

Camp Pinnacles a BIG Success!

Morning birdsong and the soft chortling of rushing water abruptly gave way to grinding gears, tires crunching on gravel, and boisterous jubilation as 106 K through 8th grade students spilled out of buses, vans, trucks and private cars to attend the 2011 Camp Pinnacles.

Camp Pinnacles is a two day, one night “lab in nature” program. Launched in 2009, Pinnacles Partnership collaborates with local school districts, Monument staff, and trained professionals from all walks of life who volunteer to teach biology, botany, geology, and many other of the California core science curricula to San Benito County students in outdoor settings. Since 2010, the R.S. Bar Guest Ranch, a private working ranch sited on over 18,000 acres of pristine open land, has generously hosted Camp Pinnacles.

Students from Bitterwater–Tully, Hollister Dual Language Academy, Jefferson and Panoche elementary schools cycled through science sessions entitled, “Geocaching & Orienteering;” “Exploring Amphibians;” “Becoming Wildlife Detectives;” and “Alien Invasion (Invasive vs. Native Plants).” Michele Armijo, Pinnacles National Monument Educational Specialist, developed the science curriculum for grades 4 through 8. Julie Dupris, Rural School Preschool Teacher for Tres Pinos School, modified the science curriculum for grades K through 3.

Professional artist, Shannon Grissom, developed and facilitated a session blending the arts with science entitled, “The Labyrinth.” The resulting work of art is portrayed beautifully by the artist in a short video clip. To read Shannon’s blog of her experience and view the video, click: <http://shannongrissom.info/2011/art/the-labyrinth/>

Over 40 teachers, parents, volunteers, and professionals from the community as well as the Pinnacles National Monument were key to the success of the 2011 Camp Pinnacles. Pinnacles Partnership gives special thanks to the following collaborating professionals:

- Shannon Grissom, Artist
- Robert "Fireman Bob" Lund, Emergency Medical Technician
- Phil Stoffer, Geologist
- Len Stimac, Film Maker/Editor
- Jason Buman, R.S. Bar Guest Ranch Ranch Manager
- Leslie Schwabacher, E-Cubed Foundation Board Member
- Tim Foley, Retired Superintendent of Schools
- Nants Foley, Executive Director of Slow Food, San Benito County
- Ila Foley, Camp Counselor
- Lori Elder, Artist
- Debbie Cardoza, Ranch Manager
- Karen Beppler–Dorn, Superintendent, Pinnacles National Monument
- Michelle Armijo, Pinnacles National Monument
- Wendy Horvat, Pinnacles National Monument
- Veronica "Ronnie" Johnson, Pinnacles National Monument

- Debbie Simmons, Pinnacles National Monument

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- San Benito Arts Council
- E-Cubed Foundation
- Peter Szydlowski