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# WFSI NEWSLETTER

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## Another Great WFSI Trip: *Central Rocky Mountains*

By: Sara White

**Somewhere out west, USA:** During the summer of 2003, our “trusty rusty” bus finally succumbed and has since been disassembled for parts in Arizona. Thus the rise of our new (at least new to us) bus, “Big Foot.” The summer of 2004 trip was the true initiation for Big Foot, and we were not disappointed.

The latest Western trip encompassed the South and Central Rocky Mountain region. For thirty days, 24 students and six chaperones traveled to places such as Mammoth Cave, Hot Springs, Bandelier, Chaco Culture, Durango, Leadville, Florissant Fossil Beds, and Rocky Mountain. From the students surveys returned post-journey, highlights of the trip included the BarD Chuckwagon, climbing the Great Sand Dunes, and the 4x4-jeep tour.

The BarD Chuckwagon (Durango, CO) included an evening of country shops, a true cowboy dinner slopped onto a tin plate, and great Western culture



portrayed through musical comedy. Cy Scarborough, owner of the BarD, provided special guest treatment for WFSI as he recognized Big Foot from the previous summer’s sale.

If any of you are interested in an unusual, spectacular, challenging hike, WFSI recommends visiting Great Sand Dunes. Situated near Alamosa, CO, Great Sand Dunes, which was recently named a National Park, appears to mimic a Sahara Desert setting only with a backdrop of the Sangre De Cristo Mountains. Our WFSI family trekked at dusk along the dune crests towards the highest dune at 650 feet. Many of you have experienced walks on dry sand along a beach – now imagine hiking that in your boots, uphill with no “trail” to follow – something along the lines of 2 steps forward and 1 step back. Yet, hiking to the top with the sun setting behind the dunes made for a phenomenal experience. Some students rated this as their favorite hike last summer.

In addition to our white water rafting adventures, WFSI spent an afternoon in open-air Swiss Army trucks. These semi-amphibious vehicles romped and forged where no other vehicle could go. From 6,000’ in elevation to 10,000’ at the top of the Kennebec Pass, we enjoyed 360-

*See Great Trip on page 2*

## WFSI Leaves Footprints in the Soft Caribbean Sand

By: Brian Geniusz

**Cinnamon Bay, St. John Island, US Virgin Islands:** How do you get twenty high school students to spend their entire spring break studying science? Take them to the U.S. Virgin Islands in the Caribbean.

Each day was a new adventure in U.S. Virgin Island National Park. Since the Island lies on the western side of the Atlantic Time Zone, the students were immediately treated to a Caribbean sunset on their ferry ride from St. Thomas to St. John. This also meant that the ride from Cruz Bay on St. John, to the Cinnamon Bay Camp Ground, would be made in the darkness of a new moon. No easy task since the island is the ancient remains of a mountain chain. Not to mention that the traffic laws have everyone driving American autos on the left side of the roadway!

Once at Cinnamon Bay Camp Ground, our group found our campsite of raised platform tents, filled with cots, bed linens and the occasional tree fog, lizard or other native creature of the night. This full day of travel is a real eye opener to many students. Some have never left Ohio, flown or been camping.

The next few days of the trip went by quickly. Spending a day at Trunk Bay Beach, which was rated one of the top ten beaches in the world by the Travel Channel, was a definite highlight. The National Park Service has actually sunken some trail markers and made an underwater snorkeling trail that visitors can enjoy.

The group also went hiking for a day. The trail took us from the north side of the island, at Cinnamon Bay, 1100ft. up the mountainside, across the Centerline Rd. and then down the south side of the mountain to the Caribbean Ocean. Once at the Caribbean side, we were treated



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## Great Trip from page 1

degree view of Durango and the San Juan Mountains and the La Plata Canyon. Beautiful scenery coupled with frigid temperatures at the high altitude provided us with a unique adventure.

In my personal opinion, WFSI trips are a once-in-a-lifetime experience...not only for the students, but also for the chaperones. Such positive feedback from the students (and the fact that they return for multiple trips) reassures me that we, as an organization, are doing the right thing – providing students an opportunity to grow as an individual.

## Your Donations Make A Difference



**Worthington, OH:** Over the past year, Worthington Field Studies has been lucky enough to have a great alumni base that has donated significant funds to our cause. Here is a list of the *WFSI Faithful*:

### Donations to General Fund

Brian Geniusz                      Dave & Jeannie Walton  
Peter Warner                        Sally Riebel  
Sara White

### Donations to Scholarship Fund

Abbie Harding                      Chris Allen  
Claire Fleming Newman        Elizabeth Walters  
Heather McLaughlin            TWHS School Store  
Pat Barron                          Roger Pinnicks  
Ron Pilatowski                  Scott Helgeson  
Matthew Klutznick, Worthington Mall

### Income for Scholarship Fund

Café Press.com – Sale of merchandise  
Fuddruckers – Benefits nights  
GFS – Rebates

### Donations to Bus Fund

Abbie Harding                      Adam Rice  
Brett & Lori Kaufman            Bryce Miskell  
Chris M. Coe                        Chris Warnky  
Cindy Morris                        Claire Fleming Newman  
Darcy Burdette                      Dave Weaner  
Doug Heym                          Duane Brant  
Jim Immelt                          Jody Jonas  
June Owens Key                    Kevin Swabb  
Lou Ann & David Doub            Mary Beth Pierce  
Melody Gilmore                    Monika Hensel Brown  
Pat Barron                          Paula Boock Bernbaum  
Rachel Enevoldsen                Ron Pilatowski  
Sara L. Haynes                      Scott McKim  
Steve McPhee                        Tammy Berry  
The Livingston Family            The Slane Family  
Tiffany Luthy                        TWHS School Store  
Warren Fox                          Wes Hedden  
Erin Leach  
Bonnie & Joe Reilly, Thrivent Financial

## Footprints from page 1

to some petroglyphs, and an 1800's sugar mill. After lunch we made our way back the same trail to complete our 10 mile hike. As the chaperone I was exhausted but a number of students promptly returned to the beach at Cinnamon Bay.

A spring break trip wouldn't be complete without a visit to the coral reefs. Last year we chartered a boat to take a group of divers to a reef around the island. Those that were not divers went on another boat and snorkeled at another patch of reef. We saw some sea turtles, a large number and variety of reef fish and we even found some flounder. In 2001 President Clinton has defined over 12,000 acres of the waters around St. John Island as Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument, keeping the reef safe from human destruction.

I would highly recommend visiting the island and staying at Cinnamon Bay Camp Ground. While there, make certain to visit the park visitor center in Cruz Bay, take advantage of the many hiking trails, go see Trunk Bay and the Annanberg Ruins and of course spend a day in the town of Cruz Bay.

## Where Are They Now?

Here is a list of some of the messages we have received from our alumni. Some stories have been written a while ago and some are more recent:

### Kellye Kirkbride

Graduation Yr: 1997

Trip Location: Andros in Spring 1997

I am currently in my second year as a graduate student at Duke University in their Molecular Cancer Biology PhD. Program. I joined Dr. Gerard Blobel's lab to do my thesis and am looking at the role of the Transforming Growth Factor-beta type III receptor in superfamily signaling. I graduated from Indiana University in May of 2001 with a degree in Biology. I stayed involved in athletics through a student organization called the Student Athletic Board...I enjoyed it so much I took over the reigns my senior year as the President and experienced the whole Coach Knight situation.

Unfortunately, I have not kept in touch with any one from my trip. However, diving in the Bahamas has made it a goal of mine to go diving again...in Hawaii and the Great Barrier Reef...one of these days :).

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WORTHINGTON  
*Mall*

*Please Visit the Worthington Mall. They have made some large donations to our scholarship fund.*

# WFSI West 2005

**Northern Rockies:** This is the year for the Northern Rocky Mountain trip. With the hopeful reliability of Big Foot, WFSI will venture as far northwest as Glacier National Park and then compare that biome with the dry, desert-like ecosystem of Arches National Park in Utah.

Beginning the trip is a pit stop at Pipestone National Monument in Minnesota. After a few days in the Badlands region with day trips to both Wind Cave and Jewel Cave, Mount Rushmore, and Badlands National Park, we will travel north to Theodore Roosevelt NP where we will go horseback riding and hopefully take in a cultural dinner show. Following 3 days of hiking in Glacier National Park, we will venture south to Yellowstone NP and Grand Teton NP. During our stay in the northwest corner of Wyoming, we hope to take the students to a rodeo in Cody, an evening float trip on the Snake River, and a 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival in Jackson Hole.

After a short stay in Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, we will learn about Arches NP and spend a day whitewater rafting and 4x4-jeep touring in Canyonlands NP. Arches NP is always a favorite with the evening hike to Delicate Arch to watch the moonrise through the famous arch. Our final stay will be at Rocky Mountain National Park which will include another backpacking trip either up Hallett's Peak or Long's Peak.

With the locations and far distances, the trip will encompass 35 days plus 2 pre-trip classes and a clean-up day when we return to Worthington. We will be departing Ohio on June 15<sup>th</sup> and return July 19<sup>th</sup>. The trip cost for summer 2005 is \$1500 including all transportation, food, lodging, rafting, horseback riding, and jeep touring.

At this time, we have approximately 27 applicants from the Worthington and Westerville areas. With our goal of 30 participants, we are keeping the application window open. If you know of a high school student who is interested in the trip, please contact Sara White at [SWhite@worthington.k12.oh.us](mailto:SWhite@worthington.k12.oh.us) or 883-2250x1434.

## WFSI Web Shop



[www.cafepress.com/wfsi](http://www.cafepress.com/wfsi)

All proceeds go to the WFSI Scholarship fund

*Where are they now? Continued*

### **Roger L. Vogel**

Graduation Yr: 1970

Trip Location: Northern Rockies 1970

I am a class of '70 WHS grad who took the summer '70 Northern Rockies trip and still think it was the most fun I ever had. Today I am a retired Army Officer, who wanted an exciting job so I teach high school (social studies) here in Fayetteville. I have thought about setting up a field studies operation here. I worked out west a couple of times: El Paso(Ft.Bliss), Colorado Springs (Cheyenne Mt.), and a bit of NM as well.

### **Heather McLaughlin**

Graduation Yr: 1991

Trip Location: North Central Rockies, 1989

I am so happy to here from one of the greatest experiences I had in High School. After going on the WFSI trip, I became as avid outdoor nut. I have been camping and exploring the US and I thank WFSI for it. In 1996 I graduated from University of Cincinnati with my BS in Criminal Justice and Political Science. I had four months off before I started Grad School to explore. I decided to recapture some of the old memories of WFSI and retrace a lot of my steps. I spent the first month on the east coast camping and packing through the AT and meeting friends along the way. Then I found my old journal from the trip and started going to the places we camped. What a thrill to relive the memories! I fell in love with Colorado all over and swore I'd be back.

After working in Washington DC for a year, I gave up my career to go back to school to pursue a new career that would enable me to be outside more often. I graduated from Ohio State in 2002 with a Civil Engineering degree and headed for Steamboat Springs, Colorado. I am the Assistant County Engineer here and love my job and my ability to be outside all the time! I camp, hike, kayak, ski, and bike. What a life.

My fondest memories of WFSI is singing that song "I wish I was a cal-a-pike-a lichen..." or however you spell it. But whenever I reach the alpine tundra I start singing and think about all the memories. Seeing strawberry snow and knowing why it's red, understanding all the earth's movement and formations, and on and on. I feel as if every time I step outside my door I remember some other bit of information I was taught during those wonderful 32 days.

### **Bill Oshinski**

Graduation Year: 1979

Trip: Northwest 1977 & Bahamas 1979

I'm a software engineer by profession. Very happily married for 12 years. No kids just two dogs. I must say that WFSI had a big influence on my life. Ever since the '77 trip I felt the draw to the Rockies and finally moved here in 1990. Have been very happy with that decision. I recently joined the Colorado Mountain Club to find those of like mind. Also due to my Bahamas trip I got involved with a local dive shop and worked with them as a PADI

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Where are they now? Continued

Divemaster.

My sister, Kathy Oshinski, is also a WFSI alumni. However her name is now Kathy Imboden since she's married to another alumni John Imboden.

I know the newsletter (and web site) must take a lot of effort and I want you to know that it's much appreciated, thanks!

### Traci & Jeff Wisard

Graduation Year: Chaperones

Trip: Central Rockies 1997

My husband and I met on a WFSI trip(1997), began dating and we have been married a little over a year now. I was a chaperone on the Central Rockies 1997 trip and Jeff met up with us in Cody, Wyoming because his brother and sister-in-law, **Tom and Carla Wisard**, were the trip cooks. We were both so excited to see the WFSI newsletter. The trip was so beautiful and gorgeous and we love telling the story of how we first met. A very unique tale!

### Debbie Griffin (Kline)

Graduation year: 1979

Trip: West 1978, Andros 1978, 1979

Thanks for sending the newsletter; I think it's great. I went on a summer west trip '78 with the McBurneys, and 2 Andros trips (Mr. Pinnicks). They were tremendous experiences!

I teach Earth Space Science at Ambridge HS, PA, and have taken groups to Andros. I remembered how worthwhile the trips were, so I started an Andros program. I often recall examples of what I learned to share with my students. I remember Mr. Schlarb pointing out a glacial U-shaped valley! I also do sky shows in the Buhl Planetarium, Carnegie Science Center. I remember a star ID walk in Rocky Mtn. N.P. in Colorado, that really captured my interest.

**If you have a story or any photos to share for our next newsletter, just email them to: Brian Geniusz at [bgeniusz@worthington.k12.oh.us](mailto:bgeniusz@worthington.k12.oh.us). We look forward to hearing from you.**



## USVI in 2005

**WFSI Planning Headquarters:** As the 2004 year comes to a conclusion the planning for the spring break trip to the Caribbean starts to heat up. Arrangements have been made for airfare, lodging and the group has been selected. Twenty-two students have signed up for the latest edition of our marine ecology course. The course offers students 0.5 credits in science electives for their weeklong trip.

The trip does cost students a bit of money. This year's trip will cost students \$1,400 and covers all of their living expenses. The airfare takes over half of the tuition at \$715 per seat. The remainder of the fees are spent on lodging, food, equipment, ground transportation, ferry rides, a dinner out, boat rides to the reef and t-shirts for all participants. If this seems high, wait until you hear this. Two weeks ago WFSI was sent information about a group offering a similar trip to the Virgin Islands. Their lowest priced trip started at \$3,000 and went up to \$6,000. So we are doing pretty well to keep our prices down.

This year's trip will be very similar to previous trips with the exception of a new hike and an excursion to the south side of the island. All of the people on the island have been very friendly to us and have worked to make our visit very enjoyable. The National Park has sent us a ranger to lead us on a nature walk on land and through a tidal pool looking for invertebrate animals. Last year we found sea urchins, brittle stars, sea cucumbers and brittle worms as always, but we also found a very unusual creature called a sea hare. The sea hare we saw looked a lot like a slug you would find in your garden but it had gills on its back and released reddish ink.

This year's trip should provide countless memories and opportunities for personal growth just as the others have. Taking a great group of students to fantastic places to learn about science, culture and ourselves is what has always made WFSI trips incredible opportunities for all that are involved.



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