



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Pipe Spring National
Monument

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Pipe Spring News Release

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235 and Counting!

Chandler Johnson nearly blinded the park ranger at the front desk when she walked into the visitor center at Pipe Spring National Monument. She was wearing a vest covered with golden Junior Ranger badges, patches and pins from National Park Service sites. “I think I have around 235” said Chandler. Her mother, Carmen has added “wings” (panels attached at the shoulders) to the vest to make room for more.

Chandler is from Rome, Georgia and discovered the Junior Ranger programs offered by the National Park Service when she was 6 years old. “The first program I did was at Florrisant Fossil Beds National Monument [in Colorado]. A volunteer told us about it. After I did that first program I was addicted to it! I’m 12 years old now and I have had a great time learning about the National Parks.”

The goal of the National Park Service Junior Ranger Program is to connect young people to their national parks through a variety of in-park activities that are designed to introduce them to the national park system and cultivate future generations of park stewards. Programs range from simple scavenger hunts for younger children, to multi-day ranger-led activities. Over 200 National Park Service (NPS) areas currently have Junior Ranger programs. To learn more about NPS Junior Ranger programs, visit www.nps.gov and click on “For Kids and Teachers”.

Chandler said that during her school breaks she and her parents jump into their RV and go to national parks – Dad does the driving, Mom does the cooking, Chandler does the Junior Ranger programs. And there are all sorts of programs. Some are simple scavenger hunts, others require you to visit the museum and answer questions or write a haiku about the park (these are Chandler’s favorites). She also really likes going on hikes and tours with rangers. When they stopped at Pipe Spring National Monument they had just finished a mule ride into Grand Canyon National Park and were a little sore – Pipe Spring gave them a chance to stretch their legs and learn about the history of the Arizona Strip. They took a tour of Winsor Castle, visited the longhorns and horses, and hiked the Ridge Trail.

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Chandler's favorite park and Junior Ranger program so far has been Yellowstone National Park – she has done it three times! Her father, Jay, said “The Yellowstone program is a tough one. You have to stay for several days to complete it. The Junior Ranger program is one of the best things the government has done. It makes you get involved with the park you are visiting and really learn about it.” Mom said “And it has been great for us, too, **we** are getting smarter!”

For Chandler, the best parts of Junior Ranger programs are the hands-on activities. More than listening and watching, these Junior Ranger programs excite her because she gets involved both physically and mentally. These hands-on, interactive experiences offer Chandler many opportunities to connect with the natural and historic resources of the parks. She has made yucca rope at Pipe Spring National Monument, practiced being a secret service agent at Eisenhower National Historic Site, and helped the ranger fold the American flag at the end of the day at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

And what do you think she said when asked what she wants to be when she grows up? “A park ranger!” We told her she could use her vest as her resume.

Pipe Spring National Monument is open every day from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. AZ (8 a.m. to 6 p.m. UT). Self-guided Junior Ranger activities are always available. Every Saturday is Super Saturday from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. AZ (10 a.m. – 2 p.m. UT) for young people. Special ranger-led activities, from learning to make yucca rope to hikes on the Ridge Trail, are offered. For more information call 928-643-7105 or visit our website at www.nps.gov/pisp.



Chandler Johnson shows off a few of her 200+ Junior Ranger badges and patches. You, too, can become a Junior Ranger for Pipe Spring National Monument and earn a Pipe Spring badge!