10 p.m., Stargazer Suite, Room 332

Today, Halloween is the real deal! Costumes encouraged, but not required!

SILENT AUCTION & RAFFLE

We are hosting an on-site silent auction and daily raffle, and an online auction is underway (go to our homepage, anpr.org, and scroll to Silent Auction 2026). Look for Supernaugh Scholars on site, who will be selling raffle tickets, and make sure to be present for prize distribution. Online auction bidders need not be present to win.

NANCY'S PLACE

Veteran Ranger Rendezvous participants have come to know our nightly gathering hole as "Nancy's Place," thanks to volunteers Nancy Ward and Tim Moore. The Hospitality Suite operates again this year, opening between 6 and 8 p.m. most nights. This inviting space is a hallmark of our social and professional gathering. Look for us, located in the Stargazer Suite, Room 332.

ANPR GEAR SHOP

For those who missed out on ordering T-shirts before the online deadline, check at the registration table to see if we have any extras, or stop by the ANPR Gear Shop to view some of our other ANPR clothing. We will have limited availability, and it's first come, first served. The online store is available at any time by going to our website, anpr.org, and scrolling to "Shop ANPR Gear."

PHOTO CONTEST

Categories include: Landscape, Wildlife, Historical and Cultural Resources, The Human Connection, Big Sky, and Ranger Rendezvous

All photos must be taken within a national park unit, international protected area, or at a previous Ranger Rendezvous. Contestants may enter only one photo per category. Printed photos should be unframed and recommended size of 8x10 inches.

Write your name, location of photo, and the category on the back of each print. Drop off photos at the registration desk by end of day Wednesday, Oct. 28. If unable to attend, images can be sent to arrive no later than Oct. 25, 2026, to Bill Wade, 12675 N. Sunrise Shadow Drive, Marana, AZ 85658 or bwade@anpr.org.

Winners will be selected from each category, and a "Best of Show" photo will take the top spot.

RÉSUMÉ SHARING

See ANPR Board Member Tom Banks, tbanks@anpr.org, for résumé advice and where to post your résumé; or bring it with you to network and share with others.

Rendezvous 49: presenter bios

Thank you to all our presenters for sharing your time and expertise at Rendezvous 49! The following is an alphabetical list of each presenter and their bios.

CHELSEA BALLARD

Chelsea Ballard is the Cave Resource manager/research and project specialist at Kartchner Caverns State Park in Benson, Ariz. She is from Horse Cave, Ky., and grew up only a few miles from Mammoth Cave National Park. She has been fascinated with caves and sinkholes since she was a young girl after being exposed to the resource from a very early age growing up on a farm. This led her to Western Kentucky University (WKU) to study Karst Hydrogeology. During her time at WKU, she completed a Physical Science Technician internship with the National Park Service, inter-agency training with the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and an internship with the U.S. Geological Survey. She has been involved with karst and cave research for various land managers and nonprofit organizations for nearly 15 years and enjoys providing interpretation on cave and karst resources and research to the public. She has also worked at five different caves and has been a park ranger for more than 10 years.

Ballard will present at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, "Arizona State Parks: An Intro and Behind the Scenes Look," Santa Catalina Ballroom.

DR. ERICA ELLINGSON

Dr. Erica Ellingson is Professor Emerita in the Department of Astrophysical and Planetary Sciences at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research has focused on observational cosmology, dark matter, galaxy clusters, and historical, cultural, and archeoastronomy. An award-winning educator with a passion for public outreach, she has spent decades inspiring audiences to explore and better understand the night sky.

Dr. Ellingson will be part of "More Than Meets the Eye(piece): Creating an Unforgettable Star Party," 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27, meeting in the hotel lobby to walk to a dark sky location.

BUTCH FARABEE

In 1961, Butch began on the backcountry trails in Sequoia and Kings Canyon, for five summers ("The best years of my life?") then became a Tucson policeman for three years. He served in 11 different NPS areas in 15 different positions, from trail crew to superintendent, retiring in 2000 with 35 years of service. He then worked for Texas Parks intermittently for four years. Farabee has his bachelors of science in Zoology and a masters of arts in Criminal Justice and went to the FBI Academy. He has written six books on "rangering" and emergency response. Farabee was ANPR's first president, but his proudest accomplishment is his two sons and four grandkids.

Farabee will present two programs: 2:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30:"Why Study Death in National Parks" in the Mesa Room; and "El Camino del Diablo: The Devil's Highway" at 1:30 p.m. 8:15 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

JACK GLADSTONE

An enrolled member of the Blackfeet Tribe, Jack Gladstone was a standout scholar athlete in high school. He went on to play football for the University of Washington, where his team won the Rose Bowl. After graduating from college, he taught at Blackfeet Community College and helped establish the "Native America Speaks" program in Glacier National Park – now the longest-running Indigenous speaker series in National Park Service history.

Since launching his music career, Jack has recorded 15 albums. His latest release, "Native Anthropology," won the prestigious "Best Historical Recording" from the Native American Music Association. In March 2023, Jack was one of the inaugural inductees into the Montana Music Hall of Fame.

Gladstone will present an educational program with song at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28; and a Keynote Address, "Native America Speaks at Glacier National Park," 8 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 29. Both programs will take place in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

THE HONORABLE ADELITA GRIJALVA

U.S. Representative Adelita S. Grijalva is a lifelong public servant, advocate, and resident of Southern Arizona. Prior to being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, representing Arizona's 7th Congressional District, Adelita worked at Pima County Teen Court for more than 25 years, where she helped court-involved youth and their families through a restorative juvenile diversion program.

In 2020, Adelita was first elected to the Pima County Board of Supervisors, becoming the first Latina, and only second woman, to serve as board chair. During her time there, Adelita developed a reputation for bringing people together to address the biggest issues facing Southern Arizona, including affordable housing, environmental protection and climate resiliency, and healthy and safe communities.

Arizona's 7th Congressional District is the second largest Congressional district in Arizona, anchored in Tucson in Pima County and spans a land area larger than seven individual states. The southern boundary of the 7th Congressional District coincides with more than 350 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. This District is also home to four sovereign Tribal nations: the Cocopah, Pascua Yaqui, Quechan, and Tohono O'odham.

The Hon. Grijalva will speak at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

RUSKIN HARTLEY

Ruskin Hartley, CEO of DarkSky International, champions a global movement to protect natural night skies by advocating for responsible outdoor lighting. With more than 20 years in environmental conservation, he has engaged with leaders and communities worldwide to promote sustainable lighting practices that mitigate light pollution's adverse effects on health, wildlife, and climate.

Previously, he held leadership roles at Fair Trade USA, Heal the Bay, and Save the Redwoods League. A graduate of the University of Cambridge and the University of East Anglia, Hartley's commitment to conservation is deeply rooted in his childhood experiences with nature in the UK.

Hartley will present "The Only Resource You Can Restore Overnight -

Rendezvous 49: presenter bios

Why the Night Sky Belongs on Every Ranger's Watch," 9 a.m. Friday, Oct. 30, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

JESSICA HEARNS

From her early days as a first-time volunteer at Death Valley National Park in 2017, Jess Hearns discovered a passion for environmental compliance and quickly advanced to become the park's wilderness coordinator and NEPA specialist. Jess has managed significant projects, including a $69.5 million water and wastewater rehabilitation, and has contributed to the stewardship of over 3 million acres of Congressionally Designated Wilderness. Her collaborative efforts, mentorship, and dedication to training have strengthened wilderness management and inspired others in the field.

Jess has seen many projects from brainstorming through execution, including several in 2025, which culminated in her nomination for the NPS Excellence in Wilderness Stewardship Award for Partners, recognizing outstanding contributions to wilderness stewardship.

As a conference speaker, Jess inspires others to build relationships, share knowledge, and ensure the lasting preservation of our natural landscapes. Her story is a reminder that stewardship isn't just about policy or compliance, it is about passion, hope, and a deep commitment to protecting the places that define us.

Hearns will present "Small Differences, Big Wild Places," 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

BOB KRUMENAKER

ANPR Life Member Bob Krumenaker retired from the NPS in 2023 as the superintendent of Big Bend National Park. He now chairs keepbigbendwild.org, a nonpartisan nonprofit advocating for wilderness at Big Bend and one of the leaders in the fight against unnecessary and outrageously destructive border security infrastructure in the wild heart of Big Bend.

Krumenaker will present "The Fight to Protect Big Bend from Border Infrastructure: An Update," 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom. He also will facilitate the keynote panel of NPCA, PEER, ANPR, and CPANP earlier that morning at 9:30 a.m.

CHUCK LENNOX

Chuck Lennox brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in interpretation, education, and public outreach, both inside and out of the National Park Service. He served in a variety of NPS roles at parks across the west, including the management of visitor center operations, wayside exhibit planning, community environmental education outreach program development, regional tourism planning, and the development of interpretive programs. He has been recognized with numerous awards from NAI and the NPS, including the Freeman Tilden Award for Interpretive Excellence–Alaska Region in 1989.

Chuck also worked as an interpretive and education specialist with the Kings County Department of Natural Resources and Parks. Today, Chuck serves as a volunteer and helps to coordinate the Global Alliance for Heritage Interpretation (GAHI; www.gahi.online). GAHI is a group of eight professional interpretive associations from around the world: Interpretive Network of New Zealand, Interpretation Australia, Interpretation Canada, Interpretive Guides Association, Interpat Mx (Mexico), National Association for Interpretation (US), Association for Heritage Interpretation (UK), and Interpret Europe. https://lennoxinsites.com/about/

Lennox will present "Taking Care of Our Own in Challenging Times," 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom. He also will present "Top 10 Practices for Walks, Talks and Tours" 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30, in the Mesa Room.

JIM MALUSA

Jim Malusa got his first backpack on his 16th birthday in 1973 and immediately set off into the Catalina Mountains north of Tucson. Fifty-three years later, he's still in Tucson, where he retired from his paycheck from the University of Arizona but persists in cataloging changes in vegetation through time.

Repeat photography is a dandy way of capturing the changes, and all he needs is a camera, map, notebook, and several cans of refried beans. He's particularly interested in the role of invasive species and fire in the Sonoran Desert.

Malusa will present "Repeat Photography and the Long-Term Effects of Sonoran Desert Wildfire," 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, in the Mesa Room.

VICTORIA (TORI) MARSHALL

Tori Marshall is a park ranger at Red Rock State Park in Sedona, Ariz. Originally from Maine, Marshall earned a BS in Parks and Recreation Management in 2008, and has worked in environmental education almost ever since. Tori spent a few years working for the NPS and another few years as the Environmental Education and Interpretation Coordinator for the nonprofit partner of several national forests throughout the state of Arizona.

Since landing with the state parks system six years ago, Tori has continued to work in environmental education through Red Rock's Connection Program; a K-8 curriculum-based school field trip program that sees over 1,000 students a year. As a W-EMT, she also teaches the majority of the CPR and First Aid classes for the agency, including multi-day Wilderness First Aid classes. Marshall is an avid birder and also leads guided bird walks for all ages and experience levels at the park, which is part of the Lower Oak Creek IBA.

Marshall will present at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, "Arizona State Parks: An Intro and Behind the Scenes Look," Santa Catalina Ballroom.

TOM MEDEMA

Tom Medema was NPS associate director for Interpretation, Education, and Volunteers from 2017 to 2024 where he also led agency-planning efforts for the nation's 250th. Tom served as acting superintendent of Denali National Park and Preserve, chief of Interpretation at Yosemite National Park, and a decade of as an interpretive park ranger at ROMO, FOVA, MORA, and CUVA. Tom is currently special adviser to America250 and project manager for America's Time Capsule, recently buried at Independence National Historical Park. Tom is the recipient of the DOI Distinguished Service Award, NPS Sequoia Award, NAI President's Award, WNPA Danson Award, and Clemson University's William C. Everhart Award.

Rendezvous 49: presenter bios

Medema will present "America at 250: How National Parks Inspire a More Perfect Union," 8 a.m. Friday, Oct. 30, Santa Catalina Ballroom.

DREW REAGAN

Drew Reagan is the Senior Marketing and Communications Manager at DarkSky International, where he leads the organization's storytelling, public outreach, and communications efforts. A former National Park Service ranger, Drew has spent more than a decade connecting people with the night sky through interpretation and education.

Reagan will be part of "More Than Meets the Eye(piece): Creating an Unforgettable Star Party," 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27, meeting in the hotel lobby to walk to a dark sky location.

SHARON REESE

Born and raised in an Illinois farming community, Sharon Reese started her civil service career at the Air Force Hospital in Wiesbaden, Germany, in 1976-1979. She then was stationed at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico in 1979. She retired from the Department of Defense, White Sands Missile Range, N. Mex., in 2008 after 33 years of service. She was a division chief/deputy director in a uniquely demanding critical testing of weapon systems directorate.

Sharon joined the National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) in 2006. She serves as Region VII vice president, servicing five states: Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. She also has served as chapter president, The New Mexico Federation president, as well as the first vice president for Legislation.

Sharon has three adult children, four grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. She and her husband live in Las Cruces, N. Mex.

Reese will present "How Can NARFE Help You?" 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

DR. DENI SEYMOUR

Dr. Deni Seymour is a research archaeologist who has spent 45 years investigating difficult-to-define culture groups and sites in the southern Southwest and throughout the West, including the mobile Apache, Manso, and Jocome.

The Coronado expedition similarly represents a mobile event, allowing the lessons learned over the decades to be applied in search of the trail. She has studied the Spanish colonial and expeditionary periods throughout this time, excavating various presidio and mission sites as well as settlements of contemporaneous Native residents. She makes her research relevant to (and includes in the research process) the descendants of indigenous groups who were encountered by the expedition and later missionaries, military personnel, and settlers.

Her work has resulted in more than 120 refereed journal articles, seven books, and an award-winning documentary film titled, "Coronado: The New Evidence."

Dr. Seymour will present "New Finds in Coronado Expedition Archaeology from Nogales to Quivira," 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

ALAN SPEARS

Alan Spears is a 27-year veteran of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) where he serves as the senior director for cultural resources. Alan has led NPCA's work on the successful designation of five national monuments, including Fort Monroe (Va.) in 2011, Birmingham Civil Rights (Ala.) in 2017, and Emmett Till & Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument (Miss./Ill.), which was established by President Biden in July of 2023.

Alan currently is leading NPCA's efforts to oppose the sanitization and erasure of American history from sites managed by the National Park Service. Alan is a native of Washington, DC, and remains the only NPCA staff person ever know to have been rescued from a tidal marsh by a Park Police helicopter.

Spears will present "NPCA: What Our Crisis Reveals," 9 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

MALANA STARR

Malana Starr is a park ranger and environmental education coordinator at Oracle State Park in Arizona. She began her career in parks with the NPS as an intern and seasonal interpretive ranger at Saguaro National Park. Over the last two years with Arizona State Parks & Trails, she has been working to grow the park's education program, engage local community members, and has gotten involved with several Arizona State Park initiatives, including agency-wide education programs and joining the agency's Justice Equity Diversity Accessibility and Inclusion team.

Starr will present at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, "Arizona State Parks: An Intro and Behind the Scenes Look," in the Santa Catalina Ballroom.

DR. YOLONDA YOUNGS

Dr. Yolonda Youngs is a professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at California State University San Bernardino, with expertise in Long Term Environmental Monitoring (LTEM) in national parks and international protected areas, natural resources conservation, environmental geography, outdoor recreation, and GIS. She teaches courses on national parks and public lands, environmental sustainability, natural resources, and field methods.

Dr. Youngs has written or co-authored two books and more than 30 journal articles and scientific reports featuring her research across the U.S. National Park Service system. Her second book, "Framing Nature: The Creation of an American Icon at the Grand Canyon" (2024), won the 2025 John Brinckerhoff Jackson Book Prize from the American Association of Geographers, one of the highest awards in the discipline. She maintains field research sites in Grand Teton, Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, and Channel Islands national parks.

Youngs' research is funded by the National Science Foundation, U.S. National Park Service, and the Cooperative Ecosystem Services Network (CESU). Her awards include the Outstanding Faculty Researcher (CSUSB -CSBS), Outstanding University Researcher (Idaho State University), and a Scholar-In-Residence at University of New Mexico. for the Conservation of Nature, and the Royal Geographic Society.

Youngs will present "Framing Nature: Creation of an American Icon at the Grand Canyon" 8 a.m. Friday, Oct. 31, Santa Catalina Ballroom.