

The Protection Ranger



WWW.RANGERFOP.COM

The Newsletter of the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police 15th Anniversary Vol. XIII • No. 4 • 2002

President's Message

By Greg Jackson

I'm honored to be the new Lodge President during the 15th anniversary year of the Lodge. I've been president before, in about 1991 as I recall. I've been Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President, Guard, and then was out of office for several years.

Since my last term as president, the Lodge continues to hold about 50 percent of all commissioned rangers as members. This is an extraordinary record for which my predecessors should be commended.

The NPS law enforcement program has reached the point of meltdown. The factors leading to this are many. The incidents on September 11 were the straw that broke the camel's back in the NPS staffing crisis. People are leaving the agency in droves. It's literally a seller's market for law enforcement - if you've got the skills there is a job for you. Be a sky marshal for 80k a year. It's easy, just apply online. The new Transportation Security Agency will be hiring thousands of 1811's, also at premium pay, at airports across the country (www.tsa.gov).

About 1/3 to 1/2 of rangers will be retiring in the next 3-5 years. The NPS is already down nearly 750 positions from its model

staffing level. How it intends to recruit that many qualified people in a market where GS-9 pay is not competitive is a great question. Who will be left to train these people? There is an "intake" program of 50 new rangers, but who has the spare time to field train them? The ranger staffing crisis has led to a staffing crisis at FLETC, because nobody is available to go there as detailed instructors. Classes later this year may be cancelled.

With that in mind, let me give the NPS our 5 Recommendations to save what's left of the ranger profession

1. Implement the reports the NPS paid for and do so quickly. Simply changing the ranger badge would send a message to the field that changes are coming, but it's the bitter pill that managers won't take. Separate the funding for law enforcement out so that superintendents can't plunder it for pet projects. The fact that superintendents are taking funding away from ranger divisions who send rangers on security details ought to be enough to show that this needs to be done. And, put in a direct line authority.

2. Restore money plundered from the law enforcement program: The program has been plundered for years. FLETC funding has been plundered to 1979 levels by the training office. Base funding for law enforcement has been taken away by superintendents when special increases have been given. Parks were given extra 6c funding to cover enhanced retirement. What are the parks doing with it now that there are fewer rangers? Plunder. The program needs to be the number one priority for NPS funding for several years in order to restore the money that was plundered from it.

3. Remove the people who got us into this position: When the LAPD came into a staffing crisis because of the actions of its chief, the chief was removed. The same should be true for the NPS to show support

Commemorative Ribbons

This tri-ribbon is meant to be worn during Police Week to show those officers of local, state and federal agencies who have died in the line of duty that they have not been forgotten and that in honor and recognition of their sacrifices, we are carrying on their tradition of service to the resources of the park lands and to those who visit them. The Lodge is very appreciative of Michelle Barland-Liles who not only put the tri-ribbons together, but initiated the idea of them as a remembrance to those officers who paid the ultimate price.

for the mission, and to give an endorsement to the new leadership.

4. Stop losing staff: Immediately put a retention program in place to stop people from retiring through by giving them money to stay. Pay incentives could be one-time retention bonuses, or long-term increases in retirement pay or by giving all commissioned rangers AOU pay. Retain other employees by immediately increasing the journey level grade for law enforcement to the GS-11 level using the draft BLM ranger position description on the lodge web page. Increase the grade to GS-12 for master rangers, as found in the ranger careers program.

5. Double the size of program management: The Ranger Activities Division in WASO is incredibly understaffed. It is impossible for anyone there to act like a leader when they spend all of their time fixing emergencies. The staff there needs to be tripled. Other LE programs, like in regional offices, need to be similarly expanded. Who else is going to be around to implement the recommendations of the IACP and IG? Yes, we need to double the number of rangers in the field, too, but with an ineffective leadership, the program will

Inside This Issue:

National Park Rangers Lodge, Yosemite	2
Losing Park Resources Little by Little	3
NAPRF	4
First Ranger Lodge President	4
Separate Law Enforcement Budget Needed	4
Where We Stand	5
Meth Labs on Corps of Engineers Land	5
One Ranger Hat, One Belt, Hold the Ethics	5
Memorializing WTC Site	6
COE News	6
Ranger Workforce Shortage Jumps 27%	7
Hanky-Panky with FLETC Funds	8
Structural Fire, the Next Threat	8
Wade Report Implementation	8

continue its implosion. Who will hire and train the 1500 new rangers needed in the next 5 years?

These changes need to be made at a speed which the NPS has been incapable of attaining in the past, and may not be able to attain now. We hope that it can rise to the occasion.

In closing, I want to remind the membership, and the managers of the NPS and other Interior agencies, that we would not be in this position if the agencies adopted the Lodge's recommendations made over the years. Actually, no one need look further than the Protection Ranger, Vol XI, No 1 from two years ago when I wrote "Ten Things the NPS Can Do to Prevent Ranger Fatalities But Hasn't". It was a moderate call to bring professional standards to the NPS. Of the 10 recommendations, 7 would not have cost anything.

Working together as we have done in the past, we will accomplish many of our goals; we have to, for the sake of officer safety, the resource and its visitors, and the NPS itself.

The National Park Rangers Lodge, Yosemite, 1987

The first NPS rangers helped by the Fraternal Order of Police worked at Independence during the late 1970's. The Superintendent refused to allow rangers to wear visible firearms during the daytime, leading to such absurdities as trying to draw revolvers from ankle holsters while running to a call. (Not to mention sending rangers to a local police academy instead of FLETC, and then disciplining them for using force as taught at that academy...but I digress.) But for a variety of reasons, the idea of the Fraternal Order of Police never caught on service-wide. Individual rangers, in Virginia and elsewhere, belonged to local FOP lodges but no one outside of Independence was actually represented.

Oddly enough, the idea for what became the National Park Rangers Lodge originated at the 1987 Ranger Rendezvous.

Some of you may remember ANPR's consistent refusal to do anything that even remotely smacked of taking sides in a

workplace dispute; ANPR preferred to deal with broad policy issues rather than messy individual cases. (In fairness, from its inception it was never intended to be a labor organization.) During that year's business meeting, Kathy August mentioned the body armor issue and commented that if ANPR didn't address it, sooner or later a union would. Someone in the crowd heckled that when "you" formed a union, then and only then would ANPR consider the issue. That smug crack motivated us both. It was pretty clear that if we didn't do something, we would never get body armor. [Nor decent firearms...ever been issued an ancient revolver that, despite years of use, had never been inspected by an armorer? Or carried one that-true story-had scars on the butt from being used to drive nails?] We looked for a labor organization that might represent law enforcement rangers not just as "cops," but rather in all our public safety roles.

Organizations we contacted included: International Brotherhood of Police Officers; National Association of Police Officers; PORAC (Peace Officers Research Association of California); International Union of Police Associations (IUPA); and Fraternal Order of Police, California State Lodge.

Kim Aufhauser and J.R. Tomasovic joined in and we became a self-appointed organizing committee. In late 1987 or early 1988 we held our first exploratory meeting, to see just how much interest there was. We put out some grub to encourage attendance - what ranger passes up a free meal? After several formal, and many informal, meetings a national officer from FOP and another from IUPA came to an organizational meeting in the Spring of 1988. At that meeting, after listening to the two representatives, we held a vote to decide which group to affiliate with. There were at least thirty commissioned rangers present, and after much discussion we voted overwhelmingly to go with the FOP. The consensus was very clear that those present wanted to try working with management as an employee organization, rather than as a labor union. This consensus was so strong that even the most adamant union advocates formed FOP in a united front.

That united front started out as a pretty small one. At our organizational meeting, only about fifteen rangers submitted

applications (many more drifted in during our charter membership period). After our applications were approved on the spot by the national officer, the National Park Rangers Lodge came into being as California Lodge #23. The first slate of officers included Kim Aufhauser (our first president), J.R. Tomasovic, Kevin O'Connor-Henry, and myself. Phil Hibbs generously published our first newsletters. Meanwhile, George Durkee was starting the National Alliance of Park Rangers and Firefighters (NAPRF). We were not in competition. Because we were determined to make a difference for our members and our profession, at first we limited membership to rangers close enough geographically to participate in the Lodge. That restriction was dropped within a year.

Some of us joined both organizations, and worked for both concurrently. For example, the NAPRF newsletter printed my research paper "Winning Law Enforcement Retirement" in its newsletter. Later, our FOP lodge reprinted and distributed it. It made an effective recruiting tool because it showed we were working on issues important to all protection rangers. I like to think that paper played a part in our successful appeals for law enforcement retirement.

What were our issues? Body armor was probably the number one issue, with law enforcement retirement a close second, but there were many others. In no particular order, they included hepatitis immunization for all rangers (Yosemite already provided them to permanent rangers, but many parks didn't provide them at all); an end to mandatory but unpaid training (EMT refreshers, firearms qualifications, etc. were all routinely attended on our own time); better equipment; pay for mandatory on-call assignments; and my personal

Officers for 2002

President - Greg Jackson
First Vice President - Pete Tortorell
Second Vice President - Jay Eickenhorst
Treasurer - Tony Macri
Secretary - Randall Kendrick
Guard - Kristen Fey
Past President - George Durkee

favorite, the establishment of a hearing conservation program. Management always seemed to have other priorities; it was just too expensive to provide headset radios for those of us spending long hours next to noisy fire engines, operating noisy pumps (just as at water parks, it was too expensive to protect ranger hearing from boat motors). There were plenty of rocks in the road during our first year. I remember being called into the Superintendent's office, and on the carpet, because he felt we were using divisive tactics. As to the propriety of chewing out an employee for his off-duty advocacy, you decide that one for yourself. (I was the only Lodge officer not gone or on a fire, or I would have gladly left the honor to someone higher up the FOP food chain.)

There were some hopeful signs, too. In August 1988 I was in D.C. on personal business; Walt Dabney, the then-Chief of Ranger Activities, generously made time to meet with me. I was hoping to correct some of the misinformation that was circulating, because we felt we were trying to work within the system and with management. Walt thought it important enough that-as Yellowstone went up in smoke-he made the time to hear what was going on. He listened without judging, two traits that seemed to be in short supply at the time. I found that it wasn't hard to gain a little prominence in an employee organization; all you needed was a willingness to work. My reward was to be elected as the second Lodge president. I had to decline, as I took a transfer to Glen Canyon. It was just as well.. after a year and a half of hard work, I was burned out. Fifteen years have passed since we organized California Lodge #23. I've watched as the FOP grew into eastern and western lodges, and then merged back together. I've only occasionally become involved in Lodge issues; it's hard to be active in an NPS lodge when you work for another agency. But there are a few things that stand out for me, from the perspective of fifteen years gone by and eleven years with the Bureau of Land Management.

Some of the changes I've seen in the NPS sadden me. It particularly saddens me that the Lodge feels it needs to be so adversarial. But from what I've seen of some issues--medical standards, for one--I don't see that the Lodge has much choice.

For those who think that the Lodge is too strident, consider... we all know that a minor hearing loss, caused by the Service's refusal to provide proper hearing protection on the job, would never disqualify a field ranger from employment. Isn't that right?

Of the initial slate of Lodge officers named above, only two survived in their NPS careers. One is now a college professor, another is a Physician's Assistant, and I'm with BLM. I'm glad that I made the switch; I work for an agency that provides good equipment, treats its people pretty well, and generally lets me do my job. I'm proud to have played a part in starting the National Park Rangers Lodge. And I'm proud that, for eleven years, I was privileged to wear the green and gray and the flat hat that goes with it. But because I stood up with my fellow rangers and worked to improve our lives and our agency, I--and others who joined in that necessary battle--will never be privileged to wear them again.

*Randy August
Bureau of Land Management
Boise, Idaho*

Losing Park Resources Little by Little

The large conservation organizations - Sierra Club, Greenpeace, NRDC, Wilderness Society - do a pretty good job with the large issues such as loss of biodiversity, large source pollution, and global warming. They are there with their experts and membership to sound the warning alarms and to lobby for improvement at the highest levels of government. But, they are missing the "nickle and dime" story which is adding up to be a Large Issue on the level of those mentioned above. I am referring to the fact that agencies in the Department of Interior are so starving their law enforcement programs that important natural and cultural resources are either being stolen or degraded out of existence. And, they are missing the story that visitors to the parks no longer can count on prompt law enforcement, building fire, and EMS responses. Why? Because, Interior agencies, led in retreat by the managers of the National Park Service are not only failing to respond to increased visitation and crime by buying adequate law

enforcement protection, they are actually causing the total number of commissioned rangers to drop in the face of increased demands for the services that only these employees can provide. And, when the Congress provides additional funding, regional directors and superintendents can, and do, ignore the purpose for which this money was appropriated.

Example: Golden Gate NRA - the superintendent received \$455,000 to hire six new rangers this fiscal year. As of May 1, no new ranger is on the job. Where did the \$300,000 go? Because the NPS does not have a separate budget for law enforcement, managers can dip into the money Congress thought is was appropriating for protection for any and all manner of projects and staffing that not only have nothing to do with law enforcement but are considered by the interested Congressional committees as "mission creep" not deemed appropriate for federal agencies to engage in. Congress has been excellent about providing money for the NPS. The NPS has been wasting this money on non-productive purposes. The NPS in the face of an ever increasing budget and ever increasing visitation has responded by decreasing the staff of full time commissioned park rangers. We have seen many parks lose 50% of the ranger staff over the past ten years. We still have parks with no dispatching service even though this glaring lack was a major contributing factor in the shooting deaths of rangers McGhee and Jarrell. We have large parks like Amistad and Cape Lookout with only two or three permanent rangers even though they are 365/24 parks. How can a superintendent in good conscience hire contract specialists, personnelists, media relations workers, etc. in lieu of hiring park rangers who protect the resources and the visitors? At Amistad and Cape Lookout, the rangers cannot even safely perform their duties. What law enforcement agencies send their officers out alone without a way to summon assistance? At Yosemite, there usually are not enough rangers on duty to staff the building fire brigade even though they are the primary responders and many Yosemite Valley buildings are highly flammable. So Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, you are seeing cacti, orchids, aboriginal art and relics, reptiles, etc, being stolen or

damaged and not only is there no one to catch the perpetrators, there usually isn't even enough staff to tell the public what's gone missing. Don't forget Fossil Cycad National Monument which was "managed" out of existence by the National Park Service. Set aside to protect the world's best site for fossilized Cycads, the NPS refused to send rangers to protect this resource and soon everything worth anything was stolen. Managers of the NPS have a history of shortsightedness in protecting resources while being very solicitous of their salaries and perks; it's happening still and we have to fight this inbred corporate dysfunction. We, the membership of the US Rangers Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police, are leading the effort to properly staff the DOI land management agencies with competent, professional officers who are fairly compensated. We also, and as a first order of business, have to call attention to the fact that DOI agencies, BLM, USF&WS, NPS are not using the resources Congress has provided in a manner that will protect the resources and the visitors while allowing the officers to perform their jobs in a safe manner in conformance with standard police practices. The best gift the Sierra Club, and the other conservation organizations, can get for Interior agencies, is line authority for law enforcement and a separate budget for law enforcement.

The National Alliance of Park Rangers and Firefighters

The NAPRF began to take shape in California in late 1987 and by 1988 was producing a high quality national newsletter and had hired a part time consultant in Washington, DC. Original organizers included George Durkee, Mead Hargis, Pat Teague, Paige Meire, Charlie Fullam, Randy August, Randy Morgenson and Randall Kendrick. The stated goals of the organization were to organize to attain enhanced retirement, known as 6[c] in shorthand, end unpaid on-call status, and to improve working conditions for seasonal rangers and firefighters. The NAPRF took the early lead in working to attain 6[c] status for officers and firefighters and Randy August supplied much, if not most,

of the research and intellectual impetus. His articles on "Winning Law Enforcement Retirement" were a regular feature of the ALLIANCE and proved to be worth more than their weight in gold for officers and firefighters long denied the retirement benefit they so obviously deserved. Housing issues, including required occupancy and rent gouging by management, were also important issues the NAPRF tackled. As if this weren't enough for a new organization to digest, the DOI under Sec. Hodel, decided to randomly test 12,000 Interior employees for illegal drugs even though there was not a shred of articulatable evidence that this was a problem in any DOI agency. Responding to this assault on civil liberties, the NAPRF stepped forward and provided legal cannon fodder for the law firm of Hogan&Hartson (the lawyers for the plaintiffs[us!]) in the form of Charlie Fullam and Randall Kendrick as class agents. The suit won a major victory before Federal Judge Harold Greene who termed the Interior policy as "Kafkaesque" and "Bureaucracy run amok."

The first officers of the NAPRF were George Durkee, Randall Kendrick, Charlie Fullam and Pat Teague. The NAPRF eventually grew to over 600 members and the organization folded itself into the US Ranger Lodge, greatly expanding the latter's membership and clout.

First Ranger Lodge President

It started at the Girls Club in Yosemite Valley. Some managers suggested that we were just a bunch of disgruntled rangers. That we were not. Perhaps frustrated but all were interested and willing to help effect change. There were several contentious issues "on the table". Among these were housing, pay, on-call compensation, 6C retirement, and drug testing.

Three of us approached different organizations including the Fraternal Order of Police. Some speculated that a mere handful of rangers could do little in an organization of over a hundred thousand. We prevailed at the first meeting. Managers, while welcome, were conspicuously absent. There were the usual impassioned pleas and utterances of concern, doubt and fear, but in the end we

had a unanimous vote to 'sign on' with the FOP. For the next 15 years and several administrations (both in Lodge 23 and in the NPS), we worked with the FOP and WASO toward positive change. As I see where National Park rangers are today, there is both a sense of pride for having been part of those early days and of concern that the job is not finished. Rangers have 6-C retirement and the pay has improved. Both huge leaps forward. Now I wonder how the Service will improve morale. What of current and predicted future staffing levels and working conditions? As we enter this 15th anniversary as an FOP Lodge stay focused on what still needs to be accomplished. Do what it takes to keep the spirit alive.

*Kim Aufhauser
First President
FOP Lodge 23
FOP # 001*

Separate Law Enforcement Budget Needed for Interior

This is hard for an outsider to believe but here's what happens: Congress, seeing a need for more officers, training, special equipment, etc, passes a budget giving the agency this money. When the money is parceled out to the individual units of the agency, the manager[s] can - and do - use this money for whatever strikes their fancy. Case 1: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, CA: This NPS park got \$455,000 this fiscal year to hire six new protection rangers. The FY started on October 1 and just in March were the first two jobs advertised. Where has the \$800,000 that should have gone to ranger salaries gone? And, just because jobs have been advertised, doesn't mean they will be filled anytime soon. Result: money for unintended purposes.

Case 2: Lake Mead National Recreation Area: It has been reliably reported to us that this park got the money to hire 14 new protection rangers approximately ten years ago. This is a very busy area and audits showed that the ranger staff needed to be doubled and this fourteen was a down payment on the 35 needed. The superintendent hired the new rangers all right but as the years went by, when an existing ranger transferred or retired or

switched job categories, the superintendent didn't fill those positions and kept the money for non law enforcement purposes. There was no net gain of fourteen as intended; there seems to have been no net gain at all even though management says, "We hired fourteen new rangers."

Where has the money gone when the ranger staff in Yosemite Valley has been halved; or, the ranger force at Cape Lookout went from eight to two? If the agencies were required to maintain a separate account for law enforcement only then this type of duplicity would be much harder to pull off. Of course managers who are not serious about protecting park resources and visitors, and this seems to be a majority of managers, oppose this. Some of the projects and positions that have been funded with funds earmarked by Congress for law enforcement would have been laughed off of Capitol Hill if managers asked specifically for them. But, when they ask for protection funds, knowing full well at least part of the money will be diverted, they know the respect that rangers have will get them both a sympathetic hearing and the money. A separate budget for law enforcement is needed to go hand and hand with line authority.

Where We Stand

What follows are Lodge positions on topics of concern to the members of the FOP Lodge and to those who are interested in protecting park resources and those who visit the parks, monuments, forests, refuges, and impoundments.

SEASONALS

The Lodge supports both fair play for existing temporary employees[called seasonals in some agencies] and a steady conversion of these positions to permanent full time officers. Not too many years ago, in the 1950s and 1960s, many enforcement seasonal rangers were Subject To Furlough even though they may only have worked three or four months per year. The National Park Service, to its discredit, stopped giving STF status to employees who could and would return year after year and even bullied those with STF to give up that status.

In the late 1980s, the Office of Personnel

Management, in an advisory statement, said that the NPS and IRS are examples of two agencies where both the agency and the employee who returned year after year had more invested in the position than that of a mere temporary employee. Temporary employees, according to OPM, are those hired for a one-time event, like cleanup after a major disaster, and had no long term interest in the job. The NPS, following usual practice for this agency, ignored the advice. Following the untimely death of park maintenance man Hudson - an eight year seasonal with no benefits - Congress passed a law which said that if an agency had need for a position year after year, and that job lasted more than six months, then that position had to be STF. This was a modest step in the right direction. The NPS, which had had seasonal rangers typically working 180 days for years, cut the season down[wherever possible] to 1049 hours: an hour less than six months. Parks needed these officers for the full 180 days and WASO decreed - contra the new law of the land - that parks could only employ officers, for the most part, 1049 hours to avoid paying them the health and retirement benefits Congress said they deserved. This is nothing other than a case of bad faith on the part of NPS managers and a disregarding of the spirit of the law. The Lodge wants the use of seasonals gradually phased out with current seasonal allowed to continue until they no longer desire to continue or fail to meet the physical standards. There is no age limit for seasonal officers because they are not under the 6[c] system. The NPS treats these employees, who often make the bulk of visitor contacts and initial presences at crime scenes, very poorly. The NPS should reimburse these rangers for their tuition at seasonal LE academies and pay for all costs, including travel, associated with physical exams and drug tests. The history of NPS management vis a vis temporary officers is one of exploitation and ill treatment. The housing is substandard, per diem is usually not paid for assignments away from a recognized duty station, and seasonal are required to pay out-of-pocket for travel, training, and equipment that a permanent officer would not be required to pay. The Lodge has had a few successes in this area - AOU pay at back country stations in the Sierras, allowing seasonal to work past age 57, helping to get LE pay the former Yellowstone superintendent Mike

Finley petulantly refused to pay[even with an appropriation earmarked for this purpose] - but mostly it's been the NPS having its own way. Because temporary employees have few rights under MSPB, it is hard for an officer in this situation to defend his/herself. If all seasonals were at least STF than they would have the rights they deserve by performing this hazardous work.

Meth Labs on Corps of Engineers Land

Methamphetamine makers and distributors have a deserved reputation for being the most vicious of drug dealers. When Meth Labs are found on federal property it's always a cause for concern; however, when such labs are found on Corps of Engineer land - where the COE rangers are by policy unarmed and without ballistic vests - the potential for officer injury and death is even greater. Here's a recent case of a Meth Lab on COE managed land. Ga Dept of Natural Resources Officers discovered an active methamphetamine lab on Corps property. Two individuals were arrested on site and a third with felony warrants escaped. Two pounds of crystal Meth was recovered. DEA was contacted to cleanup an extensive chemical site. The location has also received numerous complaints from local residents of unauthorized seaplanes landing on the lake over the past 6 months. The FBI has now taken charge of the case. More reports will be forthcoming.

One Ranger Hat, One Belt, Hold the Ethics

ANPR leaders are up to their old "insider, special privilege" tactics again. Look on the page of the company where we order our uniforms and you will see a special deal for ANPR members. The current president of ANPR, the former uniform program coordinator, has used his status to further the fortunes of his organization. This can be a major money raiser for them and it's unethical. When ANPR wants to throw a party or have a meeting, they try and finagle the NPS for paying for travel and lodge. When high level vacancies come open, the certs are stacked with former

ANPR officers. The Lodge has contacted Randy Coffman, current uniform coordinator, and demanded this special undeserved benefit be cancelled immediately. If this is not effective, we will pursue other venues to force the NPS to conform to legal and ethical requirements. This should upset all of you...the NPS won't listen to our suggestions - backed up as they are by the Thomas Report, the IACP report and the DOI IG's office, yet they will spend tax dollars on an organization that uses the name "park ranger" and yet seems never to have a real live park rangers in positions of authority. For the record: The US Rangers Lodge has had only working park rangers as officers.

Memorializing WTC Site

By Robert Lytch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

More Americans died on September 11, 2001 than on December 7, 1941. Since the site of the World Trade Center will almost certainly become part of the National Park System, it is entirely appropriate for the membership to have their input into the final form of the addition. Having worked on the National Mall, I personally would like to avoid repeating some of same design features seen there. Maya Lin's design for the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial, for example, withstood harsh initial criticism and became the most visited site in Washington, D.C. Yet no one anticipated how the public would want to make pencil impressions of the names so rangers and volunteers lug a ladder around all day to make rubbings of the names near the top of the apex. It was considered too risky for visitors to climb the ladder themselves. Also, almost no one remembers to bring a pencil, so getting back the special pencils the staff lends out is a constant struggle.

The Korean War Veterans' Memorial avoided this situation by inscribing the wall with images of the veterans, not names, and by using a process that doesn't lend itself to pencil rubbings. While the Memorial's design makes a deep impression on virtually every visitor, having a fountain as a central feature creates recurring problems. Despite signs specifically asking people not to do so,

visitors toss coins into the water. Most assume that the money will go to the upkeep. In fact, it is not worth the expense of collecting, counting, and transporting to the bank the few dollars involved. Most of the money ends up in the pockets of the city's derelicts. You can see their footprints in the fountain in the morning.

KWVM also has trees surrounding the fountain. When leaves fall they clog the fountain's drains, causing it to overflow. The chlorinated water drowns the trees, causing them to drop even more leaves into the fountain.

I feel the best memorial to 9/11 would be a new World Trade Center. If that land is forever taken out of productive use, it is a permanent victory for our enemies. The next twin towers would have to be much shorter so that so many people will never again be concentrated in one area. The width and length would also be reduced to preserve the scale and to set the building farther back from the street as protections against truck bombs. More of the interior would be taken up with reinforcements and wider stairways for evacuations.

The ground level would become the visitor center and museum and the names of the victims and heroes of September 11 and the War on Terror could be inscribed into the walls. Ideally, the museum would interpret the entire history of the site, beginning with the original architect's hope that world trade would mean world peace. Like the Oklahoma City National Memorial, space could be devoted to the study and prevention of terrorism.

Anything that is proposed for the future of the Ground Zero site will certainly be controversial, just as nearly every proposed memorial on the National Mall was unpopular with someone. Critics of the design for the Lincoln Memorial for example, questioned whether an ornate Greek temple was appropriate for someone born in a log cabin. Eventually the American people accepted each of the memorials.

What are your feelings on memorializing 9/11? Send them to the Lodge and we will advise the Secretary on the preferences of the rangers. Be thinking also about the proposed National Memorial to Flight 93. U.S. Representative John Murtha, who

represents rural Somerset County, Pennsylvania where the plane crashed, has introduced legislation to memorialize the site. He says, "The people on Flight 93 were courageous and heroic in giving their lives to bring down that airplane before it could reach its intended target in our Nation's capital. Hundreds if not thousands of additional lives would have been lost, and our government disrupted if this attack had been carried out as planned". It is the first site in America where citizens successfully fought back and stopped terrorism.

COE News

In January 2002, the Corps took a small step forward in providing safety equipment to its Rangers. After three years of testing in the Fort Worth District, Corps Management has finally authorized COE Park Rangers to carry and use Pepper Spray for self-defensive purposes. Detailed guidance and standard operating procedures will be developed before Rangers will be allowed to actually carry Pepper Spray. Although it is a step forward for Corps Management it is ridiculous that it took three years worth of testing to determine that Rangers need more safety equipment.

How basic is Pepper Spray as a self-defense tool? (Aside from questions as to its effectiveness)? My wife can take it the post office, grocery store, library, court house, or even onto Corps property and in plain view on a key chain! But a Corps Ranger cannot possess Pepper Spray while on duty and issuing a citation to a drunken camper or boater! I imagine it will take another year or two before the "proper guidance" is handed down and the Rangers are trained in Pepper Spray use. Body armor is the next topic for Corps management discussion. Is it appropriate for field offices to procure body armor for Rangers? It's pretty obvious what the real question is, do we want to acknowledge that our Rangers are placed in dangerous situations while performing their duties?

LINKS TO VERIFY INFORMATION:

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/visitassist/news.html>

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/empl>

Notes:

-BG Griffin (Brigadier General Griffin, one of the top brass in the Corps)

- On Feb 27th, my Park Manager sent an email to all of the rangers here requesting thoughts on procuring protective body vests. He consolidated our responses and this is what he sent to his Supervisor: "While I agree that we should not knowingly enter a situation that obviously requires a fully trained and equipped police officer, I know that situations which endanger personal safety can develop rapidly and unexpectedly. As an agency that requires the "visitor's best friend" to masquerade in the costume of a police officer, we should allow all reasonable, passive means of self-protection. Most visitors do believe we have full arrest power. Our visitors comprise a cross section of our society that is becoming more violent. After the September 11 attack, several districts offered their rangers as cannon fodder to would be terrorists to protect our dams. How can we, in good conscience, deny this reasonable tool to improve the safety of our rangers?"

Ranger Workforce Shortage Jumps 27% in Less than Three Years!

*NPS Cuts 166 Commissioned Rangers -
More Than 50 A Year.*

The U.S. Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police has obtained NPS statistics that show that the known deficit of NPS law enforcement rangers increased by 27 percent in the last three years. The law enforcement workforce is now at 64 percent of its effective level. In addition, a greater number of rangers than ever - fully ten percent of the available workforce, are assigned away from parks on national security details.

The NPS has cut the workforce despite the murders of three NPS rangers in the 1990s, and park rangers having the highest incidence of assault of any federal officers, according to DOJ statistics. More alarming, the cuts in rangers have come during a time when top NPS managers have made numerous public statements in

support of improving the law enforcement program. During this time, the NPS has had a study of the Law Enforcement Program by the IACP, has had two task forces to work on implementing recommendations, and has been audited by the Inspector General.

Comments by the last two Directors, Regional Directors, and by the Associate Director for Operations subsequent to these reports supported increasing staffing levels and improving ranger safety. Their actions, tragically, are diametrically opposed to their words when it comes to fixing the shortage.

This explosive situation in the Park Service is now well beyond critical mass. Regions are planning to draft rangers to meet mandatory national security staffing needs, because not enough parks are volunteering staff in the beginning of the busy summer season. In addition, drought is threatening over 20% of the country, resulting in a prediction of a more-active fire season. This represents a serious cut in the number of firefighters.

Also, structural firefighting teams in many National Parks are made up of rangers. These structural teams have been identified by a GAO report as being understaffed, and now are even more understaffed, placing the public and rangers in greater jeopardy.

The U.S. Park Rangers Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police has been warning NPS managers of the consequences of staffing cuts for the past five years. The lodge is now consulting with nationally recognized legal experts in law enforcement liability to build a case against the NPS for knowingly tolerating such an unsafe work environment for its employees. Should an employee be injured on the job due to known staffing deficiencies, the Lodge will offer assistance to the victim. We also expect that liability lawyers around the country will be come aware of the cuts in public safety personnel in the NPS, and will want to hold NPS managers accountable should their clients be affected by these cuts.

Here are the numbers from the 1999 Thomas report:

1999 Staff Level: 1,528

*1999 Recommended Level: 2143**

Percentage of recommend level: 71.3

Known deficit: 615

March, 2002 Staff Level: 1362

*Recommended Level 2143**

Percentage of recommended level: 63.55

Known deficit: 781

Increase in deficit: 166

Percentage increase: 26.9

The document given to the Lodge also states that the effective staff level of non-management, non-special-agent, full-duty rangers in the field available for assignment is currently 810.

With 80 rangers on security assignments at present, roughly 10% of the few remaining rangers are out of the parks. This leaves 730 rangers in the field in nearly 400 units in the National Park Service -- less than two per park. As a contrast, there are currently 500 rangers in the California State Parks system alone.

The prognosis for the situation is even grimmer. FLETC is looking at ramping up to fit in an extra class of 50 students this year, yet these rangers aren't new hires, and won't add to the workforce in numbers. There is currently no plan to increase the budget for law enforcement staffing, or implement an intake program. It will take 2 years for this to happen. At the current rate of decline, an intake program won't begin to break even with the current levels of staffing for several years.

Even worse, the next 3-5 years is projected to be one of the greatest decreases in ranger staffing due to retirements in an aging workforce. To compound this, as the non-retired workforce ages, there are fewer rangers in the field, as rangers with 15 years of service get 8 hours of annual leave a pay period vs. 6, and use more sick leave due to age-related illness.

The seasonal pool, long used for recruitment, has dried up. Hiring new rangers without commissions will require space at FLETC, yet space at FLETC is at an extreme premium due to the anti-terrorism ramp-up that other agencies are going through. These other agencies are also draining the talent pool of potential law enforcement officers for the NPS.

The lodge asks that the NPS attempt to identify who created this crisis, by ignoring VRAP and the IACP, as well as the Lodge,

and by failing to act to fix the problem. Either they knew that this crisis was coming and refused to act, or they should have known and were negligent. Either way, those responsible deserve the scrutiny of the NPS, Congress, and the public.

*The recommended level is based upon VRAP data. The IACP considered VRAP only as a minimum acceptable level, but noted that VRAP left out essential data, such as collateral duties, and the need for backup, in determining staffing. Based on increase in the size of the NPS, the increase in visitation, the need for more rangers both in the field and in program management and a comparison to historic staffing levels, the FOP recommended level of rangers was, in 1999, 3,000. Based upon the increase in NPS visitation patterns and the number of NPS sites since, the FOP currently recommends 3,100 rangers.

Hanky-Panky With FLETC Funds

The Lodge is investigating whether funds allocated for ranger law enforcement training by Congress and the NPS have been repeatedly re-allocated without authorization by the NPS Training Division over a period of several years.

The funds had been allocated for ranger law enforcement training by Congress, the NPS Director, and NPS Regional Directors.

According to a witness with direct information, Carlin routinely forced the FLETC program manager to change numbers on the annual cost account documents (form 10-561) from what the program manager believed to be true, resulting in under-reporting of costs and activities at FLETC, providing congress with a false picture of the real costs of providing the basic law enforcement training academy National Park Service rangers.

Under-budgeting for ranger training has created a funding crisis in the FLETC training program, which became fully apparent in March, 2002, when the NPS was forced to come up with over \$400,000 or have its training programs at FLETC shut down. Another crisis is expected in October, 2002 when the new payments and

funding sources must be found to support the instructors formerly paid by the Treasury Department. This crisis will require the NPS to provide an additional \$350,000 for instructor salary payments on October 1. Because FLETC costs have been understated, Congress has been unaware that this need exists and no funds have been budgeted.

For the past 27 years the Treasury Department has paid for NPS FLETC instructor salaries and relocation costs, but has told agencies that they must bear their own costs. NPS was the last agency to stay on the Treasury dole, and did so until the final week before the deadline. NPS management has known of this responsibility for 7 years but has taken no action to ask Congress for funding to meet its obligation, choosing to request funding for other pet projects instead.

Structural Fire, The Next Threat to Ranger Lives

The GAO report on structural fire states the NPS does not have enough trained structural fire employees. They are actually referring to structural fire managers, not the line grunts. They assume the employees will always be available for fire callout. They skip over the extra pay for training and drills by the rangers, which have in the past mostly been handled for free. Those old-timers will remember when you'd report for a drill even if it's a day off, etc. because it's for the cause. And in a small park you couldn't take comp time because there was no one to cover. What has affected staff levels also affects structural fire response.

A trend noted in one park was that only rangers reported for the structural team drills and for training on days off. Only rangers were available 24/7 to respond. Although other divisions could participate in structural fire, no other divisions require participation or standby. If the Wade report stands and rangers cannot move to fire as a career goal unless they start in fire, why should they labor for years training as grunts to forever stay grunts without options to advance in some choice positions? Where is there a motivation to grow and improve? Also there is a pay issue. Being on call constantly is bad. Especially if unpaid. Being paid standby pay is fine, unless you are the only

one on standby, every night, and eventually you decide its time to get a life away from the job. The need for a real life happens about five years into the career, but may take 10 years.

Apart from lack of structural firefighter numbers, and a decline from the time since the study was made, long-term health issues also should be a concern in both the wildland and structural fire program. At the World Trade Center, firefighters now have disability issues as a result of smoke, dust, and contaminated air. That happens on wildland fire, and structural involves toxics and special equipment. Our structural program requires expensive training, and expensive equipment. This didn't make the budget.

Wade Report Implementation - Pick Up Your Shovel

How come law enforcement is the only discipline the NPS isn't turning into a specialty? Resource management, now fire, what's next?

Implementation of the Wade report means your career in fire stops at cutting line. Maybe crew boss and a few other grunt level positions.

It seems that implementation of the Wade report on Fire is so important that implementation is in progress before the comments from the field have been received. The old Rick Gale position has been taken out of Ranger Activities and is being advertised as this is being written. The reason? This fire is "high profile," thanks to a GAO report that criticizes the wildland fire program. The chief rangers should be thrilled that their opinion is being valued so much that changes are being made before their comments are in. And of course, contrast this to the IACP and IG reports where over a year and a half has gone by with nothing to show for it in organizational change.

Why the difference? Money. Fire money is separately programmed. Building that program that doesn't mean that they'll need to raid other pet projects like they would to improve the ranger profession.



Fraternal Order of Police

VIRGINIA STATE LODGE

9407 Hull Street Road, Suite E
Richmond, Virginia 23236
(804) 745-6720
FAX (804) 745-6715

President
Dan Blake
Charlottesville

Secretary
Joseph A. Vass
Hampton

Dear Members of Lodge 60:

As President of the Virginia State Lodge and its membership, let me say congratulation to you the members of Lodge 60 upon the completion of 15 years of service to your membership and the Fraternal Order of Police.

You have much to be proud of in your accomplishments over the past 15 years as a lodge and the goals your members have achieved. During those years you have encountered some setbacks and disappointments but through it all you the members worked together to get the job done.

Your membership has been very fortunate to choose leaders who had the foresight and courage to make the tough decisions and address those concerns and achieve resolutions so that you the members can enjoy the benefits you have today. However, do not rest upon those laurels as there is much to still be done and the future is yet undecided. Right now you have the power to choose what issues are important to you and how to address those concerns to obtain the best for your members.

As President of the Virginia State Lodge and the membership of 9000 members we stand with you to help you achieve those goals and dreams for the future.

It has been my honor to work with you the members of Lodge 60 during my term and I look forward to continuing our positive relationship in the future as we work together to get the job done.

Congratulation on your 15th Anniversary and I wish you many more years of service.

Fraternally,

Dan Blake
President, Virginia State Lodge
Fraternal Order of Police

"Law is a Safeguard of Freedom"

Lodge Website

Brother Duane Buck has built and maintains the Lodge website. We keep it updated with notices and links to other sites that we think are interesting and/or helpful to resource based law enforcement officers. Visit it often between issues of the Protection Ranger to keep current on things that affect you and your job. The address is www.rangerfop.com

Application for Membership

I, the undersigned, a full-time regularly employed law enforcement officer, do hereby make application for active membership in the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, FOP. If my membership should be revoked or discontinued for any cause other than retirement while in good standing, I do hereby agree to return to the lodge my membership card and other material bearing the FOP emblem.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

DOB: _____

Permanent Rangers: \$52/year

Seasonals and Retired Active Members: \$35/year

Associate (non-Commissioned) Membership (Newsletter only): \$35/year

Renewals: You do not need to send in this form to renew. Enclose a copy of your Commission (new members only).

Agency and Work Unit: _____

Mail to: FOP Lodge, POB 151, Fancy Gap, VA 24328

Phone: 1-800-407-8295 10am-10pm Eastern Time or email randallfop@ls.net