Following was quoted in an online comment to a story in the St George News. It was written by a retired National Park Service employee.

“My father was a statistician and my son holds an MBA, yet I don’t speak math, either. But the math is a distraction.
What you speak, and I try to, is human decency.
The recurrent effort to compare Yellowstone to Six Flags, Independence to Disney World and Padre Island to Sea World bespeaks a profound misunderstanding of both amusement parks and the protected pieces of our national legacy.
It’s the same conceptual challenge presented by those who want to take off-road bicycles into the wilderness and make bungee-jumping a daily New River program.
Yes, you pay, often dearly, for intensive recreation experiences. You get back excitement and adrenaline rushes. The National Park System may incidentally provide some of those, but isn’t the purpose for which they were set aside. It is, rather, the place for learning about and connecting with a shared heritage.
If you believe that individually or as members of a particular in-group, we don’t share the heritage of other people whose experiences differ from ours, that is alien to the park concept.
To me — and, I think, you — it is a core park concept that our ethnic, religious, linguistic, gender, and national pedigrees shouldn’t separate us from one another. Pipe spring was a Mormon settlement, but it is part of the legacy taken on by a new citizen from Ethiopia. Manzanar held Japanese Americans, but it resonates with European Jews, Middle Eastern Muslims, and anyone who understands the impact of Jim Crow “services” or gender discrimination.
The great value of parks is that there is no limit on what type of people can learn from them and respond to them. That value should be of such grand importance that we must scrap to find ways to connect with the broad spectrum of humanity that comprise our great nation.
Let’s give everyone a chance to grasp the spirit of a welcoming nation by making certain that we don’t re-create the royal hunting preserves of Europe that welcomed only those with sufficient money or connections.
We’ll never pay for parks through entrance and user fees, but the value of civic participation will repay itself to a nation that is generous, not churlish.
A week-long pass suits someone who doesn’t lose pay for every day away from work. A fee that could feed a family of four for days is an outright barrier to many.
Entrance fees teach the wrong lessons and exclude those – the young, the poor, the newly Americanized – who stand to gain the greatest lessons from the parks.
Fees should not fall disproportionately on those who do use parks – they should be swept aside so that more of our society can use parks.
Personally, I believe that begins at the simplest level: Open the damn doors. Let me and you, our neighbors, and total strangers in. They won’t learn from what is kept from them.”

Duncan Morrow