

GUYdelines

A few thoughts for outdoor lovers and leaders from
WILD GUYde Adventures, LLC

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Both Strange and True...

Our topic last quarter was rather sobering (*Learning from Tragedy*), so this quarter, we mix in some tongue in cheek with some pain and suffering. Humor also can illustrate the human element as a causative factor in incidents in the outdoors. Hope you don't see yourself in any of these ten true stories. Enjoy!

1. A visitor to Glacier Ntl. Park in Montana lost his car keys while attempting to lure a ground squirrel by dangling them out in front of the critter. The squirrel grabbed the keys and ran down a hole with them. The keys were never retrieved, a ranger cited the man for harassment of wildlife, and a locksmith was called to make new car keys.
2. In May of 1994, TM (43) was gored and seriously injured by a large male bison next to the Lake Hotel. Moore and a friend had approached within 15 feet of the bison to have their picture taken. While they were standing with their backs to the animal, it charged. Moore's companion escaped, but Moore received a severe puncture wound in his right thigh, and was taken to a hospital in Jackson for treatment.
3. A visitor setting up camp in Lake Eleanor in Yosemite Natl. Park hit herself on the head with a rock while trying to string up her food to protect it from bears.
4. In 1994, a woman visiting from the Bay area embarked on a solo hike to the summit of El Capitan in Yosemite. When she became lost and saw a storm brewing, she called 911 from her cell phone and asked to be rescued. A helicopter found her barely off the trail and one fourth of a mile from the top of El Cap. When the 'copter lifted off and the woman saw how close she was to her summit goal, she asked the crew to set her down on top. When they refused, she threatened to sue them for kidnapping.
5. A woman, appearing rather distraught, came into the visitors' center at Redwood Ntl. Park to report that she had seen several Irish setters lying along the edge of the highway and she feared that they were dead or injured. Rangers explained that these were pieces of redwood bark that had fallen off logging trucks.

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6. A woman drove up to the entrance station at Yosemite and asked, "Which way to the geysers?" Ranger Stone directed her to continue 1000 miles further to Yellowstone and told her there were no geysers in Yosemite. "Yes, there are," she said. "I have a friend who saw them." Stone and the woman went round and round several times before she left, still insisting there were geysers in Yosemite. Later she wrote a letter to the chief ranger complaining that Stone had refused to provide her with the information she wanted.

7. When an elderly couple stopped to film some bears at Dunraven Pass in Yellowstone, a young bear crawled into their car searching for food. Unable to make the bear leave, the exasperated couple drove the 17 miles to the ranger station at Canyon Village with the bear in the backseat. When the husband got out to report the incident, the bear hopped over into the front seat so that the investigating rangers found the woman in the passenger seat and the bear behind the wheel.

8. In 1993, a woman called 911 from the top of Half Dome using her cell phone. According to dispatch, she shared, "Well, I'm at the top and I'm really tired." The answering ranger asked if she felt sick. "No," she said, "I'm just really tired and I want my friends to drive to the base and pick me up." The dispatcher explained that she would have to hike down the trail she had ascended. The visitor replied, "But you don't understand; I'm really tired." What happened next? "It turns out we got really lucky," the ranger said, "her phone battery died."

9. Each year, visitors to Petrified Forest Ntl. Park in Arizona pocket an estimated 12 tons of petrified wood to take home (despite numerous warnings not to take wood, and the fact that this criminal violation carries a minimum fine of \$275). A few years ago, rangers received a report that a man had put a large piece of wood in his car. Upon searching the vehicle, they found a 40-pound piece of petrified wood in his trunk. "My 4-year-old son must have put it in there," the man said.

10. A camper at Long Pine Key in Everglades Ntl. Park decided to take a dip in the lake with her dog, despite signs saying "No Swimming - Danger - Alligators." She swam to an island about 75 yards from the shore, then saw some alligators and refused to swim back. "Didn't you see the signs?" asked the ranger who retrieved her in a canoe. "Sure," she said, "but I didn't think they applied to me."

Here is an idea: gather your crew (scouts, family, camp staff), share a few of these, and then springboard into a discussion about what the story illustrates about how humans bring the danger with them into the backcountry. What is this story teaching us (about ego, lack of skills or knowledge, deceptiveness, naiveté, or invincibility...)? Ever seen this at work in your life experience? What can we learn? What lesson is here to apply? Happy adventuring out there!

LRZ

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