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Desert Winds Newsletter - Winter 2013

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Spring School Programs Are Sold Out



CFI fulfills its [mission](#) in a variety of ways, but our work with [school groups](#) is at the center of it all. Whether students are at our [Professor Valley Field Camp](#), out on the river, or up in the La Sal Mountains, providing children with outdoor education experiences is our raison d'être. That's why it is very gratifying to report

that our 2013 season is off to a phenomenal start. [Read more...](#)

New Taylor Ranch Field Camp Site



We have been so blessed with the use of our field camp site on Professor Creek that it was difficult to imagine anything else truly fitting the bill as we searched for a replacement. But thanks to local "angel" Jennifer Speers, CFI

has a secure "permanent" site on private land virtually next door. [Read more...](#)

The CFI Intern Legacy



David B. Williams was a CFI intern, and later served on our staff. He married Marjorie Kittle, a woman he'd met here when she was working for CFI. Today, David is a successful natural history writer having recently published his fifth book. David cites his experience at CFI as being instrumental in shaping his writing career.

[Read more...](#)

Double Arch Memberships with Museum of Moab

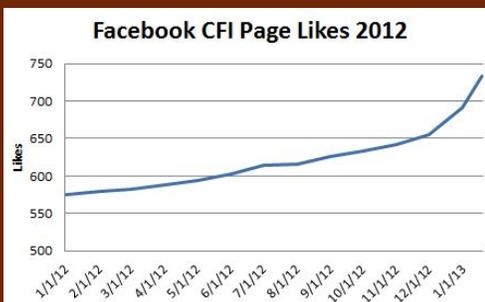


CFI is partnering with the Museum of Moab to offer an additional **dual** membership



[Like CFI on Facebook!](#)

Facebook Likes Are Up!



Our following on Facebook has seen a surge of late. Thanks to all for clicking the SHARE button on our photos, which is largely responsible for the growth. And if you have anything you'd like to share about our beautiful

opportunity at the \$150 level to support both of our education programs in cultural history. We will collaborate on several member events in months ahead, an Arboryglyphs tour Aug. 17 and a Dinosaur Picnic Sept. 14. [Read more...](#)



Hands On The Land

Working with our partners in government has helped make our Professor Valley Field Camp something worth crowing about and we're now listed in the Hands On The Land directory.

[Read more...](#)

Nature Note: Holding the Soil Together



While out on a hike through any one of the numerous parks of the Colorado Plateau, it is common to see lots of plants and animals of the area, which includes the ubiquitous biological soil crust. Much of the time, this crust is hard to spot because it takes a very long time to develop, and in early stages it can be nearly invisible. But in well-preserved areas it's hard to miss the spires that make up mature soil crust. [Read more...](#)

Spring School Programs Are Sold Out

CFI fulfills its mission in a variety of ways, but our work with school groups is at the center of it all. Whether students are at our Professor Valley Field Camp, out on the river, or up in the La Sal Mountains, providing children with outdoor education experiences is our raison d'être. In fact, many of our other programs are geared to support our work with schools.



That's why it is very gratifying to report that our 2013 season is off to a phenomenal start. Our spring school schedule had incredible demand this year and is now completely full. However, space is still available for July through September. The number of additional schools and youth groups we can host also depends on securing adequate underwriting.

The surge in demand is "across the board," CFI Registration Coordinator Mona Pompili says. "We have public, private, charter, and parochial schools. We have groups coming from everywhere, from New Jersey, from all over. And we're excited. The demand is really there."

CFI wants to thank everyone who has given a donation. If we had to charge these kids the full price for what it costs, a lot of them would not be able to have this life-changing experience. If you would like to help support a child's outdoor education experience please visit [our donation page](#).

canyonlands, please post away.

2013 Open Reservation Trips

Trips in Calendar Order

Scheduled River Trips

[Lower San Juan River Trip](#)

[Upper San Juan River Trip](#)

[Westwater Canyon River Trip](#)

[Women: Wild by Nature River Trip](#)

Scheduled Land Trips

[Navajo Mt. Culture & Archaeology](#)

[Cedar Mesa/Comb Ridge.](#)

[Range Creek Archaeology](#)

[Book Cliff Archaeology](#)

Day Workshop

[Desert Wildflowers](#)

[Mountain Wildflowers](#)

[Wildlife of Canyonlands NP](#)

Weekend Half-Day Tours

[Moab's Ancient Past Rock Art Tour](#)

[Sunset Tour of Arches National Park](#)

Custom Trips:

Dates don't fit your schedule? Call CFI today 800-860-5262 and create an extraordinary [custom canyon country vacation](#).



Recent Interns

Thanks to our donors who have contributed to our **Intern and Apprentice Guide Scholarship Fund**. With your help

New "Taylor Ranch" Field Camp Site

We have been blessed for many years with the use of our field camp site on Professor Creek. With its unparalleled view of the La Sal Mountains (a mere 10 miles away), the Colorado River (2 miles away) and 1,000 foot-tall canyon country cliffs and mesas



View from the new field camp site

less than a mile away, the sense of place is immediate and transformative. The location is close enough to Moab to make it convenient for groups traveling to the area, and yet being there is to feel removed from the rest of the world, set apart in the midst of a serene wilderness. And we are just 15 minutes drive from the Colorado River.

Two years ago, as we were renegotiating our lease with the Bureau of Land Management, it became clear that CFI needed to seek a new location by spring of 2014. Given the unique beauty and location of our Professor Creek site, however, it was difficult to imagine anything else truly fitting the bill. That's why it was so timely when, with the help of

local "angel" Jennifer Speers, we were able to secure private land virtually next door. This 40-acre site is situated just downstream along the creek. Speers purchased it from Joe Taylor and has graciously given us a 25-year lease with option to buy.



We recently secured a change in the County Land Use Code to allow for such use. The next phase will involve site planning and fundraising. We will relocate our rustic field camp facility next year while we pursue our dream of a year round education center for the future. We're very excited about this new opportunity and

look forward to keeping you in the loop as we move ahead.

we are able to [launch careers](#) in environmental education and natural resources.



Last season Sarah Dendy was CFI's Professor Valley Field Camp Caretaker and Cook, where she was responsible for making sure visitors to camp felt at home, which she excelled at. She also

organized and ran service project programs for CFI this year as part of her Americorps responsibilities. Sarah first visited the Moab area on a college geology course and fell in love with the region's landscapes. She graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in Earth and Planetary Science and spent a lot of time climbing out in California before coming to Moab. Her favorite thing about being at Field Camp was seeing the skit about a trick-performing compost worm and being surrounded by the majestic red rocks of Professor Valley. Sarah has moved to Boston, MA, where she plans to pursue graduate studies in Geology (with a particular focus in Nanogeoscience and Isotope Geochemistry).



Rich Noel, last year's Program Intern, came to CFI from Bloomington, Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University with a degree in Biology and was drawn to "the opportunity to do cool work in a cool place after

graduation," having visited Moab on a family trip several years ago. Rich is an avid climber and hiker and has spent his free time climbing as much as possible and hiking in nearby national parks. His favorite part of working for CFI was getting to go to Arches National Park as his job, sharing local knowledge with visitors, and hearing how impressed everyone was with the geology and cultural history of the region. Rich plans to return to Indiana and climb indoors through the cold Indiana winters while applying for registered nursing (RN) programs!

The CFI Intern Legacy



Beginning in 1988, David B. Williams was a CFI intern, and later served on our staff. He married Marjorie Kittle, a woman he'd met here when she was working as our camp cook. Today Marjorie works for [The Mountaineers](#) and David is a successful natural history writer having recently published his fifth book, [Cairns: Messengers in Stone](#) with Mountaineers Books.

David cites his experience at CFI as being instrumental in shaping his writing career. "I taught and coordinated natural history programs for people of all ages for five years, followed by three years as an interpretive park ranger at Arches National Park. These teaching experiences fostered my desire to become an author because I saw writing as a better method to more widely share my passion for the natural world." CFI "opened for me a much broader world than I could have imagined."

He explains that after moving to Boston for his wife's graduate work, he discovered he was able to build upon his experiences in the wilds of canyon country, even in the new urban landscape in which he found himself. "Where I had once traipsed through quiet sandstone canyons, surrounded by 1,000 foot tall cliffs of rock, I now walked through shadowy canyons created by buildings. Where I once hiked on desolate trails, I now crossed busy streets. For the first time in many years I felt disconnected from the natural world."

"And then I noticed Boston's buildings. Half-billion-year old slates butted against 150,000-year-old travertines. Metamorphic rocks interfingering with igneous rocks. Fossil-rich, sea-deposited limestones juxtaposed mineral-rich, subduction-created granites. Plus, builders had gone to the effort of cleaning and polishing these fine geologic specimens, making their stories that much easier to read. As I began to notice the stone in buildings, I found the geologic stories that could provide the connection I had lost to wildness."

And so David, now living in his native Seattle, WA, has succeeded in building a career interpreting the natural history of urban landscapes. After his first two books, [A Naturalist's Guide to the White Rim Trail](#) and [A Naturalist's Guide to Canyon Country](#), he wrote [The Seattle Street-Smart Naturalist: Field Notes from the City](#), a collection of essays looking at nature in what many consider our most unnatural places, the urban environment. He followed this with [Stories in Stone: Travels Through Urban Geology](#), which weaves together "the natural and cultural history of building stone from around the country."

Double Arch Memberships with Museum of Moab



Taylor Harvey, hailing from Seattle, WA, was CFI's Public Relations Intern last fall. She took the lead on a number of important projects, including the very successful Harvest Moon Dinner and Campfire.

She is now working with Zegrahm Expeditions, a travel company in Seattle. Her deft organizational skills and sunny personality will be missed.

Major Donors Since 7/1/12

- Charla Brown and Rob Burnett
- Julie Bryan
- Catto Charitable Foundation
- Bert and Barbara Cohn
- Janet DeLong
- Susanne Feller and Toni Davison
- Dr. David Dietel and Betsy Longenecker
- Dr. Dorothy Garceau
- Margot Gilbert and Allan Frank
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- Suzanne and Cornelius McGinn
- Janet Minden
- Moab Half Marathon
- Nature Valley Granola Bars
- Donald and Sylvia Robinson Family Foundation
- Hank Rutter and Susan Fralick
- Austin and Beth King
- Bob Nemitz and Chris Warren
- Dale Weiss

Realizing our missions interseararound *people* on the Plateau, CFI is partnering with the [Museum of Moab](#) to offer an additional **dual membership** opportunity at the \$150 level to support both of our education programs in cultural history. We will collaborate on several member events in months ahead: an Arborglyphs tour Aug. 17 and a Dinosaur Picnic Sept. 14.



For this introductory offer our Double Arch members will receive:

- Receipt and acknowledgement from both the Museum and CFI for your contribution.
- Subscription to the Museum's Canyon Legacy and a photographic print 8 x 10.
- CFI metal water bottle.
- Enrollment in the North American Reciprocal Museums Program (allows entrance to a collection of 500 museums that promote culture, natural history and art.)
- 5% discount on CFI programs.
- Invitation to both CFI and Museum member-only events and field trips.

If you have questions about **Double Arch Membership**, please feel free to contact Travis Schenck, Director, Museum of Moab, 435-259-7985 director@moabmuseum.org or Karla VanderZanden, CFI Director, 435-259-7750; director@cfimoab.org.

Hands On The Land

Due to our partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service and National Park Service, CFI's Professor Valley Field Camp is now listed in the [Hands On the Land](#) online directory.



The directory is a network of field classrooms designed to connect students, teachers, and families to their public lands. Jennifer Jones with the Moab BLM approached CFI to ask if we'd like to be featured. "CFI was an obvious match," Jones said. "CFI has been conducting programs for more than two decades that work to integrate students and the natural environment."

"There are a myriad of benefits in getting youth outdoors," she added. "Aside from the obvious, helping students to understand natural cycles and environmental issues is potentially building constituency for the value of public lands or even increasing an awareness for potential

career opportunities."

The goal of Hands on the Land is to encourage and support local partnerships between public land management agencies and schools, teachers, and students. To join the Hands on the Land network, partnerships must meet Membership Criteria: *The public land management agency or education center must offer education programs for students at a field classroom located on federal, state or public lands.*

Thank you to Jennifer Jones of the BLM's Moab Field Office for helping us get involved in this great network and to Derek Baldwin, Hands On the Land program lead for the Washington, DC BLM office. Coincidentally, Derek happens to be a former CFI intern and we hope to feature him in an upcoming newsletter.

Nature Note: Holding the Soil Together

by Fall Program Intern Richard Noel

While out on a hike through any one of the numerous parks of the Colorado Plateau it is common to see lots of plants and animals of the area. Often times ravens and other large birds can be seen coasting high up on thermals, while down on the ground antelope squirrels and Hopi chipmunks scurry from shrub to shrub.

In many locations there is an abundance of blackbrush scattered across the landscape, as well as larger and much older junipers and pinion pines. On any trail here in the Southwest you want to be wary of sharp plants such as yucca and prickly pear cactus, as well as the invasive

Russian thistle (also called tumbleweed.) But often hikers are unaware of the smallest group of organisms carpeting the sands, silts and clays of the Southwest - biological soil crust.

Much of the time, this crust is hard to spot because it takes a very long time to develop, and in early stages it can be nearly invisible. But in well-preserved areas it's hard to miss the spires that make up mature crust. Even on very busy trails you can sometimes see a mossy patch growing around a cluster of other plants. This very fragile and often overlooked potpourri of microorganisms plays an integral role in the ecology of the southwest.

Cyanobacteria make up the bread and butter of this crust, forming filaments that glue sand together and, along with the black lichens, fix atmospheric nitrogen into the soil, which other plants need to survive.



Mature biological soil crust

Mosses, algae, fungi, and lichen are also components of the biological soil crust. Without this crust our desert would be much less inhabitable by many plants and animals.

So next time you are out enjoying the beauty of the desert southwest, make sure to watch your step and don't *bust the crust!* For more information check out [this great site](#) created by the US Geological Society.

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