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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601
E-mail: kcsr@chadrad.com

(Neb.)-State Parks Offer July 4th Activities

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 07/02/2013 09:47 AM

(Crawford)-Several Nebraska parks have full agendas planned for the Fourth of July weekend. Seven of the state recreation areas and one state historical park will allow park goers to set off their own fireworks in designated areas.

Visitors can set off fireworks on July 4 from 8 a.m. until midnight at Branched Oak State Recreation Area (SRA) near Malcolm, Fort Kearny State Historical Park (SHP) near Kearney, Fremont SRA near Fremont, Two Rivers SRA near Venice, Pawnee SRA near Emerald, Wagon Train SRA near Hickman and Memphis SRA near Ashland.

Signs will be posted at the recreation areas directing people to the fireworks sites and their boundaries will be clearly marked. Use of fireworks elsewhere in state areas or at other times is prohibited. Only fireworks approved for sale in Nebraska by the state fire marshal are permitted and visitors must pick up expended fireworks and deposit them in appropriate containers. Here's a summary of event offerings at parks across the state:

- Living History - Fort Kearny State Historical Park SHP

Fort Kearny SHP will fire their cannon at 2 p.m. on July 4, 6 and 7 with scheduled historical living history activities July 6-7. The living history days include staged events that reflect the day-to-day routines of 1860's civilian and soldier camps.

July 4

- Fourth of July Celebration BBQ - Fort Robinson State Park SP

Following the Fourth of July parade in Crawford, Fort Robinson will be hosting a noon BBQ for \$6 or a buffet for \$8.95 served at the Fort Robinson restaurant.

July 4

- "Light Up the Lake" - Johnson Lake State Recreation Area SRA

Johnson Lake Association is sponsoring a "Light Up the Lake" fireworks display on Johnson Lake at dusk.

July 5

- Living History Weekend-Fort Atkinson SHP

Fort Atkinson will conduct an 1820's Fourth of July celebration. The historical activities include a military salute to the states and a reading of the Declaration of Independence. Civilians will churn butter and spin and weave, while the blacksmith and tinsmith work at the armory shop. The sutler's store will be open to display and sell wares representing the time period. Activities begin at 10 a.m. and end with the lowering of the flag at 4:45 p.m. Visitor center admission is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children age 13 and under.

July 6-7

- Dutch Oven Cobbler & Ice Cream Social - Ponca SP

Homemade Dutch oven cobbler and hand cranked ice cream will be served while old fashioned games are played at the Missouri National Recreational River Resource and Education Center at 7 p.m.

July 6

- Antique Appraisal Fair - Fort Hartsuff SHP

Bring your items to Fort Hartsuff before noon to enter the appraisal fair. Tom Bassett, a professional appraiser will be on hand to appraise your items at a cost of \$5 per item with a 2-item limit. Admission is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. Appraisals begin at 2:00 p.m.

July 6

July 6 - National Park Service Outdoor Event - Niobrara SP

The National Park Service will have staff presenting demonstrations on a variety of topics and outdoor events are scheduled.

- Buffalo Cookout - Niobrara SP

A buffalo cookout will be held at the shelter at 6 p.m. Cost is \$12 for adults and \$8 for children. Deb Carpenter Nolting and Lyn Messersmith of the Nebraska Humanities Council will be providing the program, "Legends & Leaders of the West." Reservations must be made by noon on the day of the event.

July 6

- Sidewalk Chalk Art - Niobrara SP

The park office will be the focal point for a fun day of sidewalk chalk art beginning at 10 a.m. There will be prizes for participants.

July 7

A park entry permit is required for all vehicles. Contact information for the parks can be found at www.outdoornebraska.ne.gov/parks/guides/contact.asp.

(Information courtesy Nebraska Game & Parks)