

I would like to nominate Danny and Karen Neal for a Volunteer Coin Award. They have been serving as park host/volunteers at Post Oak Campground on Copan Lake for 9 consecutive years beginning in 2008. Their main duties are to facilitate the checking in of campers at all of the sites and opening and closing the gates 7 days a week. This requires them to continually coordinate with our contract gate attendant to ensure that no sites are double booked and that every camper gets checked in to the correct area. Additional duties are general cleaning and maintenance of park. In just 2016 the Neal's have a combined 1285 hours of volunteer service.

Throughout the years, the Neal's have become a staple at Post Oak campground. They are a consistency at the lake that seems to be ever changing with the way recreation is shifting. Any camper that has stayed at Post Oak campground will tell you Danny and Karen stopped by to check in, say hi, or even invite them over to eat some fish. Any new time campers at Post Oak will never leave without a "Tool Kit" that they developed. It includes park maps, Reserve America pamphlet, and a general rule guide based off of Title 36.

Danny is knowledgeable about the areas around the lake and is always willing to talk about fishing or hunting. His involvement with the surrounding community has helped the Corps office identify adjacent land owners. Karen is a true nature lover. You can ask her about any sunset over the lake and she will likely have a picture of it. She is also the driving force behind the beautiful flowers that you will see blooming throughout the park. While she's out and about, she is always making sure that any children in the park are sure to leave with a water safety Frisbee or coloring book as well.

During the recreation season, the Neal's are reliable for campground surveillance keeping a watchful eye on not just the campground, but the campers too. They work closely with Park Rangers identifying and resolving issues with camper disputes or unruly guests. Their friendliness and willingness to meet new people keep the same campers coming back year after year.

Nominator: Tabitha Nixon – Park Ranger/Natural Resource Specialist

Copan & Hulah Lakes

