

## **There is Nothing so American: Planning a National Park Vacation – Transcript of the audio**

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Good afternoon, welcome to today's webinar. Today we have Dominique Hallett from the government information and library at Arkansas State University. She earned her MLS from Louisiana State University. She has presented various topics on librarianship including providing as an academic -- Jennifer Castle is the instruction and librarian. Jennifer earned her MLI S. She is the lead editor of the roundtable publication. Documents to the people. She has written and presented on practical issues and government information. All right, take it away.

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Jennifer, you are on you.

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Can you hear me?

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We can hear you.

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Great. Hello and thank you so much for joining us today. There is nothing so American, planning a national Park vacation. I am Jennifer Castle at Tennessee State University which is in the music city of Nashville. I will let my lovely co-host introduce herself.

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Hi, I am Dominique Hallett and I am at Arkansas State University. For those of you who don't know, that is in Arkansas and I am about an hour from Tennessee just to give you a little idea of my location. As you said I am the government document and stem librarian here. And I have been a government document for a couple of years now. Today I am really excited that we are going to be presenting to you about the national parks. Back to you, Jennifer.

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All right, great. Let's get started. All right. So, you may know is Theodore Roosevelt being a great champion of national Park but we just appreciated this quote from his cousin Franklin. Just going to give you a little bit of background about the national parks. In 1861 Congress appointed Ferdinand to lead a fact-finding expedition at the the waters of the Yellowstone River. The area had been an attraction for exploiters since the late 18th century. There were numerous accounts of the geysers in Hot Springs but it was not until the team of geologists and botanists returned from a trip that U.S. government had a full account of the various wonders. It didn't take long for him to convince Congress. President Grant signed the bill designating 2.2 acres of land in the territories the pleasuring rounds for the benefit and enjoyment of the people. The act signed by June 8th in 1906 grew out of a movement. It authorized the historic landmarks it is also prohibited, the expedition are pro-habitation of federal lands without permission from the department having jurisdiction. Nearly a quarter originated from the fact. The National Park Service was not established until 1916. For four decades the parks reserved or supervised at different times by the departments of war and agriculture. Although the idea of -- this is partially the part of leadership in financing and administrating the parks that already existed. Secretary of the interior did much to alter this situation. A leader and a transformation into the centrally administered National Park Service. Under the leadership, Grand Canyon, Arcadia, Bryce, Zion, Hawaii were established. He successfully lobbied to ensure other parks including those that involved purchase for private owners. We now have 424. Covering more than 85 million acres in all 50 states. Almost 312 million recreation visits were launched in 2022 which is closing in on the 2019 numbers of roughly 327 million visits. There

are 63 designated national parks in 30 states. Some of them were popular and easier to travel to than others. This may or may not surprise you, but the great national Park tops the list. Having lived in Asheville North Carolina for a few years I can assure you it doesn't surprise me that it has had issues of over crowding. Second on the list is the Grand Canyon which continued to astound visitors year after year. The conservation group indicates that the 77 mile stretch is America's most endangered waterway do to prolonged drought. Next are the cliffs of Zion national Park in Utah. It is located mostly on Mount Desert Island. It is really great place. And Cadillac Mountain. Highest lead's on the East Coast. Not surprising there is Yellowstone in Yosemite. Excuse me. 36.7 million, 32.9 million visitors last year. Joshua tree has been a favorite spot for many years. And finishing up the list, between the cities in Ohio, glacier peaks running to the Canadian border. Do to the high traffic in these parts, you might want to visit one with fewer fellow Taurus. Let's take a look at some of those. The great basin Nevada is the most visited on this list. Only had 142,115 people. So, followed by dry Tortugas in Florida. And then wrangle Saint Elias in Alaska. Most of the sites on this list are located in Alaska because as you can imagine, it is not the easiest state to travel to. So, Katmai is also in Alaska. It is an area of lava flows and ash. North Cascades in Washington has the most expensive glacier system in the United States a high degree of flora biodiversity of any national Park. Coming in at the last five starting with Isle Royale in Michigan. It takes about a two hour ferry ride to get there. Lake Clark which can only be reached by the vote or small aircraft. The park protects a rain forest and two volcanoes. Kobuk Valley is about 25 miles from the Arctic Circle it is situated entirely north of the circle of the Arctic. Fewer than 2000 visitors per year. If you are looking for something more remote or more quiet, these 10 would be a safe bet. Speaking of bets, not really, let's have a quick trivia question. Will give you 15 seconds to give you a question. What is the only state without a national park of its own? You have 15 second. All right. If you answered Delaware, you would be correct. I'm showing my age here, but if you have seen Wayne's world, the movie there is a scene where there playing with a green screen and then when Delaware pops up they just go hi, we are in Delaware. I am not knocking Delaware, but the answer is Delaware. All right. I'm going to pass the ball to my lovely cohost.

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Hello, everyone. We had talked a little bit about Teddy Roosevelt but more about a quote from his cousin but here we have a quote by Teddy who was known as someone who is very into nature very into wildlife and preservation. He was also a hunter so preservation is a little easy on some of that. He is correct, the establishment of the national Park system is justified. The value of natural beauty as a national asset. The recreation in the production of good citizenship. I am a strong believer that everyone is at all possible should go visit at least one national park in your lifetime and hopefully the next slide. And the next slide.

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Dominique, you are the one that can advance the slides. I do have some slides here are some of this but I'm actually just going to talk to you about things that are easier. The slides are rather simple. And take you to some of these websites. One of the things I have noticed in recent years, sky watching. We have a number of national parks that are involved in such events. Many of the last dark skies in the country lie over our national parks. They become overlooked making it difficult to see the stars. National parks offer some of the best places to be able to do this. Now, this site has not only information about exploring the night skies but it also has information appear about managing light state. That was very interesting information. We have a night skies by resources, it is not just natural resources we're talking about. There are also a lot of cultural aspects to the night sky. And one of the things I really like is that the national Park site gives us information about scar gazing. I have that information up so I'm not going to look at it. We have information about looking at your sky from home if you live in an area that is dark enough, you may be able to go out in your yard and looking up at the sky and identifying the cons relations. You also can sometimes get a little bit out of town. I know my family gets this when there

things going on, we do it for lunar eclipses, we do it for comets coming through or shooting stars. We will go out of town. Or even in some cases, public libraries have local astronomy groups. There is a lot you can see there. You really need to get away from some of that light. One of the best ways to do this is our national parks have 37 parks that are sort of had by the international dark sky Association now, this is the website, this is obviously not a government, it is international but it was founded in 2001 with encouraging community parks and protected areas around the world to preserve and protect through responsible lighting policies and public education. The purpose is to protect the night from light pollution. Celebrating and protected across the world as a shared heritage benefiting all living things. No, that is actually pretty fantastic and if you look at this list we have the list of all of the national parks that take place or that have dark sky type events. 30 of these of the international dark sky Association designation. Those are the ones with the Asterix by it. So honestly I was surprised at the number of them. I think that is absolutely fantastic. Going to show you a couple of them and the type of things that they have. Sleeping bear dunes, they have night sky program, they have exploring dark skies. This is something you will hear more about from Jennifer is the Junior Ranger Explorers so, each of these parks that are in this list actually have their own websites that goes to information about the dark sky programs that they have. Now, Carlsbad cavern, they have had star viewing and they have night hikes and it tells you these are a one point five mile hikes through the desert and they are led by the people who work at the park I thought that was really interesting to be able to go on a night hike and of course since were talking about planning a vacation just gives you information about what you need to wear it updated daily, the space station from their parking lot. That was actually kind of cool. We have so many different types, so many different types of parks and monuments here that have night sky opportunities. One thing that I did not know is we actually have three national Park observatories. I found this out as I was doing research on this. They have a cultural national historical Park Observatory, that is a mouth roll. It is in New Mexico and one of their big things, they future interpretive programming that connects park resources to the celestial knowledge of the people who settled that area. Great cultural information as well. The great basin Observatory is actually located on one of the darkest areas in our country. It is the first National Park Service beast in the national parks and astronomy resources come from all across the country. The final one here is the rock Creek Park planetarium. It includes Ranger led visitors, puts Ranger led visitors on a journey of X duration. Each of these is also a clickable link. You can find out what is going on at the park. Great information here. And I love that the National Park Service included a list of resources giving additional information about all things about night skies. Not just about government resources. If you have any interest in astronomy, some of these parks would well be worth looking at if you're planning a trip. They are located all over the country. Now we are going to jump to a different type of park. This kind of park or the ocean and coastal parks. When I think of national parks I think of Yosemite. I think of Yellowstone, I have mountains, I think of for us and stuff like that. I live in Arkansas so I don't necessarily think of ocean and coastal parts. But there are quite a few. Is our national recreation areas, some of them are national seashores and lake shores. These offer a variety of activities that a lot of the other parks are not going to have. Including boating, water sports, paddle sports, diving and snorkeling, and wishing. These definitely have those. And a lot of these parks also will have, here is a map that shows you all of the coastal parts. They also offer other activities like the hiking and biking and the things that you would normally expect. Across the top here, you can see depending on what you are wanting to do, look at the recreation tab and that will take you to the ones that are specifically focused in the area, I can pretty much guarantee if you go to the diving and snorkeling, you're probably not going to come up with a lot of my favorite national parks which are in Alaska, but you definitely will find fishing there. Down here we have different regions. I just wanted to show you a couple of them. Again, Alaska being one of my favorites. Was going to go down to the Katmai national Park . I have been to the Katmai national Park. We also have Brooks camp. Those photos were taken around the Brooks camp. You also have your Katmai webcam, I have actually been to Brooks

Falls. No Lifestream at this time. I wasn't quite sure about that. We are getting close to salmon season but not quite there. If you get a chance to go there, absolutely do. So, that's Alaska. The Caribbean link. There are a lot of Caribbean parts. Here is where we see Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. If you are taking a cruise and have an excursion possibility, you may be able to go to the national parks that way. Lots of information on each of these. It will tell you what you can find there and what activities are available. All over the country except of course certain areas of the country, one place that is on the least visited is the Isle Royale national Park. This one is on my bucket list. I have to admit. I think it looks fantastic. Only way to get there is with a ferry ride. You can also take a seaplane. If you've never taken a seaplane, it is a unique experience. It is worth doing once, but it is rather terrifying. I'm going to pass it back to Jennifer and she is going to talk to you about more activities. Now you can advance the slides. Can you hear me? I just want to make sure that everybody can hear me.

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We can hear you. I'm going to move to hiking. Short distance hikes can be found in almost every national Park with varying degrees of difficulties. Here are some of the best short hikes. It is just some options for you. Starting out with Queens Garden Navajo Loop Trail in Utah. This is one of the best ways to see and experience Rice Canyon. You get a close look, you can walk through the canyons arches. And then hike up to one of the most famous viewpoint. They run about 10 to 15 minutes. It is a half a mile of walked to it involves. If you are looking for a short easy hike of spectacular views of the Rocky Mount national Park, put these at the top of your list. The views you get are unbelievable. You are walking along the Alpine tundra with our next truck did views. The blue forest trail is one of several off beat hikes. Three miles round-trip. It is a beautiful section of the park and it is in a small section of the Badlands. The hills are striped with blues pinks and grades. The trail climbs and tips through these hills. The views constantly change. The most popular hikes in glacier national Park starting with Logan pass you will walk a combination to get to the overlook. Along the way you can keep a lookout. From the overlook, you can enjoy the view. You can contribute to the trails. I am going to stop right here and going to take you really quick to -- there we go, let me get rid of this. There we go. All right. So, the national parks website is really pretty expensive and it's really great. Here is the one for hiking. Obviously you can choose what type of trails you want to go on. Trail designation. How they are managed and how they keep maintenance. In hiking, they talk about the benefits of hiking. Where you can hike with your kids. And how you can stay safe out there. A lot of these places are in remote wilderness and you are sharing the space with the wildlife out there. You have to be careful about how you deal with that wildlife. If you are going to go someplace it is difficult, you need to understand your own personal capabilities. You need to have the right equipment. A three mile hike is one thing but maybe if you are interested in something longer or you maybe want to even tackle the Appalachian trail, this gives you a lot of tips about hiking smart and how to plan that trip. This is the website, I'm not going to spend a lot of time on here but this is what it looks like. And we are back. I'm going to move ahead so, long hiking. Maybe you want to backpack. There are more than 500 miles of hiking trails in Shenandoah national Park. You can run down into the parks characteristic woodland hollows. This includes 105 miles of the legendary Appalachian trail. The trail enters Shenandoah in the south and then it leaves the park. It runs across the mountains. Several peaks and offering spectacular views on the way. One of the best backpacking trails, it is 93 miles long with a cumulative elevation gain of 2000 feet. It goes into force and valleys.'s is one of the best multi-day hikes in America's national parks mainly because of its variety and difficulty. It offers glorious views of Tacoma which is one of the indigenous trails of Mount Rainier. It feature some of the greatest mountain scenery. It is also a place that is the sunniest mountainous climate on. Shimmering leg's, and underneath towering peaks. An epic adventure in desert wilderness. There are few if any better back packing trips then a Grand Canyon hike. One of the world's largest canyons climbing back out. This is not simply a walk in the park. A rim to rim hike can have disastrous consequences for people who are unprepared or misjudge their business level. They will walk through

every life zone through New Mexico in Canada. Comparatively shorter backpacking trips, this forces a great option. It is really accessible. The only national Park with a section of Route 66. Back packing in the painted Desert can be an easy overnight trip or a multi-day deep in the wilderness. It is phenomenal. Especially because the night sky is breathtaking. Speaking of breathtaking, maybe you're looking for something that gets your heart rate up a little bit faster than hiking. Maybe biking might be your jam. National Park system is full of spectacular biking. This is not meant to be comprehensive. These are just a few options that are out there. So, the National Park Service occasionally closes some of these routes to car traffic. Some parks offer bicycling opportunities. Biking as defined here in this webinar is with paved roads. The Everglades national Forest in Florida. Have you ever encountered an alligator while riding your bike? How about coming face-to-face with one at night? It is a 15 mile course in the northern part of the Everglades national Park. It is especially popular on a full moon. You can acquire for a Ranger led bike. Thank goodness I never encountered an alligator. Okay, glacier national parks provides breathtaking views and for now at least glaciers. From the visitor center, 32 miles toward Logan peak pass with the 6646. The roads highest point. Wildflowers, mountain goats and bighorn sheep. It is 18 miles down. In the early spring, the road is open to bikers. The seven mile hermit Road offer some of the best views of Grand Canyon. One of the main overlooks around the route. During the high season they only have to share the road with Park operated visitor shuttles. For the last three miles or so, you have the option to right on a multiuse trail. This is an easy-going 11 mile loop. It seemingly has it all. Restored the 18th and 19th century, casual cyclists can rent by's and closes the loop before 10 a.m. The smooth and moderately hilly trail, just \$35. Located in the parks on mountain district, it is a one-way winding road. The nearby mountain creates a great backdrop. As with all desert parks, this is but the best visited during the daytime hours. Well, Olympic national Park has both. Spectacular and strenuous. Is not for the faint of heart. Leaving Olympic national Park, writers will go on a steady force did climb. He can strenuous, how does Mike mountain biking sound? Home to some of America's most remarkable landscapes. The seemingly endless series of rock formations, Batman, it may be best explored without a windshield. Mountain bikers can choose from three trails. Remember that the Badlands is home to a large bison population. Please stay safe. Big Bend national Park in Texas attracts mountain bikers who can choose from the 26 mile old or road, the 13 mile old maverick Road, the 15 mile great wine Hills Road, and the paint gap Road. It is home to both black bears and mountain lions. Should know how to behave when you see a black bear and what to do during mountain lion encounters. It is canyonlands. Situated in Moab. It is home to hundreds of miles all of which are open to mountain bikers. There are no singletrack trails. One of the greatest mountain bike trails is the 100 mile white rim Trail. This trip typically takes three to four days. Day and overnight permits are required. There are several mountain bike travelers. This is a bike town. They offer bike rentals and tours. It just may be the best national Park in the U.S. It is situated like I mentioned, the East rim Trail system is the first trail that offers great views and varied terrain. While the trail is designated with mountain bikers, it is also open to Trail hikers. In total, almost 100 miles of trails are open to hikers. This is also one of the best national parks to visit in the fall. Death Valley has 100 miles of paved roads. The parks numerous trails from mountain biking are paved roads, there is everything from short jogs on paved roads two more epic adventures in the desert back country. Salt Creek, Skidoo and Cottonwood are of increasing difficulty. Now, speaking of biking, I want to talk a little bit about Nashville. I.C.E. bikes and scooters nearly every day. As of 2020, e-bikes are permitted, just the local communities and NPS staff and partners continue to work together to determine best practices and guidance. They still retain the right to limit or restrict positions on e-bike used to ensure visitor safety. Just be sure to check with the park that you are visiting. Any other rules that apply. As of traditional bicycles, I'm going to stop right here and I'm going to show you real quick the page for biking just so that you can get a look. All right, this is the Viking page. Got right in to e-bikes on the page. So for hiking, they have listed here. If you keep scrolling down you can see where they have got mountain biking. Some of them are overlapping, but there is mountain biking and road biking. So,

any information that you want to find out, where you should visit and how to do that, any events that are available, let's see, Acadia. Okay, so, hiking. There we go. This is sort of unrelated to biking but just know that this is here and that is a wealth of information. I'm going to go ahead and stop my share and go back and I am going to let Dominica take it from here.

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Yes, okay, now we are going to talk a little bit about planning your visit. I'm going to just switch to my computer monitor. You can look at the slides later but all the information, the length's are there. When you're ready to plan your vacation there is a plan your visit site. Can find out about passes, you can learn to plan like a Park Ranger. There are a lot of good tips there. Look at this type of information and see. I love the find a park because depending on the area you are in, you can search by state and I don't get to go that far from home a lot of time so I went to Arkansas and we do have the first established national River which is the Buffalo River out in Northwest Arkansas. And we have the Hot Springs national Park. It gives you basic information and it will help me if I go to that website. It will help me plan my visit. Each of the national parks tend to have a plan your visit. Which is really nice. For example, I have been really looking at Yosemite because it is in the news. If you go to individual website, you will see that there are road closures and flooding. It was last year where they had roads collapsing. So be sure and check the website for each individual park you plan to visit before going and make sure that everything is okay. Another option is if you look at social media most of the parks have a Facebook page. Again, this is telling you about the park it is a and, the parts of it that are closed. That is another way to get that information. Look at the individual park. We also have an NPS app. It has over 400 national parks. So, there is also an NPS trip planning guide. This is a nice little checklist about all the things that you should think about before you go on a trip. There is a disclaimer at the bottom. This may or may not cover absolutely everything so be sure and look at the individual parts. The plan your visit is the place to go. There is information about the passes you may need. Great information there. They stop sharing and we are going to go ahead and go back to Jennifer for just a minute. I'm going to talk to a little bit about the passport. I'm going to go ahead and share my screen again. All right, so a fun way to supplement and document your time at our great national parks is the passport to her national parks. You should purchase the passport from this website, America'snational parks.org. National Park visitors have used passports to collect stamps from each of their products duration. You can personalize your passport by adding stickers and logging your favorite hiking trails and mapping your next adventure. You can also show off your look. You can stamp your passport as you capture stories and all of these really great things. Just going to show you really quickly what it looks like. The classic edition is running about \$13. They do have standard packs. There is a specialized Junior Ranger passport that is also available to purchase. I'm going to stop right here and let Dominica tell you a little bit about senior pass.

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Okay, I was going to tell you just a little bit about the senior pass, can you guys hear me?

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I can.

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I wanted to mention the senior pass because the director of my library knew I was doing this presentation and came up to me about a week and a half ago all excited because he had just received his senior pass. At age 62 you can get an annual senior pass for \$20. It is \$80 for a lifetime senior pass. Managed by six federal agencies. Not just the national Park service. You may want to look into this here you may have thought to make reservations. But I can also get you some discounts and some of the places including discounts. You have to look at that. So, back to you, Jennifer.

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If you have children between ages of five and 13, this is really to anybody. It's not really just for children, they will accept you into Junior Ranger if you are 85. But young ends might be interested to join. The

Junior Ranger program is an activity-based program conducted at almost all parks. Was just take a look at some of the things the program has to offer. The Junior Ranger online. Before you even get started, while you are planning your trip and to get kids excited, you can take them here and from here you can check out online tours and videos. They also have this interactive activity, you will see, we went to the Everglades site. If you're planning on going to the Everglades national Park, take a look at those. Interesting story although I did grow up in Florida. I didn't know how many seasons to think the Everglades have. Was actually only two. It is just in the dry season. Interesting facts about the Everglades. This is all specifically for kids. Let me go back. You can see, it is specifically to kids. We go back to the home page. And some of these cities, if you want to get your Junior Ranger book, that is really cool. Click here. These booklets, can learn about wildland firefighters and exploring, it has some information about it. Here is the booklets. You can complete and then you can get your little badge. And then if you pick up one of these activity books while you are in a park but first I'm reason you are having so much fun and your kid didn't finish it, it is really no problem, you can send the book back to the park when it is completed and a Ranger will check the book and mail the book back with a badge and a signed certificate. All in all, the Junior Ranger program is pretty cool. So, before we wrap things up, let's go back to the slide deck once more. All right.

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We have a final quote here by John F. Kennedy talking about the importance of national parks. I will let you read that for yourself. The main thing is right now we just want to thank you and thank the GPO for having us today and we are hoping you get the chance to join one of our national parks. If you have any questions, the next slide has our contact information. Be sure and email us or give us a call. We are pretty easy to find. And if you have any questions, go ahead and post them. We have about five minutes to go. Oh, thank you, Bridget. Thank you for the suggestion. I mentioned that it's very populated over there. It is really beautiful. Lots of great hiking if you are in to hiking. You're welcome, Katie, thank you.

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I just wanted to point out that Ashley just showed the link to our survey and we only have a couple of minutes left. If you do have any questions, please get them in right now. I just put in the chat, they just put in the link to the senior pass. It is right there.

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Somebody said how many parks have you been to? I don't have a count, but traveling as a child, my parents made sure that we traveled all over the country. Packed up the station wagon and I have been to quite a few all over the country. I have been to 49 of the 50 states and I have been to national parks and a good portion.

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An earlier comment, Eric said that Gorge Park should be on the night sky list.

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I don't know, I'm not sure why. I look set up when I saw that comment.

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Well, we have a minute. I just want to give you some of the webinars that are coming up tomorrow. We have secrets of the super searchers. The 23rd is census 101. Public documents and public reserve system. That is going to go into some Fraser during webinar. Okay. All right, it doesn't look like you're getting any questions so I'm going to wrap it up for this session. I want to say a very big thank you to Dominique and Jennifer. This is a fascinating, fascinating webinar. I really appreciate you presenting it to our group here.

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Summer is coming up, get out. Thank you. [Event Concluded]