



*This is a photo from the Elk Meadow Trailhead on December 27, 2018.*

## **Message from our President, Gretchen Darlington**

Dear Friends,

On December 7, the Park had a wonderful party for staff and volunteers that was supported in part by the Friends of Mueller State Park. It took a lot of committed people and a sense of humor to see it through. I'll explain.

Unfortunately, Cathedral Ridge, which was to be the location of the event, had a fire on December 6 that prevented them from hosting us. We were VERY lucky to be able to book the Cultural Center and the people at Cathedral Ridge made it work beautifully. Here's where one's sense of humor comes in.

Just as the program got underway, the fire alarm at the Cultural Center went off....no fire, but a very loud alarm. We couldn't figure out how to shut it off, consequently we all went outside until the fire department came. They knew how to reset the alarm, so when things quieted down (literally) we all went back in and enjoyed the presentation by Brian Kerrigan, the new park manager, about his vision for the park. It'll be hard to top the excitement of the 2018 banquet next year!

Don't forget the First Day Hike at the park. Details are below.

On behalf of the Friends of Mueller State Park, I send warm greetings and best wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season and a peaceful New Year.

Gretchen Darlington  
President



[Click here to view the scheduled programs for the month.](#)



*We hope to see you at the Park on January 1, 2019.*

## **First Day Hikes at Mueller State Park**

There are **4 hikes scheduled**. One is at 9 a.m. starting at Elk Meadow. The other hikes are as follows: Rock Pond, 9:30 a.m., Homestead, 10 a.m., and Outlook Ridge at 11 a.m.

## **MSP Volunteer of the Year: Dave Groat**



*Photo is of Dave accepting the Volunteer of the Year award from the Park Manager, Brian Kerrigan.*

Dave Groat grew up in Michigan enjoying the eastern forests and wildlife. Dave is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. Afterwards, he studied Environmental and Earth Science at Michigan State University and discovered his love for learning and teaching about the natural world. He started working seasonal jobs in the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service and several nature centers. It was at one nature center where he met and married Linda. Dave spent about 15 years working as a naturalist, then the last 24 years as a computer guy or Network Administrator. Dave and Linda raised two wonderful daughters.

He was responsible for designing and implementing the Kiosk in the visitor center working with many volunteers. Dave's hobbies are bird watching, monitoring his bluebird houses, gardening and photography. He plans to retire in January and is looking forward to having more time to enjoy living in the mountains and volunteering at Mueller!

**These volunteers reached 1000+ hours in 2018:**

Cindi Shanika\*

Larry Kinchen

Donna Kinchen

Barbara Berger

Gretchen Darlington

Paul Darlington

Rose Banzhaf

Dale Rothberg reached 3000 hours this year!

\*Cindi Shanika received the **Spirit Award**



## Art In The Park - Save the dates!



Art In The Park is 3 events that will be held at the Park. The first is the **Spring Art Festival**, the second is the **Fine Art Show & Sale**, and the 3rd is the **Photography Show & Sale**. If you would like more information about participating, please send an email to the **Friends**.

## Have you considered becoming a "FoMSP"?



Do you want to meet people, become more active, get outside more and make a difference. Consider joining us and become a **Friend**!

**Next Friends Meeting is 01/23/2019, 3-4:30 p.m. at the Visitor Center.**

We need your support and input for park projects and programs. Even if you

cannot attend a meeting, please email your suggestions and ideas to  
**[FriendsOfMuellerSP@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsOfMuellerSP@gmail.com)**.

***Happy New Year from the Friends of Mueller State  
Park!***

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