



September, 2013

# Mountain Man Monthly

The Authorized Publication of the  
Colorado Springs Muzzle Loaders Inc.

The Colorado Springs Muzzle Loaders, Inc. was chartered in 1969 by a group of men and women interested in their heritage and dedicated to preserving and promoting the sport of muzzle loading and buckskinning. CSML is a family oriented club that holds a broad range of functions such as camp outs, potluck dinners, and black powder shoots. CSML is affiliated with the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association and the National Rifle Association.

Views and opinions contained within articles submitted to the Mountain Man Monthly are not necessarily those of the editor or CSML. The editor reserves the right not to publish any article submitted but encourages articles on any subject regarding shooting sports and subjects related to the fur trade era.

**Monthly Meeting Oct. 3**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Paper Shoot - Oct. 6**  
**NO SCOPES!!!!!!**

**Bird & Buffalo Event**  
**Oct. 19-20**

**Camping @ Ft. Melchert Friday**

**News of our friends.....**

**November 3 - Paper Shoot**  
**November 17 - Primitive Shoot**

**President**

Joy Hicks

**Vice President**

Roy Crouse

**Treasurer**

Gwem Blanchard

**Secretary**

Lois Schainost

**Membership Chairman**

Ted Beaupre

**Range Officer**

Todd Schainost

**Assistant Range Officers**

Marlin Johnson, Ted Beaupre,

Blake Schainost

**Primitive Exec.**

Doug Davis

**Assistant Primitive Exec.**

Tony Hecker

**Womens' Primitive Exec.**

Dee Beaupre

**Cannon Master**

Richard Stites

**Public Relations**

All of Us

**Legislative Liaison**

Doug Davis

**Mountain Man Monthly Editor**

Doreen Webb

UPCOMING EVENTS: CSML & Statewide			
WHAT	WHERE	WHEN	INFORMATION
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	Oct. 3	Come see what happens!
Hot Irons Rendezvous	Ft. Lupton	Oct. 4-5	no other details at this time.
CSMLA Trap Championships	Golden Gun Club	October 5	hosted by Peter Lucas (303) 297-9800
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	Oct. 6	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Annual Bird & Buffalo Shoot & Camp Out	Ft. Melchert Penrose	Oct. 19- 20	long range, shotgun, and primitive shooting, potluck Sat.
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	Nov. 3	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Annual Craft Fair & Regular Monthly Meet	American Legion	Nov. 7	Free tables to display your crafts; anything accepted
Club Primitive Shoot	Ft. Melchert	Nov. 17	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	Dec. 1	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	Dec. 5	Ornament gift exchange & eats
Club Primitive Shoot	Ft. Melchert	Dec. 15	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	January 2, 2014	wild game potluck; tall tales; trophies
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	January 5, 2014	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
CSML Board Meeting	Joy's House 7:00 p.m.	January 14	set yearly calendar; begin annual shoot work
Club Primitive Shoot	Ft. Melchert	January 19	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	February 2	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	February 6	white elephant gift exchange fun
CSMLA Annual Trade Show & Convention	Clarion Inn Greeley, CO	Feb. 14-16	annual meeting, banquet, awards, and much, much more!!!
No Primitive Shoot in	February - - - attend	CSMLA Annual	Convention in Greeley
Club Paper Shoot	Ft. Melchert	March 2	pistols at noon; rifles at 1:00 pm
Regular Club Meeting	American Legion	March 6	come see what's up; mailing flyers & such

For CSML scheduled shoots; CALL SHOOT HOT LINE (719) 632-7690 after 9:00 a.m. on shoot day to be sure shoot is on!!!  
Schedule is subject to change at any time and is based on information available at time of publication. On-line check csmlinc.org

# PAST THINGS

Well those few folks who braved all the other things they could have done and came to the September meeting of the CSML had a good time. We also had a great potluck and enjoyed the feast set before us. Those of you who "forgot" about the meeting or just didn't make it missed the good food and.....

The rolling of the thundering, smoke belching, clacking train that rolled through the election floor. Yes, even though there were only a few members present the election train rain hard through the room. There were no known volunteers, although Tom Gabor said if Roy Crouse didn't want to be Vice President again, he would take it. Roy said he would do it again so that train kept on a rollin', rollin' on down the line.

We need to remind you all that it is important to be at the meetings and to volunteer to help the group that is trying to keep us together. We would really like to have folks shadow us and learn what we know and carry us forward. While none of us will admit to getting older, we are none of us getting any younger. It is getting more and more important to have the membership step up to the plate and help us.

So nice to see Tom Newell back with us. He gave us an update on his wife and reported that she is now back to driving. The seriousness of her accident is now behind her and she is progressing well. For that we are all thankful.

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## GET WELL AGAIN BLAKE!!!

We have heard that Blake's shoulder injury will require surgery so he will be sidelined for a while. It also means his wrestling is over for this year.

Keep Blake and his family in your prayers and let's hope that the rest of his Senior high school year gets better!!!

## Colorado Springs Muzzle Loaders, Inc. Regular Monthly Meeting September 5, 2013

After the potluck food was pretty much gone and everyone was full, the CSML regular membership meeting was called to order by President Joy. She welcomed Tom Newell back into the fold.

A motion was made to accept the Secretary's report as printed in the *Mountain Man Monthly*. Motion was seconded and passed.

Gwen gave us the Treasurer's report. There is a little bit of money in the treasury and it will go quickly when we start on the next year's annual shoot. A motion was then made and seconded to approve as given.

Membership report was passed over as Ted is hunting and not available. The group noted that we had one more than last month since Tom Newell renewed his membership.

There was no primitive report because Doug was at another meeting elsewhere.

**Old Business:** Todd Schainost provided an update report on the Grainger Paper Camp Out. He said that the whole event was good and we had some new shooters. Todd also gave the pistol shooters some razzing about their participation.

Tom Gabor reported on the State Shoot. He said that there were 34 shooters at the event. It went well and we still would like to have more folks attend and shoot at this event. As far as we know now, it will be at the Ft. Lupton range next year.

**New Business:** It is time to get your nominations in for the 2014 CSMLA Muzzle Loader of the Year. The nominations need to be sent to Marlin Johnson.

The Hunting and Fishing Day demo will be on September 28. Ted Beaupre is heading this up and he will be back from hunting on the 21<sup>st</sup> if you have any questions. We will be needing lots of help for this one.

Gun show on September 14-15. Don Stoner plans to be there. Go and help him with the table and spreading the word of our group.

The Club Challenge match is September 21 at the Rightmire's place. Let's have a great showing and field more than one team for this one.

Up next was the election of officers. Since there was no volunteers or anyone stepping up to the plate, it was decided by the group to keep the same slate as before. None of the board members changed.

There being no more club business a motion was made, seconded and passed for adjournment.

At that time, Doreen took the floor and announced to the group that Joy (our President) was scheduled for some very serious back surgery on September 16. She asked that all of the group keep Joy in our prayers and do what we can to help where Joy would normally be. Joy's recovery time will be intense and long and we need to step up and make our President proud of us.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lois Schainost

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**NEWS of our Friends.....**

We have heard that Joy's surgery went very well. According to her son Steve, the surgeon only had to go through the front and back and not the side. The total time was less than anticipated and while it took a while for the anesthesia to leave her, Joy is up and beginning the movement for recovery. She is still in a lot of pain but that is to be expected.

Joy is currently still in Penrose Hospital on North Nevada. However, she is not up for company yet. You can send her a card of thoughts to Room 2030. However, use the old trick of putting Joy's home address as the return address so that the post office will take it back to her anyway even if she is no longer in the hospital. You can also just send cards to her house and her family will see that she gets them.

Let's get behind Joy and support her during this illness and what can be a long recovery time. She is a strong woman but must follow all doctor's orders to get back to where she needs and wants to be.

Ron Melchert has told us that his wife Juanita is being moved back to the Progressive Care Center in Canon City on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is a very sad thing for most of us, including Ron. He had so hoped to have her at home but it is proving to be too much for all involved. You can send Juanita cards at the

Progressive Care Center, 1338 Phay Avenue, Canon City, CO 81212. Be sure to tell her how much you miss her!!!

We need to keep Ron supported during this time. Being a full-time care giver for our loved ones is not an easy task and he can use al our support. If you have a minute, get in touch with Ron and let him know you are thinking about him. Also, PLEASE, PLEASE *call first* before you go to Ft. Melchert. Ron may be at PCC or taking care of business and not at home. While we want to support Ron and help him in all the ways that we can, we need to be mindful of his time and not overwhelm him.

Don Stoner reported that his mother is in an assisted living facility in Oregon. She has been here and participated in our 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade. We now know where Don gets his sense of humor.

Please keep these very special folks in your prayers and thoughts. Ask that the Great Spirit above bless them and their families as they find their way through these rough times.

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Okay guys, this is the part where we should have some information about the shoots, pistol matches, hunting stories, tips, tricks, thoughts, anything that you can or will share with our membership. However, as of the September deadline, we have received nothing from anyone!!!! A very strong reminder is now given.....

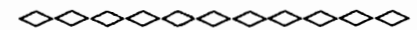
**ALL MATERIAL FOR THE NEWSLETTER IS DUE BY THE THURSDAY** following the primitive shoot. This gives us time to get it into the newsletter. You don't have to wait until the deadline but the deadline is there for a reason.

It is only with your help that the Editor can continue to keep this newsletter worthwhile. Having to come up with stuff to fill space is always a rugged job and makes the newsletter less personal. You don't have to be an author or recognized for your wisdom in words. Just write up an article and send it to us; we'll fix it (if needed) and publish it for you. You get the by-line and have the satisfaction of helping the Editor make the *Mountain Man Monthly* worth the paper, ink, and stamp to send it out.

We'd love to have some book reports, movie

reports, things you've learned in muzzle loading; the topics are endless. Many of you are craftsmen and could tell us of your handiwork and how you got there. We have some very talented folks out there you could advertise your talents and entertain us at the same time.

Just remember that the deadline is always **the THURSDAY following the primitive shoot each month**. Thank you!!!!



## BIRD & BUFFALO EVENT

The annual Bird and Buffalo event will be held on October 19-20 at Ft. Melchert. This is a long-range shooting event and even some shotgun fun will be conducted. Since it falls on the primitive shoot weekend we also have primitive shooting as part of the fun.

Dry-camping is allowed at Ft. Melchert beginning on Friday evening (9/18). Be sure to watch where you park and don't get too close to the leach field. Everyone is encouraged to attend and stay for all the fun.

We will again be providing a chili lunch on Saturday around noon. All you can eat for \$5.00. The only change this year is that instead of the witches (plural) chili, it may be the witch's (single) chili. Richard Stites has graciously agreed to provide the fire for the pot and we'll get it stirred up in time for the noon break.

Saturday night is the potluck supper around 6:00 ish and that is always a good feed. Bring vittles enough for yourself and some others and join us. Don't forget to bring your eatin' irons and a chair. This will be followed by the ever-famous auction and bidding wars. We believe that Marlin Johnson will still be our auctioneer for this one. If you haven't already been asked, Marlin, you are now!!!!

That brings up the fact that you need to bring your unwanted, gently used items for the auction. Items do not have to be muzzle loading related, just good stuff that you think is "one man's treasure". (Hey since the holidays are rapidly approaching, it may

be a good time to find the right gift for someone on your list.) The only rule is that if your stuff doesn't sell on Saturday night or you can't trade it off to someone, you must take it back with you. Nothing is to be left at Ft. Melchert!!!!

If the majority of the attendees want to do it, we can do a potluck breakfast on Sunday morning. That is a decision to be made on Saturday and of course, the time to start it. Bring stuff just in case so that you'll be ready if we do it.

Lastly, we remind you to bring lots of powder, patches, and balls. There will be some fun targets as well as the long-range shoot at the buffalo. Doug always has a good set of primitive targets for us. This is a fun-filled weekend and a good way to spend a great fall day.



## NOVEMBER 7 MEETING.....

This meeting is our annual craft fair. Tables are free and all we ask is that you bring your stuff to show and sell. There are no limitations on what the items are. We know that there are folks out there in our membership that make soaps, craft items, food items, and lots of things that are always good for us to buy for ourselves or again, for those on your Christmas shopping list.

You can also bring items you want to sell or trade; things from your closets that you no longer use or want. It provides a time for our group to reduce, re-use, recycle, upgrade, or change.

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## DON'T FORGET.....

Those of you who are able and still hunt, we need your success statistics so that we can award the

big game trophies in January at the annual wild game potluck. Trophies are presented for the largest elk, deer, and antelope harvested with a muzzle loader. The winner's name is added to the trophy and they get to proudly display it for one year in their home.

Be sure to provide Joy with your statistics on the animal(s) that you harvest. You can e-mail her the info and we like pictures as well.

The wild game potluck in January is also the time that we do the George Bennett Memorial Tall Tale Trophy award. This is given to the best hunting story that year. The story doesn't have to be from the current year, just the best one told at the meeting. Begin honing up your tall tale telling and get ready for this one.



## ALLIGATORS

*Reprinted from the Museum of the Fur Trade Quarterly, Volume 49, Number 2, Summer 2013.*

It seems curious that alligators are listed in *The Fur Animals of Louisiana* even though they are entirely fur-free. Of course they had and have value as leather, and at times past had value as a natural animal product collected for sale.

The French colonists called the great reptiles they found in the rivers of Louisiana "crocodils," the name given the Old world distant relatives of this animal. The Spanish, however, referred to it as "el legarto," meaning the lizard, and as time passed this fascinating denizen of the swamps became known among English speakers as the alligator.

The earliest account of American Indians hunting alligators was published in France in 1591. A watchman was posted by the river in a small hut and, upon sighting the great reptile moving in the stream toward the hut (thinking it contained his dinner), the Indian alerted other men who approached the alligator with a sharpened pole ten or twelve feet long. "With the greatest quickness they push the pole, small end first, as deep as possible down his throat .... Then they turn the crocodile over on his back, and with clubs and arrows pierce and pound his belly, which is softer." Jean Pierre Lassus' illustration appears on the first

depiction of New Orleans, painted in 1726.

Another account, written by a priest with d'Iberville's colonization expedition of 1699, describes an Indian jumping into the water and inducing an alligator to swim toward him. Then he grabbed the alligator in a bear hug and swam with it to shore, where he killed it, suffering only a few scratches."

In the eighteenth century, the Natchez Indians exposed alligator skins to ant hills the ants removing the soft parts and leaving the hard horny plates which were played with a stick, like a rasp, in the percussion sections of their tribal orchestras. Other than their use for drums, alligator hides had little value among native people of North America.; their flesh was considered toothsome and remains a fine flavored delicacy today. Audubon mentioned that oil rendered from the tails of alligators was poured in vats of boiling indigo to prevent the pots from boiling over. He stated that alligators were shot for the sake of their oil, which was used for greasing the machinery of steam engines and cotton mills. Other than that, both Audubon and Timothy Flint mentioned that the teeth made excellent powder measures. Some Chitimacha basket weavers stated that a popular design for their dyed river cane vessels was called "alligator's entrails."

At various times efforts were made to tan alligator leather, almost invariably taken from the animal's underside, including the hide below the jaw and snout. The hornback plates damaged the tanning machinery, so the skins were split down the back and around the horny plates, which were left as of no use. In the early days, the hides were put in barrels of brine pickle. About a century ago the hides began to be salted and rolled for sale.

Apparently alligator leather became an article of commerce about 1800. Henry Brackenridge wrote in 1814, "the numbers of this animal have lessened of late years from the destruction made by the inhabitants, who value their skins." The artist Audubon stated that alligators were "quite an article of trade, and many of the squatters and strolling Indians followed, for a time, no other business." He stated that on the Red River "particularly that thousands of the largest sizes are killed, when the mania of having either shoes, boots, or saddle-seats, made of their hides lasted." However, he noted that the leather was "not sufficiently firm and close-grained enough, to prevent water or dampness long." An 1845 writer

concluded with Audubon's assessment, but demand for the hides continued, although at a slower pace. In the 1850s demand rebounded, and in 1858, a writer noted that "one man in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana had killed 400 alligators during the previous year; they sold for an average of 75 cents each."

A variety of methods were used to take alligators. Hooks with strong tackle were eventually used until the late nineteenth century, when high-powered rifles became the standard method. However, when shot and killed, the alligator almost invariably sank to the bottom and had to be recovered with poles and gaffs. Through the nineteenth century, most were killed in the winter months when they tended to enter a state of torpor. They were dug from their holes and netted or trapped by blacks and Indians.

During the Civil War, the South had declining sources of raw materials for military equipment, and post-war reminiscences tell of using tanned alligator leather for boots and saddles, "the flesh for food and....the fat was rendered for lubricating oil....and for soap making." After the Civil War better tanning methods were developed by a New Orleans leather maker from Austria named Wenzel Zimmerman; he concentrated on alligators and was able to make them waterproof. Alligator leather became universally popular for saddles, luggage, wallets, shoes, and so forth. Between 188 and 1894, it is estimated that two and a half million alligators were killed for commercial purposes. Five hundred men in Louisiana made their living hunting and skinning gators in this period.

After the Civil War commercial markets for gator leather grew up around Lake Charles, Abbeville, New Iberia, Morgan City, Houma, and of course, New Orleans. In Florida there were market centers at Kissimmee and Cocoa; one man there took 800 skins in one year, and another, 42 in a single night. Small numbers of hides were collected in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Still, the most valuable alligator hides were those from Louisiana.

Hides longer than seven feet were usually divided and sold as smaller skins by the hunters, since large hides did not bring extra money. The best hides were from four to eight feet long, although as the fad for alligator leather increased in the 1920s, any hide was taken. American gator leather competed with cayman skins from the Caribbean and South America,

and crocodile hides from Africa. These last were often split down the belly, leaving the hornbacks intact, and tanned by the natives; usually they are very dark, nearly black. The New World skins are tan to brownish butter scotch in color unless dyed.

In the peak years of the twentieth century, about 25,000 skins were taken in America each year. The fashion declined during the Depression and World War II, but in 1946 the skins averaged \$1.40 per foot and 3,409 were sold, a record year. Over-hunting caused the harvest to dip to 10,000 until it was suspended for a time and the alligator was declared to be threatened, but the numbers have increased and hunting has resumed.

Today wild alligator hides and meat compete with farm-raised products. Meat sales exceeded hide sales some years, but in 1988 the Louisiana hides brought eight million dollars and meat sales, \$2.5 million. Lately the market has been dominated by sales in Asia, especially Korea and China.

*SOURCES: Vaughn L. Glasgow, A Social History of the American Alligator (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991). The Fur Animals of Louisiana, Bulletin 18 (New Orleans: State of Louisiana Department of Conservation, 1931).*

## THE TEA BRICK

One source notes about the tea brick. It is always best to find at least three sources for your statements of authenticity before making them.

One bit of confusion among fur trade and mountain man re-enactors is the use of the tea brick, a hard-pressed board composed of tea and tea dust. Dark brown in color, the bricks are usually a little smaller than a sheet of regular typing paper. And about 3/4 of an inch thick. The sides have designs and words pressed into them; the ones made today have Chinese characters and a ceremonial gate depicted, while most of the old ones seen bear inscriptions in Russian and sometimes various illustrations including three-horse troikas and other typically Russian scenes. The backsides of the bricks are pressed or scored in rectangles to facilitate cutting the brick into uniform pieces.

When tea became the beverage of demand across Europe in the seventeenth century, the Chinese, who were originally the only suppliers, set up trade sites where foreign ships could purchase cargoes. Russia, however, had recently fought a disastrous war with the Chinese over the Trans-Usury region along the Manchuria-Siberian border. Russian traders were forbidden to sail in Chinese waters; instead they had to do their business at Khiakta, Mongolia, by camel caravan.

The Chinese had long traded tea to Tibet. The Tibetans made their tea with yak butter, so the quality of the tea was not much of an issue. The tea was pressed into bricks to make it easy to transport, and it was carried hundreds of miles by human labor. The quality of the brick tea traded to the Russians was greatly enhanced, but some merchants contended that a lot of floor sweepings from tea processing went into the bricks.

The tea bricks were scored so they could be broken apart, not only for brewing purposes but for use as money among Siberian natives. A few old Russian bricks survive because they were recognized by European numismatists as an example of primitive native currency.

To the best of our knowledge and research, tea bricks were never used outside the Chinese trade with Russia (including California and Alaska) and Tibet, except as curiosities.

## MATCHES FOR THE RENDEZVOUS

In 1826 John Walker, a pharmacist or chemist as they are known in Britain, invented the first useful, reliable, and inexpensive match. He took flat wood splints and dipped their ends into a paste made of chlorate of potash, sulfide of antimony, gum arabic (for adhesion), and water. Once these had firmly dried they were boxed up for sale. Each box contained a strip of fine sandpaper; the user placed this around or on the splint. By rapidly withdrawing the splint it ignited the mixture and the wood splint much like the wooden matches we use today. Mr. Walker termed his invention "friction-lights" and is known to have begun selling them in April 1827.

For Walker, these matches were of limited value; he didn't patent them or attempt to expand his local market. Others, however, leaped at the opportunity and within months, several manufacturers were offering their knock-off copies of his product. The new name for them was "Lucifers," a term Walker apparently disdained, and he apparently stopped making and selling them about 1830.

The first to steal Walker's idea was Samuel Jones, a London inventor who had just patented the "Promethian Match" in 1828. It contained a concentrated drop of sulfuric acid in a sealed glass tube not a quarter of an inch long. Around this was placed a paste of chlorate of potash, sugar, and gum. The ball thus created was rolled up in a strip of paper called a spill, or in the end of a small wax candle. By crushing the glass with a blow or bite of the teeth, the acid ignited the chemicals and the paper or candle. It was "both ingenious and convenient." It was also expensive to manufacture and a bit dangerous, for an accidental or unanticipated blow to one's pocket might ignite them unintentionally.

Jones found Walker's unpatented product to be superior and by the summer of 1829 he was marketing Lucifers in large quantities. But because he could not patent them, dozens of other manufacturers stepped forward. Through the 1830s a dozen or more makers appeared. The first exclusive manufacturer of these matches was Richard Bell; he eventually sold out the firm of Bryant and May, which is still in existence.

The earliest fur trade reference so far has been an inventory of one gross of Lucifer matches in 1839 in the Ewing Brothers papers in Indiana. The St. Louis papers regularly advertised Lucifer matches in the 1830s so it would not be out-of-place for a mountain man to carry them west as personal gear.

About the only improvement effected in Lucifers was the preliminary dipping of the wood splints in sulfur, sometimes camphor, to increase ignition. In the 1830s German and Austrian chemists had mixed phosphorous into the paste of the Lucifer, increasing its reliability. By 1832 this new "Congreve Match" was making great strides in market share, and by 1840 it had caused the makers of Lucifers to cease production. In 1855 the "Safety Match" was invented by a Swede, J. E. Lundstom; it used a tip of red phosphorous that was struck on a special ignition strip on the box.



Colorado Springs Muzzle Loaders, Inc.



# ANNUAL BIRD & BUFFALO SHOOT

October 19 & 20, 2013

**WHERE:** Ft. Melchert; 0086 K Street, Penrose, CO

**WHAT:** Long range buffalo, shotgun, primitive, pistol, and more!!!!  
Range opens on Saturday at 10:00 a.m.

Chili lunch on Saturday; all you can eat with chips and fixin's for \$5.00

Potluck dinner Saturday night, followed by live club members donation  
**AUCTION.**

*Bring any of your old, no longer wanted "plunder" and donate it to our annual auction. Your used or unused "plunder" can be of great benefit to CSML and a true treasure to the lucky buyer with the winning bid. All proceeds go to CSML, Inc.*

Dry or self-contained camping available beginning Friday evening.

**BRING A FRIEND AND ENJOY THE WEEKEND!!!**

For more information, contact:

Joy Hicks: (719) 598-5715  
Doreen Webb: (719) 275-8724

Ron Melchert: (719) 372-3286  
Doug Davis: (719) 632-7690

