



Centennial Challenge News Release

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Centennial Projects Coming to the Gateway Arch

St. Louis, MO -- Have you ever wondered what it might be like to be a Park Ranger or dreamed of visiting some of America's special places? Have you considered climbing a mountain or going camping, but didn't know what kind of equipment you would need? Are you a lover of wilderness or historical sites? If so, then ParkPalooza will be the event for you.

Today it was announced that Jefferson National Expansion Memorial will receive National Park Service Centennial funding to match private donations to sponsor ParkPalooza, a two-day interactive outdoor event on the grounds of the Gateway Arch. Planned for September 27th and 28th, ParkPalooza will provide children and their families the chance to explore recreational opportunities available in parks across the country. National Park Service Director Mary A. Bomar said, "With the nearly \$25 million Congress has appropriated and nearly \$27 million of matching commitments from our park partners, the Centennial Initiative today moves onto the landscape and into people's lives. It's a great day for the National Park Service and a great day for Jefferson National Expansion Memorial."

"As the Arch is the Gateway to the West, ParkPalooza will be a gateway to national park experiences," said Frank Mares, Acting Superintendent of Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. Following the "No Child Left Inside" initiative, activities are being planned that will tap into outdoor recreational opportunities, archeology, art, and preservation; all encouraging people to become stewards of public lands.

Jefferson National Parks Association, which supports educational programming at the Gateway Arch and Historic Old Courthouse, will contribute the matching funds for the project. Executive Director David Grove is thrilled to be participating. "I learned the value of national parks as a young person and instill this in my own children. With ParkPalooza, we will be able to provide rich educational experiences for area families who may not realize the great opportunities that await them in their national parks."

In addition to the news that ParkPalooza will be an official Centennial Challenge program, additional good news for Jefferson National Expansion Memorial is that a second project will also receive funding. The second project is for the design and installation of a Programmable Logic Control (PLC) system to help operate the Gateway Arch trams. The current Relay Logic Control system operates the speed, doors, lighting, and capsule leveling functions of the trams; however it is 40-years old. Installation of a new and upgraded system will allow real-time monitoring of the trams using a visual orientation system. Park partner Metro is providing the matching funds for this project.

The National Park Centennial Initiative is a 10-year program to reinvigorate America's national parks and prepare them for a second century as the National Park Service prepares to celebrate its 100th birthday in 2016. The initiative includes a focus on increased funding for park operations plus a President's Challenge: up to \$100 million a year in federal funds to match \$100 million a year in philanthropic donations to the National Park Service.

"This is how we put our Centennial goals on the ground and it's quite a beginning," Bomar said. "We have 110 programs and projects involving more than 130 individual, public and non-profit partners benefitting 76 national parks in 38 states and the District of Columbia."

For a complete list of the 2008 National Park Service Centennial Challenge projects and programs please visit www.nps.gov/2016.

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