



A Formal Thank You

by Russ Hauck

Whenever one receives something of worth, it is proper to respond with a formal "thank you." Having attended the Park Ranger Conference in Ventura, I want to use this avenue to do that.

To Dr. Kennedy, **thank you** for your remarks. You are truly inspira-

tional. To all of the presenters, **thank you** for sharing your time and talents. To the organizing team, **thank you** for preparing this conference. Although the conference takes only one week to complete, you all spent an entire year in thought and action. To the founding fathers of PRAC, thank you for your foresight. To my colleagues, **thank you** for doing your part to advance the profession. For 51 weeks per year, I feel like it is me against the world; but for one week per year I realize that it is all of us against the world. I left the conference feeling enlightened, motivated, and empowered.

For those of you who didn't attend the conference, I urge you to overcome the obstacle(s) that prevents you from attending. If it's financial, start saving for next year, or consider attending when the conference is in your half of the state to cut down on the expenses. We're all employed on the "paid in sunsets" plan. If it's time, plan your vacation around the conference or come for just one day. If you don't think you'll get anything out of it, you may need to re-eval-

uate your personal and professional growth. There's an old saying: "when you're through improving, you're through."

A car can't run forever without a tune-up. A house won't last without a new coat of paint every now and then. While these are two major investments one makes in one's life, they pale in comparison to the investment one makes in his or her career. We're compensated for the time we spend at work, but that is equivalent to filling the car up with gas, or dusting and vacuuming around the house. While those things are necessary, they don't contribute to the overall quality and efficiency of the object. Similarly, without personal and professional growth, our individual quality and efficiency begin to suffer. We need a periodic tune-up and a fresh coat of paint. The Park Ranger Conference can provide that.

Eighty-four dollars is a bargain for a conference of this quality, especially when you consider the fact that some meals are included in that price. I remember my "ski-bum" days when we would pack eight people into a motel room, and if you were any good at "rock-paper-scissors" you could usually end up with a bed. Start planning now for next year's conference in Concord. If you live in Southern California, and can't afford to travel that far, we'll be back in March 1998, so put it on your calendar now. It is truly worth the investment of your time and finances. I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming conference. I'll be the one with "Park Ranger" on my nametag.

Region I Bar-B-Que

Mark your calendars for **Friday May 10, 1996**. PRAC is sponsoring a BBQ at Central Park, Lake Elizabeth in Fremont from 2:00 to 6:00 PM.

Come join us for a good time. Meet old acquaintances, make new friends. We will have volleyball and frisbee. Please bring a dish to share. The fee is \$5.00.

If you join PRAC or renew an expired membership at the BBQ, you can eat for free! Your membership will be good for the remainder of the year.

Location: Central Park Visitor Center
at Lake Elizabeth,
40000 Sailway Drive, Fremont CA

Date: Friday, May 10, 1996

Time: 2:00 to 6:00 PM

Contact: Sandy Ferreira (510) 791-4340
Voice Mail (510) 494-4895 X 5341
FAX (510) 791-4137

Please RSVP. Thanks and we look forward to seeing you.



From The President's Desk

Change is an interesting thing. In biology class we learned that life cannot exist without change. As we manage parks and open spaces we try to encourage biological diversity through changes in the environment. In psychology class we learned that life can cease to exist because of change. Sudden, rapid changes are very stressful to humans and we all know that too much stress is bad for your health. Think about those tests you can find in magazines and books where points are assigned for life changes. You know, 10 points for a promotion, 50 points for a marriage, 100 points for a death in the family. Too many points over too short a time span and **bang**, you got an ulcer or worse.

Right now the park ranger field is undergoing a great deal of change. Over the last few years some ranger programs have dissolved, some expanded, others have moved from parks departments into police departments. Right now most of these changes are made by upper level management and politicians who have never worked as ranger. Talk about major points on the old stress scale.

Change for the better does happen (back to biology class), better equipment, improved training and peer support can knock a few points off the stress scale. The park ranger profession is evolving. Old ads for rangers used to call for a man who was comfortable in the wild, could shoot straight and live off the land. Today's ranger can be male or female, is usually college educated, with training and expertise in a dozen different areas. These changes make park rangers one of the most valuable employees any government agency could ask for.

The moral to this little story is that rangers have to focus all the change that is occurring. If we don't it could end up hurting. We need to be out educating those policy makers and the public. If your agency is about to undergo a major change, call! PRAC can help nudge the changes over to the plus side, maybe save you a few points on your life stress score.

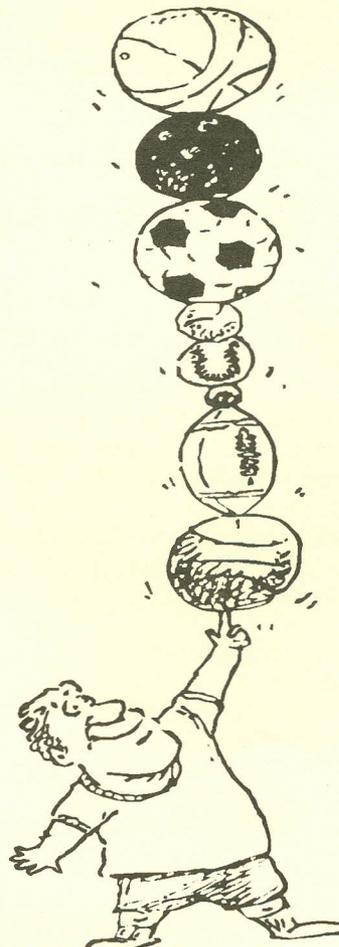
Pam Helmke

Your Tax Dollars At Work

by Russ Hauck
Glendale Park Ranger

I recently received a copy of a "Draft Environmental Alternatives Analysis" for the Northern Spotted Owl produced by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. I don't know what mailing list I was on to receive this telephone-book-thick piece of work, but I got it none the less.

If any of you folks in Northern California would like it, it's yours for the asking. Call me at (818) 548-3795, first caller wins. I'll even pay the postage. there's only one condition. The next time I see a Northern Spotted Owl in Glendale, I want it back!



Earth Day Games

by Sandy Ferreira

Here's a couple of good ideas that kids can enjoy on Earth Day or any day for that matter.

Earth Cookies

Supplies needed for game: knives, blue and green frosting, round cookies.

How to Play: using frosting—decorate cookies to look like the earth. Enjoy!

Scoop Ball

Supplies needed for game: scoops (milk gallons cut out), balls

How to Play: using frosting: work with a partner, throw the balls back and forth and try to catch in the scoop.

Taking Better Pictures

by Ken Miller

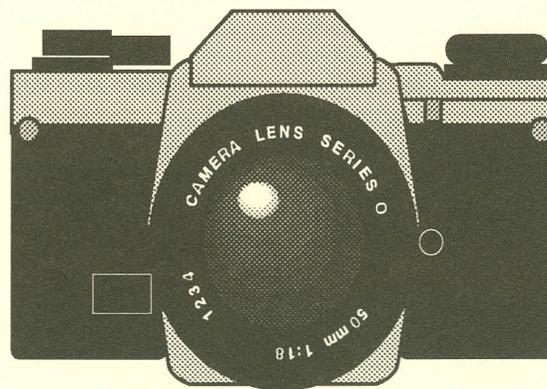
I think that everyone wishes that they could take better pictures. At the Ventura PRAC/CSPRA conference I attended a workshop by Glenn Allen who is a professional photographer and educator. Glenn said that the visual image is one of the most powerful tools available to the interpreter. I learned lots of information in one hour and want to share some of it with you.

Take different shot angles of your subject. Try a long, medium, and short as well as a high, middle, and low angle. You will discover things about your subject that are not apparent with just a snapshot.

There are six elements of design when making a photograph. The written word is the number one thing that a person will notice in a photograph. Brightly lit areas will attract the viewers attention next. Bright colors will attract attention too. The other three elements are contrast which is the distinction between light and dark, converging lines and framing, and negative space or blackness.

Glenn mentioned that there are

only three things that separate professional photographers from amateurs. *Understand exposure control.* Cameras believe that the world is 18% gray and will expose film to make the subject 18% gray. If your subject is either darker or lighter you will need to compensate the exposure. This is the reason that pictures taken in bright snow come out dark if you don't alter the exposure. *Camera stability* is another difference. If you use a tripod make sure that it weighs more than the camera. You can hang a pack below the tripod to add weight. Finally, *shade your lense.* Do not allow glaring light to hit the front of your lense.



Two final hints that he gave were the following. Don't use a shutter speed slower than the focal length of your lense to prevent a blurry photo. Use a port-a-bush. Not the port-a-bush that first comes to mind. If there is something in your photo that distracts from your subject use a tree branch or piece of bush to camouflage it.

I learned a lot of information in an hour and look forward to using it. Happy picture taking.

Pooper Scooper Ordinance

by Sandy Ferreira

In response to many citizen's complaints of dog owners who walk their dogs in Central Park and don't pick up their dog's waste, the City of Fremont just recently passed a "Pooper Scooper" ordinance. This ordinance *FMC 3-5300 (5), (6) and (7)* requires dog owners to carry a disposal bag when walking their dog on any public place or park. It also requires the dog owner to pickup their dog's waste and dispose of it in a trash receptacle. Lastly, it requires a dog owner to show on demand of a Park Ranger or Animal Services Officer a disposal bag to pick up their dog's waste with. Failure to comply, if cited, will cost the dog owner a \$75.00 fine.

The Parks Department has installed 4 dispenser units which contain biodegradable disposal bags. These are free to the public and are located in key areas of the park. If they use their bag, they can pick up additional bags to use and Ranger staff will hand them out too. In addition to the dispenser units, informational signs have been installed with each dispenser informing the public of the new ordinance. Informational signs have been installed at major entrances in Central Park.

To encourage dog owners to be more responsible, Ranger staff will set up educational "check points" randomly

throughout the park for the next 60 days. Dog owners will be asked to voluntarily to stop and educational material informing the public of the new ordinance will be handed out. A disposal bag will be given to dog owners who need one, and a dog biscuit as a reward to dog owners who have a disposal bag with them.

The *FMC* ordinance and a picture of dogs was designed on a bumper sticker. This bumper sticker was placed on all the trash cans in Central Park. They ask the dog owner to be more responsible, and pick up after their dog. It reminds them "it's the Law."

Since this new ordinance has passed, I have noticed dog owners carrying plastic disposal bags. As they pass by the Ranger station, they have held up their disposal bag for staff to see. While on park patrol, I have been stopped by dog owners who seem to agree that the new ordinance is a good idea. They too have been unhappy with some irresponsible dog owners who don't pick up after their dogs.

From the feedback I have received from the public so far, I think the majority of park users who are dog owners will be responsible and comply with this new city ordinance.



USES OF NATIVE PLANTS WORKSHOP - June 6, 1996

Presented by

PARK RANGERS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

THE COURSE WILL BE A WILDERNESS SKILLS COURSE FOCUSING ON THE USES OF PLANTS BY "PLANT PEOPLES" SUCH AS NATIVE AMERICANS. PARTICIPANTS WILL GET TO KNOW SEVERAL PLANTS AND THEIR USES. PRODUCTION OF CORDAGE, PROCESSING AND PREPARING EDIBLE PLANTS WILL BE COVERED. ALSO SURVIVALIST SKILLS USING AVAILABLE PLANT MATERIALS WILL BE TAUGHT. PLANT MATERIALS ARE ALSO USED AS TOOLS IN MAKING BASKETS, BOWS AND ARROWS, ROPE, SMUDGES AND FIRE MAKING APPARATUS.

LOCATION: LAKE PERRIS STATE RECREATION AREA
Regional Indian Museum

Date: Thursday, June 6, 1996 9:00 to 4:00 PM

Class size will be limited to Twenty Persons - Please confirm your registration ASAP.

Mail Registration Form to:

Please Register me in the Plant Uses Workshop:

Paul Pettit -PRAC Region 5 Director (909) 928-0830 h. June 6, 1996 at Lake Perris SRA

28790 Ellis Ave (909) 940-5644 w.

Name: _____

Romoland, CA 92585-9707

Address: _____

\$55.00

City, ST., ZIP _____

Make Check Payable to: PRAC

Phone: h. _____ w. _____

REGION 5 MEETING and all members

by Paul Pettit

A Region 5 Meeting is scheduled for May 16 th, Thursday at 6:30 PM. It will be hosted by Ranger John Ganaway of Orange County Parks. We will be discussing the role of Rangers and authorities to issue citations and Parking Citation Programs. All are welcome to attend, we may try move to a local food establishment for a bite to eat.

Join us at IRVINE PARK. Take the 405 FWY and get off on JAMBOREE and go west till it ends at the park. From the 91 FWY, go to the 55 FWY west/south, go to Katella Off-ramp and go east until it ends at Irvine Park. Address is: 1 Irvine Road.

A Region 5 Meeting will be held July 18 in San Diego Area. Mark your Calendars. If any one would like to sponsor the meeting at their park please contact me.

CERES California Environmental Resources Evaluation System

By
Paul Pettit

The California Environmental Resources System is an information system developed by the California Resources Agency to facilitate access to a variety of electronic data describing California's rich and diverse environments. The goal of CERES is to improve environmental analysis and planning by integrating natural and cultural resource information from multiple contributors and by making it available and useful to a variety of users. Scanned photography, satellite imagery, geographic information system (GIS) maps and data layers are examples of information included from a network of data bases from several locations. It is designed to shorten the costly and time consuming process of finding, compiling and interpreting resource information and make needed information more readily accessible.

For More Information contact: CERES (916) 653-8614

900 N Street, Suite 250, PO BOX 942837, Sacramento, CA 94237-0001

or on the WEB --- <http://ceres.ca.gov/>

Oakland Rangers Form Association To Gain Access to LDF

by Dave Sloane

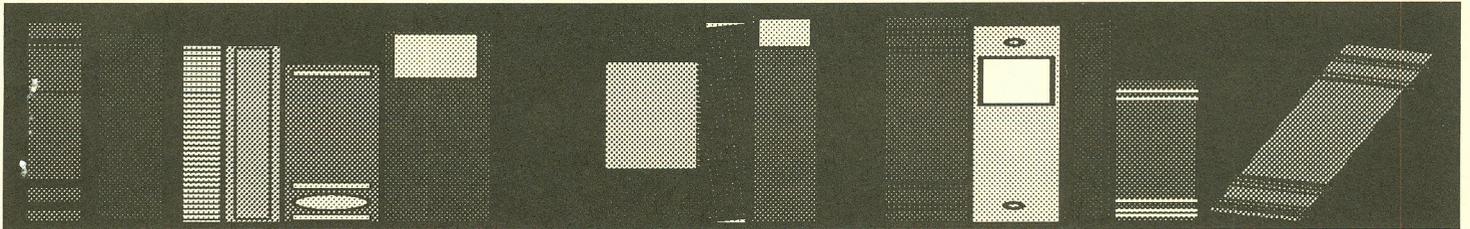
After reading my last *Signpost* article on the Legal Defense Fund, City of Oakland Park Rangers contacted me on yet another way to obtain LDF and membership into PORAC. The Oakland Rangers formed their own association (which at the the time does not represent them during negotiations). Fees go to pay for PORAC membership and LDF. Since this is not a formal bargaining unit, it allowed rangers to obtain LDF with fewer legal hurdles to jump over than a change of representation or the formation of a new ranger bargaining unit.

The "Oakland Park Rangers Association" was formed to "assist in the promoting the professionalization of the park ranger service; to provided for educational opportunities; to encourage among the members a closer personal acquaintance and a friendly spirit of mutual cooperation; to encourage, contribute to, and promote the good citizenship of youth in the community and wherever possible to assist in all matters pertaining to the welfare and efficiency of the City of Oakland Ranger and the well-being of the community" (OPRA bylaws objective statement).

Members are required to pay an initiation fee and an additional amount monthly to cover enrollment in PORAC and LDF. The membership consists only of currently employed classification of rangers in the department and retired rangers from the department. The association has a "termination of membership" statement which seems to discourage rangers from only paying membership dues when they might need LDF representation.

The forming of similar associations may be beneficial to other medium to large sized agencies within PRAC. This allows for PORAC membership and LDF coverage without changing representation. In the event that an agency's rangers decided to change representation from a general bargaining unit to a ranger oriented bargaining unit at a later date, the machinery to do so would already be in motion.

City of Oakland Park Rangers may be reached at (510) 238-7888. Contact Ranger Rich Wirkkala for details.



Another Book Report

by Bern Smith

One of the enduring myths of the last 150 years is the notion that, while evolutions is a fairly entrenched theory, it is nonetheless impossible to prove, because significant changes take so long to occur. We could never measure over the millennia necessary, the myth's promoters say, so science fails to provide the data required to illustrate the changes.

Get over it. Peter and Rosemary Grant have spent several months in each of the last 20+ years studying 13 species of finches on the Galapagos Islands. They have taken thousands of measurements from birds, spanning 20 or more generations. The data they collect indicates evolution is occurring all the time, relentlessly. The birds mesh completely with their habitats, adapting quickly to changes in climate, food and competition. The adaptations pass to succeeding generations so quickly that at first it is difficult to believe.

The data refute skepticism. Species populations are expanding and contracting, average body weights and sizes

are rising or falling, beaks are changing shape and size. Some species are adapting away from their previous food sources, taking advantage of some new plant or the decline of another species. Some species are hybridizing, blending the traits of two species and then, in subsequent generations, blending the blends. Other species sharing the same habitats are diverging, reinforcing their differences to fortify their hold on specific niches. All of these trends are documented and analyzed. The proof is abundant.

If you think that one bird study is insufficient proof, consider that the author gathered some other evolutionary studies while researching this book—over 2,000 of them. Evolution works, and it is working non-stop all the time.

Weiner, Jonathan *The Beak of the Finch*, Alfred A Knopf Inc., New York, 1994.

This is an attempt to placate Smitty—he's not the only one who can read a book. Call me the apprentice Smitty.

Smitty's Book Report

Back again after a great week in Ventura. I don't know when I have had such a good time as I did at this conference. It is always a lot of fun to renew old acquaintances, meet new people in the field, and to socialize with the present and the past. In my case, it was a great pleasure to have Walt Cacace (City of Santa Cruz) and Bill Lawrence (City of San Diego) around again. Along with myself and Raleigh Young of Santa Clara County, Walt and Bill were representing the founding fathers of PRAC at our twenty birthday party. We all had a lot of fun, the workshops were educational, the food excellent, and the comradeship exceptional. State Park Director Don Murphy and National Park Service Director Roger Kennedy both gave stirring addresses to the attendees, as well. All in all, a week well spent.

As always with conferences, you also end up finding new resources to turn to. I suppose some of you are familiar with it, but I ran into a new and exceptional source, of naturalist materials. The company is called, *The Acorn Naturalists*. They put out a beautiful catalog of environmental materials, books, etc. Their address is: Acorn Naturalists, 73000 East 17th Street, #J-236, Tustin, CA 92680. Write to them for a free catalog.

In our last "blurb," I told you that I was reading *the Power Broker*. *The Power Broker* is a Pulitzer Prize winner which was written by Robert Caro in 1974. Even though my favorite bookstore did not have it on the shelf, it was still very much in print and easy to obtain. *The Power Broker* has been called one of the most acclaimed books of our time. It reveals how one man, Robert Moses, became one of the most powerful people in New York by developing some public authorities into a political machine that was virtually a fourth branch of government. One that could

bring to their knees Governors and Mayors, by mobilizing banks, contractors, labor unions, insurance firms, the press and the Church, into a powerful economic force. Moses personally conceived and completed public works costing 27 billion dollars without ever having been elected to a public office. The greatest builder the world has ever known. He even dominated the President of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt. He built parks by the hundreds, was on the New York State Park Commission. He found himself on the boards of several "authorities." Authorities that built bridges and roads that collected millions of dollars in tolls.

The Power Broker, is a story about how this one man rose to such power, from an obscure city park commissioner, to one of the most powerful people in the country. I see in his rise to power, other people that have risen, in like fashion, to places of similar control. There is a certain midwestern university I know, that has a basketball coach that has risen to such a powerful figure, that I doubt the president of the institution has much control over what goes on. As I read *the Power Broker*, I saw other like people within our own county. Maybe not as high a profile as Robert Moses, but a power broker, for sure. This is an interesting book because it does start you thinking about the power structures of local governments, and how things get done through power. Is it important to us to become a "skeptical thinker?" You bet ya!

Caro, Robert A. *The Power Broker, Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*, Vintage Books, New York, New York, 1974.

Be your own power broker. Put your brain power into action. Read!!

California Parks Conference—Ventura

by Sandy Ferreira
Director Region 1

For the three days that I attended the conference in Ventura, I had a great time. It was fun to get together with our directors from PRAC and all the other rangers from different parts of California. I enjoyed meeting some of the "Founding Fathers of PRAC" which included Smitty, Raleigh Young, Bill Lawrence and Walt Cacace. As we sat together and talked about old times and how these guys founded PRAC, we learned that Walt still has all the old meeting notes from the first time these guys got together and began to form the foundation of PRAC! That was twenty years ago! Anyhow it was fun to listen to some good old stories from these guys.

One of the special programs that I attended was the "Ghost Walk" of the historic downtown of San Buena Ventura. This was an evening walk which was lead by noted Ghostologist and historian Richard Senate. In spite of the inclement weather, we had a good turnout and were able to tour several of Ventura's old haunts. The walking tour lasted about two hours and we covered allot of territory.

There were a number of varied topics and breakout sessions that one could attend at the conference. Each day offered different selections which applied to Resource Management, Interpretation, Law Enforcement, Operations and several special event to choose from. All in all, the atmosphere and location for this conference was good. From the feedback I received from other attendees, everyone agreed that this conference had something for each and everyone who attended. Good job California State Parks! I hope to see everyone again at next years conference.

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Agency:	
(1-25 persons—6 mailings)	\$75 _____
(> 25 persons—12 mailings)	\$100 _____
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