



Linn County Parks



NEWSLETTER

What's happening at Linn County (Or.) Parks Fall 2021

HistoriCorps brings new life to Clear Lake shelter

By Alex Paul

Communications Officer

CLEAR LAKE — The sound of hammers at work filled the air on a recent cool summer day at Clear Lake Resort as staff and volunteers with HistoriCorps made repairs to the log picnic shelter that has stood through rain and snow for more than 90 years.

A Civilian Conservation Corps project from the 1930s, the shelter is showing its age.

It now boasts a new hand-split cedar shake roof, a refurbished lava stone fireplace and some new logs to replace those that had been battered by time.

Jason Benson, who hails from northwest Washington, and Remy Buxton of Corvallis, are the only paid staff members on this project. All others are volunteers.

Benson has been fixing up old things since he was 5 years old and helped his parents rehabilitate a 1914 farm.

He earned a degree in botany, did trail work and then became a preservationist with the National Park Service. He has been restoring historic structures up and down the West Coast for 20 years.

Benson said he is a “carpenter/preservationist” and this is his first season with the program.

Buxton loves being in the outdoors, for



HistoriCorps volunteers install hand-split cedar shakes on the picnic shelter at Clear Lake Resort.

work or pleasure.

He has a degree in anthropology from the University of Georgia at Athens and joined HistoriCorps in 2021 after volunteering in 2020.

Recent volunteers included Eric Acosta, Jeunilyan Stenske and David Freeman with Northwest Youth Corps in Eugene.

HistoriCorps spokeswoman Charlotte Helmer said HistoriCorps’ mission is to inspire a preservation ethic by engaging volunteers to save historic places.

“We prioritize experiential, hands-on learning above all else,” Helmer said.

The program relies on a small cadre of paid staff members and a large contingent of volunteers across all age groups and possessing a variety of skill levels.

The concept for HistoriCorps sprang from a project to restore a building in the Pike-San Isabel National Forest from 2002-2007. In 2009 the U.S. Forest Service approached the Colorado Preserva-

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To make campsite reservations visit www.linnparks.com or call 541-967-3917

HistoriCorps ... From P. 1

tion Inc. with the idea of forming a “corps” much like the original Civilian Conservation Corps and since then dozens of special places have been saved for future generations.



Helmer said HistoriCorps works like a traveling road show, popping

up on public lands across the country every year.

“Each project is made possible by government partners, generous donors, and passionate volunteers,” Helmer said.

The restoration of Clear Lake picnic shelter involves the Willamette National Forest, Linn County Parks, Friends of Fish Lake, Northwest Youth Corps, corporate sponsors such as Bon Tool, and 25 volunteers.

HistoriCorps will complete at least 40 projects this year in 15 states, with eight crews active from March to November.

There are five projects slated from Northern California to Central Oregon.

“We get every type of volunteer, from retirees to people who take a week’s vacation from work to do this,” Benson said.

The Clear Lake project crew is camping at nearby Fish Lake.

“It’s great fun,” Benson said.

Benson said the Clear Lake project will take about five weeks, plus one week of set-up. Most volunteers work a week at a time.

Recently the Northwest Youth Corps participants were busy installing a new cedar shake roof and Buxton was busy preparing the chimney for a stone mason.

About HistoriCorps

- People from all walks of life can volunteer with HistoriCorps.
- No prior construction experience is necessary, but it helps to have a positive attitude and a strong work ethic.
- Projects range in skill levels and degree of difficulty, from easy to difficult, so participants can choose for themselves.
- HistoriCorps provides meals, tools, training, safety equipment and materials.
- Lodging ranges from tent camping to indoor facilities. Altitudes information is available for each project, as is information about travel — some projects can only be reached by hiking (and carrying their own gear) or by four-wheel-drive vehicles.
- Learn more about HistoriCorps by watching the documentary, “Saving Places”, call 720-287-0100 or visit <https://historicorps.org/>.



Above: Jason Benson and Remy Buxton, on ladder, work on the fireplace at the Clear Lake picnic shelter.

Benson said his crews often repair log structures and guard stations.

HistoriCorps recently completed projects to restore Longbow Group Camp in Linn County and several Odd Fellows cabins at Paulina Lake. They will work at the Santiam Pass Ski Lodge in September and October.

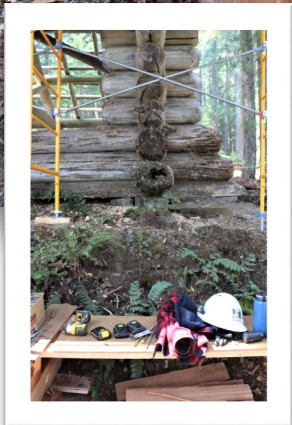
“The types of structures vary by region,” Benson said. “In eastern states, many buildings were masonry oriented.”

Benson said it takes some getting used

to working with a new crew of volunteers every week, but volunteers are provided with considerable information before they leave home. They camp out, but meals are provided.

“Volunteers get to learn how to use traditional tools, such as a draw knife to remove bark from logs,” Benson said. “They learn that often, the traditional tools are the best tools.”

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Left: The ends of logs have rotted over many decades. **Above:** Jason Benson, seated, of HistoriCorps talks with Linn County Parks Director Brian Carroll. **Below:** Logs await placement.

HistoriCorps ... From P. 2

Volunteer Eric Acosta called the project, “Super cool. It’s so unusual to get to work on a project with so much history behind it.”

Linn County Parks Director Brian Carroll praised the HistoriCorps volunteers.

“The restoration of the historic Clear Lake shelter is such a terrific project,” Carroll said. “Having HistoriCorps there to perform the work, with the help of volunteers, has provided visitors an opportunity to learn about the restoration process.”



Meet JR Erspamer

Clear Lake ranger in awe of its beauty

By Alex Paul

Communications Officer

CLEAR LAKE — When asked what he likes most about his job as a co-ranger at Clear Lake Resort, J.R. Erspamer looks out the window of the lodge and asks in replay, “Who wouldn’t like it here?”

Erspamer grew up in the busy San Francisco Bay area and has worked for Linn County Parks for two years.

“I like everything about this job,” Erspamer said. “My office view is beautiful.”

Erspamer said his goal is to help “facilitate a family atmosphere” for guests.

“That’s what I want for my family and it’s what I want for everyone who comes here,” Erspamer said.

Erspamer said his goals are to keep things fixed and the resort “clean and neat” for guests who come from as far away as Japan to enjoy the crystal clear waters and beautiful central Oregon scenery.

Most work days, there is a work crew of four people ,and during peak season, that can grow to six with a total seasonal staff of 10 to 12.

Erspamer said cabin rentals are always brisk, although mid-week openings start popping up when kids get back to school.

“It has gotten to the point people need to book cabins a year in advance,” Erspamer said.

Erspamer said winter is also a good time to book a cabin and use it as a base camp for skiing at nearby Hoodoo Ski Bowl or to go snow shoeing.

The restaurant is not open in the winter, he added.

“There’s so much to do here in the summer,” Erspamer said. “Hiking or fishing here, but people can also go mountain biking, or to the hot springs or explore caves. Its’s just an amaz-



Clear Lake Ranger J.R. Erspamer says he never tires of the beauty that surrounds him at work.

ing place.”

He added that the crystal clear — and frigid — water attracts scuba divers like bees to honey.

The restaurant is open from 7 - 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday through Sunday.

“We offer biscuits and gravy, pancakes, a charizza burrito and of course burgers and fries and our special cinnamon rolls and pies,” Erspamer said.

Erspamer said he never has to remind himself how lucky he is to work in such a beautiful place “because all of our guests tell me on a



Erspamer talks on a portable radio with one of the summer

regular basis.”

Erspamer said he would like to see the resort move toward solar power someday. Currently, power is provided by two large generators.

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Campfire Cookin'



Marinated chicken kabobs

Ingredients

- 1/2 c. plain yogurt
- 2 cloves garlic, grated
- 1 tbsp. grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp. garam masala
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- 2 tsp. lemon zest, plus 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
- Canola oil, for grill grates
- 1 medium-size red onion, cut into 1-inch wedges, then halved crosswise
- 4 pieces flatbread or naan

Cooking directions

Combine yogurt, garlic, ginger, garam masala, turmeric, lemon zest and juice, and 1/2 teaspoon each salt and pepper in a bowl. Add chicken and stir to combine. Let marinate 15 minutes.

Heat grill to medium. Once hot, clean and lightly oil grill grates. Thread chicken and onions onto six large skewers. Grill, turning occasionally, until chicken is cooked through and onion is just tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Grill flatbread until lightly toasted, about 1 minute per side.

— Country Living Magazine



Clear Lake seasonal crew: Row one, left to right: Madison Kobol, Breanne Perkins, Marni King, Hadley Collins. Back row – Park Ranger J.R. Erspamer, Rusty Grey, Ben Norman, Sydney Beers. Far background: Chris Jernigan. Photo courtesy J.R. Erspamer.

Clear Lake Ranger From P. 4

“I would like to reduce our carbon footprint if possible,” he said.

Erspamer said he is proud to work for Linn County Parks & Recreation.

“I think we have one of the best parks systems around,” he said. “Everyone helps each other out. I also like teaching the seasonal staff new things. In the winter months, we do a lot of maintenance.”

Erspamer said that, although it can be challenging keeping up with the daily schedule during the busy season, he receives “so much positive feedback on a daily basis from our guests.”

Erspamer said the resort has regular

guests who come for fishing or hiking, but also entertains visitors from around the world.

“We get a lot of people from Japan and other Asian countries and a lot of Russians,” he said.

Although he lives at River Bend near Cascadia, Erspamer works year-round at Clear Lake Resort.

“It’s a new adventure every day,” Erspamer said. “There is always

something going on.”

Parks Director Brian Carroll said Erspamer, “has done a great job for Linn County Parks at Clear Lake. He is so friendly and really has a wonderful rapport with visitors.”

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| <p>Name: J.R. Erspamer</p> <p>Age: 39</p> <p>Occupation: Clear Lake Resort Ranger</p> <p>Family: wife, Candy; two children ages 23 and 10</p> <p>Hometown: San Francisco Bay area</p> <p>Education: Associate’s Degree from Santa Rosa Community College in digital media and website development</p> <p>Hobbies: Photography, hiking, camping, surfing</p> |
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Brian Carroll

**Parks
Director**



Welcome to Linn County!
The autumn outdoor recreation season is upon us.

Fall is a great time to visit the parks and enjoy the cooler temperatures and smaller crowds. The fall colors are also one of the bonuses of getting out this time of the year. The Maples and Vine Maples usually put on a great show in late September and October especially in east Linn County.

The change of seasons is also a time of transition for the Linn County Parks Staff. During this time, park employees will make improvements to the county parks system. Some of the projects the Parks Staff will be working on include.

- **Clear Lake Resort:** Utility upgrades and road repairs and resurfacing of the Clear Lake Cabin Loop Road. If you have mid-week (Monday-Thursday) cabin reservations in October please be aware the cabin loop road will periodically be closed. Although, access to the resort's entry and exit roads will not be affected.
- **Rocky Top Group Camp (Quartzville Corridor):** Parks Staff and contractors will be constructing several significant improvements to the Rocky Top Group Camp including: Construction of a group shelter, fire rings, drilling a potable drinking water well, resurfacing the parking area, constructing campsites and adding landscape screening improvements.
- **Whitcomb Creek County Park:** Four new 20-foot yurts are currently under construction at Whitcomb Creek County Park on Green Peter Reservoir. The yurts should be available for rental in the summer of 2022.

- **Upper Whitcomb Boat-in Camp:** A new vault toilet is being constructed in the Upper Whitcomb Boat-in Camp on Green Peter Reservoir. The new restroom will be available for use in the spring of 2022
- **Lewis Creek County Park:** Completion of the Lewis Creek swim area safety barrier is scheduled for this fall. Work includes installation of safety cables and additional anchors.
- **Reservoir Water Levels**
- If you plan to visit Green Peter or Foster reservoirs this fall, please keep in mind that water levels

will be very low. We anticipate that by the fourth week in September all of the boat ramps at Green Peter Reservoir will be out of the water, which means there will be no public access for boating.

Boating access on Foster Reservoir will be available at Sunnyside County Park; however, the boat ramps at Gedney Creek and Calkins Park will be inaccessible.

Reservoir water levels should begin to rise back to normal seasonal levels once we receive substantial rain.

I hope you are able to continue to come out and enjoy all of the wonderful outdoor recreation opportunities in Linn County during the remainder of 2021. It is definitely one of my favorite times of the year to be outdoors.



Two cultural encampments held in our parks

Native American Cultural Encampments were held at Sunnyside County Park and Cascadia State Park this summer. The public was invited to learn about Native American lifestyles, music, crafts and food.

Photos courtesy Karla Burcham