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News Release

March 1, 2013

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Pancho Villa State Park Celebrates 10th Annual Camp Furlong Day

COLUMBUS, N.M. – Mexican-American history and culture will be highlighted at Pancho Villa State Park's *10th Annual Camp Furlong Day*, Saturday, March 9, 2013. The annual event promotes friendship and goodwill between the United States and Mexico.

"*Camp Furlong Day* honors the strong ties between Mexico and the United States," said John Read, Pancho Villa State Park Heritage Educator. "Residents of both countries and visitors will join in the celebration of our common heritage."

The event coincides with the anniversary of the March 9, 1916 invasion of the Village of Columbus by Mexican General Francisco "Pancho" Villa and his troops. The United States responded with the build-up of Camp Furlong, portions of which still exist within the park. At that time, General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing launched the Punitive Expedition into Mexico from Camp Furlong in an attempt to capture Pancho Villa. The search was unsuccessful in capturing Villa but was successful in disbanding his forces.

The Columbus Historical Society will honor the victims of that fateful day in its 37th annual Columbus Memorial Day at the Depot Museum in Columbus. The event will begin at 10:00 a.m., behind the museum. Guest speaker Doug Burnett will talk about the 1st Aero Squadron, regarded as the nation's birthplace of air power in the U.S. military. Curtiss JN-3 airplanes were first used by the U.S. military in the Punitive Expedition of 1916 for surveillance and as couriers.

Citizens of the Village of Columbus will welcome the 14th annual Cabalgata Binacional riders into the village plaza at 11:00 a.m. Riders from Mexico, some who have traveled over 150 miles, will cross into the United States at Palomas, Mexico and join with riders from the U.S. in a celebration of peace and good will between the two nations in Columbus. Vendors, music and exhibitors will line the village plaza for the event.

Pancho Villa State Park will host its 10th annual Camp Furlong Day at the park's exhibit hall. At 1:30 p.m., U.S. Army Historian Dr. Robert Bouilly will speak on the 12th and 13th U.S. Cavalries before, during and after Pancho Villa's raid.

Park Heritage Educator John Read will give a presentation at 2:30 p.m. on the many theories behind Villa's raid on U.S. soil in 1916.

The park's exhibit hall will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This will be an exciting day-long trip and an enlightening history lesson.

How to get there: From Deming, head south on Highway 11 for 30 miles to the intersection of Highways 9 and 11. From El Paso, take the Artcraft Road exit off I-10 to Highway 9. Head west on Highway 9 for 75 miles to Columbus. All of the day's activities will be within easy walking distance from the intersection of Highways 9 and 11.

At Pancho Villa State Park, regular day-use and camping fees apply. For more information, call 575-531-2711, or visit www.nmparks.com. For more information about the Cabalgata Binacional and plaza events, please contact the event organizers at 575-494-1535 or 575-494-5815.

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