

# Pike National Historic Trail Association Newsletter

*Our Purpose:* To Establish federal designation of the Pike National Historic Trail Jan. 2011 Vol. 5 No 1

We are a Charitable nonprofit organization Our website is [www.zebulonpike.org](http://www.zebulonpike.org)  
 "Zebulon Pike was an American hero, a patriot who lived and died for his country." -Thomas Jefferson



- *Pike National Historic Trail Feasibility Study bill to be reintroduced* The Pike National Historic Trail Feasibility Study bill reintroduced in the 112th Congress in the first week of February by US Senator Michael Bennet with the co-sponsorship of Senator Mark Udall, [These Colorado US Senators can be contacted to thank them for their efforts]
- The bill number has not yet assigned.

• **Co-sponsors:** For those in the "Pike states" to the right---Please call your two US Senators requesting them to Co-sponsor the Pike National Historic Trail Feasibility Study bill. When calling the number of your Senator [listed on the right], indicate that you are a constituent and that you would like to speak with the **staffer who handles National Park legislation**. Indicate to the staff person that you wish the Senator to Co-sponsor the Pike National Historic Trail Feasibility Bill, and mention the economic, educational, recreational, tourism advantages of the Trail in your state.

- The Pike Trail Fact sheet is: <http://zebulonpike.org/docs/PikeFactSheet.pdf>
- We also need Co-sponsorship from the other 43 states and to create a buzz among members of Congress about the establishment of the Pike National Historic Trail.
- It is interesting to note that if the Feasibility Study Bill is Co-Sponsored by the 14 Senators in the "Pike states", that it will be an exact Bipartisan piece of legislation. designation is not controversial and will continue to receive bipartisan support. The fact that National Historic Trails have low cost, because they use public roads to view sites instead of building and maintaining paths, remains a critical plus for passage and support.
- We expect the process of designation of the Pike National Historic Trail to be lengthy as many good things are.

**US Senators (Ask for staffer who handles National Park legislation)**

STATE	US SENATOR	PHONE #
Missouri	Roy Blunt	(202) 224-5721
Missouri	Claire McCaskill	(202) 224-6154
Kansas	Jerry Moran	(202) 224-6521
Kansas	Pat Roberts	(202) 224-4774
Nebraska	Mike Joanns	(202) 224-4224
Nebraska	Ben Nelson	(202) 224-6551
New Mexico	Jeff Bingaman	(202) 224-5521
New Mexico	Tom Udall	(202) 224-6621
Texas	John Cornyn	(202) 224-2934
Texas	Kay Bailey Hutchison	(202) 224-5922
Louisiana	Mary L. Landrieu	(202) 224-5824
Louisiana	David Vitter	(202) 224-4623

We have been assured that the bill and trail designation is not controversial and will continue to receive bipartisan support. The fact that National Historic Trails have low cost, because they use public roads to view sites instead of building and maintaining paths, remains a critical plus for passage and support.

*Happy 232nd Birthday Zebulon Montgomery Pike* Pike was born near Lambertson, New Jersey, now a part of Trenton on 1/5/1779. He celebrated his 28th birthday near Cañon City, Colorado cold and with a bent rifle. "This was my birth-day, and most fervently did I hope never to pass another so miserably."

- *Logo Announcement-* The Association's Logo Committee, headed by Tom Rollings, have selected official logos- one for the Association [above] and one for the Trail [to the right.] The Trail logo will be used for the trail until the National Park Service assigns another. We appreciate the work done by professional designer Katherine McCoy, and have awarded her Honorary Association membership as well as our heart-felt THANK YOU. "We felt that Pikes Peak best represented the efforts of those members of the Pike Expedition as we continue to aspire to attain for them the recognition they deserve and represents our efforts to remember them. The hand-held telescope is an instrument designed to aid the observation of remote objects. The expedition's efforts to explore, map, and record the newly acquired southwestern land of the Louisiana Purchase using many tools is here represented by the telescope." remarked Tom. "The Trail logo shows the route of the Pike Southwest Expedition through what is now seven states and three Mexican provinces from Fort Bellefontaine, Missouri to Natchitoches, Louisiana," commented Harv Hisgen, Association President. "There are also 15 stars in the logo which, in 1806, matched the stars in the American flag Pike carried, and, of course, the number of American states."



- *What Lieutenant Pike, and Privates Mountjoy, & Miller saw from "Mountjoy Hills" -*
- In our December issue, Tom Rollings describes the view from Tom's Mountjoy Hills. We were unable to include these pictures because of size issues.



• Here is what they saw- North America's second, third and fourth tallest mountains: Mounts Elbert (14,440 ft), Massive (14,428 ft), and Harvard (14,427 ft).

• *Pike's Experiences in January 1807- Cañon City- Wet Mountains- Wet Mtn. Valley-*

*Sangre de Cristo- San Luis Valley* by Allan Vainley

During the month of January 1807, Zebulon Montgomery Pike and his men:

- 👤 Struggled east down the Arkansas River through and around the Royal Gorge to find themselves back in Cañon City in the late days of December and the early days of January 1807,
- 👤 Remained in Cañon City from the 5th until the 14th,
- 👤 **What was the next best move?** Turning **South** into New Spain or what Jefferson considered the watershed of the Arkansas, they traveled up present-day Grape Creek into the Wet Mountains on the 15th,
- 👤 Entered and suffered greatly in the Wet Mountain Valley from the 16th to the 26th,
- 👤 Crossed the Sangre de Cristo Mountains into the San Luis Valley on the 27th [truly into Spanish territory],
- 👤 Climbed and camped to the east side of the Great Sand Dunes Nat. Park on the 28th, &
- 👤 Built Pike's Stockade on the Conejos River [west of the Rio Grande] on the 31st.

The month of January 1807, was a month of cold and snowy weather, hunger, frostbite and hardship in the Rocky mountains. The men of the Expedition were all alive. They were carrying out their mission- exploring the southwest portion of the Louisiana Purchase, mapping, taking readings for latitude and longitude, and discovering many items in the new Southwest America.

After arriving in Cañon City from the **East** in early December [5th], viewing Mounts Elbert, Massive, Harvard, Belford, Princeton, Yale, Oxford and Columbia on the Continental Divide and discovering the headwaters of the South Platte and Arkansas rivers to the **Northwest** and **West**, they struggled down the Arkansas. Having not eaten for days, they worked in pairs with sheds on the ice, in and about rocky terrain, carrying their baggage. They became spread out throughout the valley. From the 1st through the 4th, they attempted to shoot deer and buffalo, at times successfully, leaving behind what food they could for the next pair.

On Jan. 5- "I went out in the morning to hunt, while the two lads were bringing up some of their loads still left at the foot of the mountain." ... "We proceeded to our old camp [Cañon City], which we had left the 10th of December, and reoccupied it." Jan 7- "Sent more men back to assist in the rear, and carry the poor fellows provisions;" Jan 8- "The whole party were once more joined together, when we felt comparatively happy, notwithstanding the great mortification I experienced at having been so egregiously deceived as to the Red river. I now felt at considerable loss how to proceed..." [Pike had thought the river they were following was the Red river and went about relabeling his maps and journal entries with 'Arkansas'.]

In the time between Jan. 8 and 14, they constructed a blockhouse, hunted, took various readings to determine position, rested from their struggle down the Arkansas, explored the upper portion of the Royal Gorge, and pondered the next move.

On the 15th the Pike Expedition departed up Branch Creek (today's Grape Creek) on the south side of the Arkansas into the Wet Mountains. Pike decided to leave Baroney, the interpreter, and Private Patrick Smith, the horses and part of their baggage at the blockhouse in Cañon City. Fourteen began their days of greatest and most acute hardships. It was cold [-18 1/2 ° Réaumur = - 42 ° F], was snowing, four to five feet of snow already accumulated, and frostbite was waiting. The **Wet Mountains** [or Sierra Mojadas] are a small range of mountains in southern Colorado named for the amount of snow they and it's valley receive in the winter.

On the 17th they "Marched about four miles, when the great White mountain presented itself before us," as the adventurers entered the Wet Mountain Valley and first saw the Sangre de Cristo mountains to their north and as far south as can be seen.

On the 17th- "there was no wood or water where we were, and the woods from the skirts of the mountains appeared to be at no great distance, I thought proper to march for it, ... crossed the creek, which now bore east. [Grape Creek just west of Westcliffe, CO] Here we all got our feet wet." "after getting fires made, we discovered that the feet of nine of our men were frozen,"

After a five day camp at [Jan. 17-21] at Horn Creek west of Silver Cliff/Westcliffe, they were forced to leave John Sparks and Thomas Dougherty [later rescued] because of frostbite. After walking through three feet of snow for three days, from the 24th to 26th the group camped farther south at the confluence of the North & South Muddy creeks, attempting to locate a passage over the Sangre de Cristos. They were able to shoot buffalo for food and saw elk.

On the 27th, they headed for Medano Pass [once called 'Pike's Gap'] and the San Luis Valley, leaving Private Menaugh [also later rescued] with buffalo and frostbite. On the 27th ["bad days march"] they camped at the pass. Jan 28- "after marching some miles, we discovered through the lengthy vista at a distance, another chain of mountains ... which we were then descending, sandy hills. We marched on the outlet of the mountains, and left the sandy desert to our right; kept down between it and the mountain. When we encamped, I ascended one of the largest hills of sand, and my glass could discover a large river, flowing nearly north by west, and south by east..." The Rio Grande [or Rio del Norte- not the Red River].

They camped on Saturday, January 31st along the Conejos River, just west of the Rio Grande in the San Luis Valley and began building a stockade 13 miles south of present-day Alamosa.



• *Annual GARNMA Meeting Held* The annual **Greater Arkansas River Nature Association** meeting was held in Salida, Colorado, at the Community Center on the first of February. The packed house braved -8 degree weather to share refreshments and socialize before settling in to listen to chairperson **Allison Ramsey** detail the activities and accomplishments of the previous year. GARNMA is described as “a cooperating association for natural, cultural and historical awareness.” GARNMA partners with public land management agencies, county and state agencies to provide input into management plans and meet the goal of protecting the environment while providing multi-use recreational opportunities.

It is no wonder that Chaffee County and the State of Colorado look to the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association for help in developing land use plans and to compile data for historical preservation, recreational usage, and environmental impacts on the area surrounding this pristine part of the state. This is because of the hundreds of volunteers from the area who actively participate in numerous GARNMA activities.

**Ms. Ramsey** detailed specific chapters and projects that the organization is involved in. These include the Friends of Fourmile, Arkansas Headwaters Wilderness, Salida Community Garden, and various interpretive sign projects. GARNMA sponsors everything from nature walks, birding excursions, and environmental clean – up campaigns, to providing resource support for other organizations, such as the **Pike National Historic Trail Association**.

At the end of the evening, a story telling re-inactment of private John Brown (one of Zebulon Pike’s men) was performed by **Stew Brown**, an active member of our Association. Mr. Brown is a GARNMA member and local historian interested in the Zebulon Pike Expedition’s exploration of the Louisiana Purchase. **Mr. Brown** detailed the Pike Expedition’s journey from St. Louis to Santa Fe, including important facts about Zebulon Pike. It was noted that Pike was an honest, highly respected leader of men. Stories of courage, bravery, and hardship were recounted. The audience was left with the feeling that this expedition was one of exploration, one that overcame insurmountable obstacles, and one that deserves a greater place in history.

After the presentation, the audience was encouraged to ask questions. Most questions were about how the men survived with inadequate clothing and equipment. The heart, determination, and trust of a great leader are how the “**Dam’d Rascals**” survived. The annual meeting concluded with a thank you to **Stew Brown, the administrative board of the organization, and the numerous volunteers** that keep up the good work. To learn more about GARNMA, you can contact them at [www.garna.org](http://www.garna.org), phone 719-539-5106, or write to P.O. box 1522, Salida, CO 81201. -Tom Rollings

The upper Arkansas River valley has been the site of many historic occurrences. Pike and the Southwestern Expedition was the first American in the valley, discovering the headwaters of the Arkansas, exploring and mapping the valley, and viewing the Collegiate Peaks of the Continental Divide. When gold and silver was discovered in the spring of 1860, in California Gulch near Leadville CO; the rush was on. Horace Tabor met Baby Doe, at the Opera House, and Jefferson Randolph “Soapy” Smith reportedly sold his soap, two railroads rushed to built its tracks up this narrow valley to Leadville. The “war” which ensued between the railroad workers in 1878 left the Denver, Rio Grande and Western the victor. The tracks, owned by the Southern Pacific and now the Union Pacific is now the objects of visionaries in GARNMA for a recreational trail. The railroad eventually went up above the headwaters of the Arkansas to the Climax mine where tons of molybdenum were mined. The preservation of the stage route to Leadville is also being considered. Both routes are above and east of where Pike and his two companions traveled [close to the river.] In time we trust the preservation of these historic routes will become a reality.

• *Classroom corner:* Many teachers are using the internet to study Pike and other historical persons. Pat Surrena, Pike Board member, suggests you check out [Problems With The New Country Jeopardy Template](#) and check out Pike Alerts.

*Time to renew your membership or become a member for the first time.*

Level	Amt.	Level Name	Level	Amt.	Level Name
Student	\$15	<b>Corporal Jackson</b>	Small Business	\$75	<b>Robinson-Brown-Miller</b>
Individual	\$25	<b>Sergeant Meek</b>	Corporation	\$200 & up	<b>Carter-Gordon-Mountjoy-Roy</b>
Family	\$35	<b>Menaugh-Stout</b>	Benefactor	\$500	<b>Sparks-Daugherty</b>
Non profit organization	\$50	<b>Vasquez-Smith</b>	Life	\$1000	<b>Zebulon Pike</b>

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Today's date \_\_\_\_\_ Membership level (circle above)  
 plus an additional tax deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I will be able to help with:

Address \_\_\_\_\_  The Pike Assoc. website  
 Historic/heritage investigation  
 Providing educational opportunities  
 Producing educational materials

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

I /we will personally contact legislators for legislative support  
 I /we will write letters of legislative support  
 I/we would like to help in any way (Assoc. will contact)

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Contact us: 303/816-7424 [harv.pike@gmail.com](mailto:harv.pike@gmail.com) Additional gifts are tax deductible. Make checks payable to:

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