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**(Neb.) - Scotts Bluff National Monument Wraps Up National Parks Week with 17th Annual Spring Up The Bluff Relay**

By: John Thayer Posted at: 04/30/2012 02:02 PM

GERING - Scotts Bluff National Monument concluded a week long celebration of National Parks Week with the annual running of Spring UpThe Bluff Relay Race. With great weather, a large crowd came for out for the event.

Within a half hour of the starting time, parking was at capacity. The Visitor Center parking lot resembled a mini Olympic Village with athletes stretching in preparation for the starting signal. Ten Running Teams and six Walking Teams competed this year.

Teams of six worked together to relay their baton from the Visitor Center, 1.6 miles up the Summit Road to the summit of Scotts Bluff National Monument. Each team member carried their baton between 0.2 & 0.3 miles.

Over 150 people packed the monument's amphitheater afterward for an awards ceremony. First Place Running Team "Coming Around The Mountain When We Come," and First Place Walking Team "Y Nots" received trophies. Several teams were awarded certificates for placing first in their respective categories. Special Recognitions went to "The Six Stooges" as the Youngest Team, comprised of 10 and 11 year old boys, and Scotts Bluff Kiwanis's "Aktion Club" comprised of special needs athletes.

A multitude of raffle prizes included: a \$25 gift certificate from the Oregon Trail Museum Association, one dozen donuts from Gering Bakery, personal training sessions with local Personal Trainer Pamela Podowiltz, pizzas from Papa Murphy's, meals from Sonic Drive-in of Gering, sandwiches from Subway, tote bag of goodies from Scottsbluff US Army Recruiting Station, and free movie coupons from the historic Midwest Theater.

The monument wishes to extend a special "Thank You" to Jolene Kaufman & The Oregon Trail Museum Association for their continued sponsorship of this event. The monument also extends special recognition to Mike's Husker Shop support with trophies. A smorgasbord of delicious treats & refreshments were provided by Main Street Market of Scottsbluff.

The sponsors & donors made the event possible.