

Road Trip

Written by Story and Photos By Melinda Russell Sun Correspondent
Friday, 08 May 2015 00:36



Bonus edition!

Do you realize the first National Park was designated in 1872? The Yellowstone National Park Act set aside over 2 million acres of land in Montana and Wyoming for the park. Since then, over 400 national parks have been created and preserved.

There are more than 25 national parks and monuments close enough to Gallup to be visited overnight or in a weekend. I asked several UNM students where they will go this summer if they get the chance. Amanda Livingston said she will take a 4 day trip to Las Vegas so she can relax before working hard this summer. Sheldon Rodriguez wants to make it to Sand Diego. And brother and sister Sam and Fabian Vicenti want to go to Denver and San Diego respectively. Hmm, I think we have a beach theme developing. It seems, nobody wants to road trip in New Mexico.

When polled, 5 out of 37 UNM students ranging in ages from 17 to 70 said they have not visited any New Mexico National Parks. In the poll, 25 respondents report visiting El Morro National

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Monument while not one has visited Capulin Volcano, Fort Union or the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monuments.

We New Mexicans have, at our fingertips, the privilege of experiencing and exploring some of the most beautiful and most historic wonders of nature in the world. National Parks are extremely inexpensive to visit. Why don't we take time to visit these national treasures?

This reporter is just as guilty as the rest. I have lived in Gallup over 35 years and I have never seen the Grand Canyon. The last time I visited Chaco Canyon I was in my teens, 37 years ago. I have seen the Bunker Hill and the Puget Sound but I have never taken time to see the wonders around me.

This summer, I want to take you on a few road trips with me. We will start by taking a 4 day trip starting in Albuquerque and flying to Boise, Idaho where I will meet my soon-to-be grandchildren and daughter-in-law. Wow! We will travel through 9 states and 1944 miles before we get to Clarksville, Kentucky. This is going to be an interesting 30 hour drive. Along the way, I hope to show you some of the wonders of the road and share some of the personal adventures as well.

On the next trip, we (me and three friends) will travel by way of Grand Canyon Railway to see one of the most visited wonders in all the world, the Grand Canyon. I hope you will come along for the ride. I'm sure it will get interesting in ways I can't foresee.

You might ride along with other reporters during the summer as well. Don't miss out! There are adventures on the way!