



The Best Volunteer Project Ever

by Ken Miller

On June 20th, I helped with a volunteer project at one of our Preserves. The project went so well that it deserves an article. Shanin Sullivan, Community Relations Specialist in Public Affairs, from Mervyn's Department Stores contacted our Volunteer Coordinator Paul Mckowan and was looking for a community service project for about one hundred people. The project was for Mervyn's Weekend of Giving. Both Paul's and my initial reaction was "no way" because of the large amount of people but we agreed to think about it. After a few days we thought "yea...we could pull this off."

Pulgas Ridge Preserve is about 300 acres and is the former site of a tuberculosis sanitarium. He preserve is an exotic plant nightmare with lots of acacia and broom. My District does have an ongoing program to remove the exotics but there is always need for more work. One hundred people? Cut them loose at Pulgas to pull exotics was what we decided.

Tools were an issue. Our District had eight weed wrenches to its name and that just wasn't going to cut it for the project. I got on the phone to neighboring park agencies (whom I know through PRAC) and borrowed wrenches from them. Now we were up to about twenty wrenches. Better, but still not enough for one hundred volunteers. Paul and I were open with Mervyn's from the beginning that we were concerned about the large group size. We told

Shanin that we would be short on tools and she said they'd look into possibly purchasing some for us. Well.....Mervyn's ended up buying twenty more wrenches for us to the tune of \$3000. It was Christmas in June. The wrench manufacturer is in Oregon and he drove down to deliver them the day of project. They wouldn't have made it on time if they had been shipped.

To supervise the group we had Volunteer Coordinator Paul Mckowan, Resource Management Specialist Jodi Issacs and myself. Docent Coordinator Cheryl Solomon, Visitor Services Supervisor Carleen Bruins, Administrative Analyst Dierdre Dolan, and Open Space Management Secretary Kathleen Hart all volunteered to come out from our main office to supervise as well.

The group arrived in two school buses and we were off to work. We broke down into teams of ten to instruct the volunteers on hazards, plant identification, and how to use the wrenches. After two hours a semi-sized dumpster was filled with scotch broom.

Everything went right in this project. The six P's come to mind. Proper prior planning prevents poor performance. Everybody involved in the project deserves a big thank you. From the volunteers, Mervyn's for organizing the project and purchasing the tools, our office staff for helping to supervise the project, and other park agencies for lending tools, the project wouldn't have happened without you. The project was definitely win-win for everyone. I hope that everyone's volunteer projects can go as well as this one did.

PRAC Membership Renewal

by Sandy Ferreira,
Director Region 1

The Park Rangers Association of California is a professional organization for Park Rangers and similar employees of municipal, county, special district or federal agencies. We provide and promote a common ground for sharing experiences emotions, information, current jobs which are available state-wide and training.) If you join as a new member now (September), you will get the remainder of this years membership plus all of next years membership for the same fee. If you have any questions about PRAC, and/or need to renew your membership, please give me a call at (510) 791-4340. I look forward to serving you.

Hug-a-Tree Presenter Class

Cheri Hill, A Hug-a-Tree presenter trainer, has been gracious enough to arrange a class for us in September. This is a great program for children teaching them what to if they get lost in the wilderness. The program is an excellent interpretive tool and makes a great campfire program or outreach program for school groups. Don't miss this one!!!

Date: September 17, 1997

Where: Fremont Central Park Visitor Services Center, 40000 Paseo Padre Parkway, Fremont

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Fee: \$25.00 for Members/ \$35.00 Non-members

Contact: John Havicon (916) 676-0934 or (916) 875-6672

Send Registration Name(s) and Fees to:
Park Rangers Association of California,
P.O. Box 292010, Sacramento, CA 95829

From The President's Desk

I hope each of you is having a safe and fun summer season. On top of caring for our parks and visitors, your Board of Directors and I have had a very busy summer representing the interests of our members.

In July I had the opportunity to provide public testimony to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in support of the Santa Clara County Park Rangers. The Santa Clara County Rangers have been serving in a law enforcement capacity for many years and have been provided with no officer safety equipment. The rangers made a request to their department to be issued and trained in use protective body armor, pepper spray, collapsible batons and handcuffs. The county was willing to offer only vests and pepper spray so the rangers took their case to the supervisors. After hearing testimony from many rangers, the county Sheriffs Department and PRAC in support of this equipment and training upgrade the supervisors voted 3 to 2 against all of the equipment. In a second vote they agreed to support and issue vests and pepper spray. The county rangers have not given up the fight yet and are still pursuing their goal of all four pieces of equipment.

In a second issue the board has voted to join with CSPRA in support of SB 2 (Thompson), a new parks bond act that will provide funding for state and local parks. The last parks bond act was passed in 1988 and all of our state and local park systems are running short of funds. The bill is currently stalled in appropriations and PRAC and CSPRA are campaigning to get it passed to the voters for the 1998 ballots.

CSPRA hopes to get things moving ahead with our support and there is a move afoot to obtain a grant to hire a professional firm to help get SB 2 enacted. If you would like to help on this important issue please get in touch with your local representative as soon as possible.

Finally, I would like to welcome Samantha Nista from the City of Anaheim Parks and Recreation Department to the Board of Directors. Samantha was voted by the board to fill the vacancy in Region 5 left by Paul Pettit's resignation. All of us would like to thank Paul for his hard work on the board over the last 3 years and he has promised stay active with the association. Members in Region 5 can reach Samantha at (714) 254-5263.

Pam

Letter to the Editor

I recently read the July-August 1997 *Signpost*. I found your tribute to fallen rangers the first I've ever seen in the *Signpost*. Thank you.

As you may know, the President established May 15th, National Peace Officer's Memorial Day, as a national day of morning. Flags at all Federal installations flew at half staff for the first time in 1997.

I must tell you there is a monument to these fallen rangers. It's the National Peace Officer Memorial in Washington, DC. I know Ken Patrick, Bob McGee, and Mike Beaulieu's names are on that memorial. I have personally researched the killing of James A. Cary (Hot Springs National Park) and had his name added to the wall. I would encourage all agencies to submit names of their fallen rangers to this memorial.

I would recommend everyone reading *U.S. Rangers: The Law of the Land, the History of Law Enforcement in the Federal Land Management Agencies*, by Paul Berkowitz. It is a chronology of assaults and fatalities on Federal land management officers. It can be obtained through the National Park Ranger FOP Lodge (703) 236-0720.

Finally, in addition to your listing, I would like to add the following ranger names for future consideration:

Jack Gaylar, Yosemite National Park CA
James A. Cary, Hot Springs National Park, AR
William C. Godfrey, Crater Lake National Park, OR
Karl A. Jacobson, Acadia National Park, ME
Charles R. Scarbrough, Yosemite National Park, CA
Gregory Wayt, Casa Grands National Mon., AZ
Opal L. James, Blue Lake Reservoir, Army Corps, AR
Richard D. Doherty, Lake Barkley, Army Corps, KT
Wesley Fox, George Washington Mem. Pkwy, VA
William R. Abrahamson, Providence City Parks, RI

Died April 19, 1921
Killed March 12, 1927
Died November 18, 1930
Killed November 11, 1938
Died June 21, 1954
Killed November 30, 1974
Killed July 1, 1977
Killed September 4, 1980
Died July 15, 1995
Killed October 12, 1995

Sincerely,
Jeff Ohlfs

The Park Rangers Association of California is Your Organization

by Russ Hauck

I received a phone call not too long ago in my capacity as Regional Director of PRAC and pulled out my policy manual to locate the answer. As I thumbed through, I realized that much of the information in it was old news and common knowledge to me, probably because I've been involved in PRAC for a while now, and the manual has been sitting on a shelf behind my desk where I could pick it up and look through it any time I needed to. I also realized that not every member has that opportunity, and what may be routine to me may be quite foreign to some of the membership. I decided to devote this month's article to some of the information in the manual.

The action statement of PRAC lists its purpose: "The Park Rangers Association of California is a professional service organization for park rangers and similar employees of municipal, county, special district, or federal agencies. We provide and promote a common ground for sharing emotions, experiences, information and training."

It continues to list the goals of the organization: "To establish statewide professional standards for rangers through legislation and interagency cooperation; To provide professional training for rangers; To provide a medium of professional communication for rangers and park agencies; To educate agencies and the public as to the role of the ranger."

Policy #17 deals with environmental guidelines: "Following are proposed environmental guidelines to be used by PRAC. These guidelines will help to ensure that the Association will have the least amount of impact on local environments. (I have edited due to space limitations.)

1. Wherever possible, the Association shall go to those convention centers, hotels, and meeting sites which provide opportunities for recycling glass, aluminum, plastic and paper.
2. The Association will not permit the distribution or use of styrofoam products at Association sponsored events.
7. The Association should not permit the use of plastic bags or products for registration packets.
9. The Association will print all letters, fliers, brochures, programs and other materials on recycled paper.

10. The Association will continually search for ways to minimize the impact of its activities on area landfills and the environment."

Policy #15 establishes the Professional Citation Award: "Recipients are recognized for outstanding performance which furthers the mission of the Association, and the ranger profession. Eligibility requirements for this award are as follows: Nominees must have been a regular association member for at least one year and currently be enrolled as a regular member. Nominees must have displayed outstanding performance or made significant contributions to furthering the association and/or the ranger profession."

Policy #10 creates the *Signpost* newsletter: "PRAC will publish a newsletter on a bi-monthly basis. The newsletter will serve the following purposes: provide information about PRAC, the park and recreation field in California, and actions that may have an effect on this association; provide information about the latest theories and developments in resource management, interpretation, park operations, etc.; and provide a forum for the members to express their opinions on any of the above."

Policy #1 addresses late-year membership: "Persons joining as new members beginning September 1 through the end of the year are paid up through the following calendar year."

There is obviously a lot more information in the manual, but I chose to highlight things that I felt could receive immediate attention. If you don't already do so, take immediate steps to make your workplace environmentally conscious. Nominate a co-worker for a professional citation award. Submit an article for publication in the *Signpost*. Everyone of us should try to get a new member to join in September which will result in a fifteen month membership for the price of a twelve month membership.

Take advantage of what PRAC has to offer. By doing so, you will benefit the association through your involvement. President Theodore Roosevelt said "Every man owes some of his time to the upbringing of the profession to which he belongs." If we all contribute just a little, it will make the association stronger, That is reflected in the association's motto: "Park professionalism through unity."

..wildlife stories

A visitor to Glacier National Park in Montana lost his car keys while attempting to lure a ground squirrel by dangling the keys out in front of the critter. The squirrel grabbed the keys and ran down a hole with them. The keys were never retrieved, a ranger cited the man for harassment of wildlife, and a locksmith was called to make new car keys.

..putting our loved ones at risk for a photo

In May of 1994, Tony Moore, 43, of Marietta, Georgia, was gored and seriously injured by a large male bison in Yellowstone, next to the Lake Hotel. Moore and a friend had approached to within 15 feet of the bison to have their pictures taken. While they were standing with their backs to the animal, it charged. Moore's companion escaped, but Moore received a severe puncture wound in his right thigh and was taken by ambulance to a hospital in Jackson for treatment.

Wildlife Disease Exposure

Hantavirus

If your park or open space has any storage sheds, out-buildings, barns or abandoned buildings; you may want to take more precautions entering them. Hantavirus is alive and well in California, and these buildings are the ideal place to find it. Hantavirus is an air-borne disease. It's primary reservoir "host" is the rodent. Scientist aren't really specific about which rodents carry the disease, although the mouse (*Peromyscus* spp.) appears to be the main carrier. Hantavirus does not cause any apparent illness in it's reservoir host. Infected rodents shed the virus through saliva, urine and feces. Humans contract the virus as it is inhaled in the dust particles.

The disease first came to light when an outbreak occurred in New Mexican 1993. The characteristics of the disease are very similar to the common flu, which makes it difficult to diagnose. The signs and symptoms are fever, muscle-aches and flu-like symptoms followed by rapidly progressive respiratory distress and is frequently fatal. The disease may also be transmitted via a mouse bite or transmission through broken skin, such as a cut.

Known hantavirus infections have occurred primarily in healthy adults that have come in contact with infected rodents, usually in a rural setting. Hantavirus cases have been associated with: planting or harvesting field crops; occupying previously vacant cabins or other dwellings; cleaning barns and other outbuildings; disturbing rodent

infested areas while hiking or camping; or inhabiting dwellings with indoor rodent populations.

Victims will need immediate care as the onset can be very rapid within a few hours. The best way to control Hantavirus is with prevention. If the building is occupied, look around for available rodent food sources and nesting sites. Keep food and water covered and stored in rodent-proof metal or plastic containers. Dispose of trash and clutter and use rodent-proof garbage containers with tight fitting lids. Use rodent traps continuously. Wash dishes immediately and clean up any spilled food. If you are cleaning up an outbuilding or barn, Centers of Disease control recommends ventilating the area by opening doors and windows for at least 30-minutes. Do not sweep it first as it will raise the dust. Wash it down first using a general purpose household disinfectant, a hypochlorite solution (bleach, 3 tbs./1-gallon of water), a detergent, or 70% ethyl alcohol.

Incidentally, the name Hantavirus was derived from the Hantaan River in Korea from where the disease was first isolated in 1976. This information was provided to me by the Centers of Disease Control and Wildlife Biologist Roger Jones, who is continuously studying the Hantavirus. If you would like additional information, please contact me (John Havicon) at 916-875-6672.

Another Weird But True Park Story

by Ken Miller

This incident happened to me on July 4thth which is typically one of our busiest days. I sure didn't expect anything like this and I bet you wouldn't have either. But.....It did!

I lucked out and worked the early shift on the 4th which meant I was pretty much on my own for the morning. Low visitation, restock the map boxes, and just the usual duties. My wife and son met me at lunchtime which was a treat. Realizing that I only had three more hours of work till I was home free I decided to get out the mountain bike and go for a trail ride. Visitation was still low and everyone I talked with was pleasant.

I crested a hill and got quite a surprise. Three men in their 20's were hiking uphill wearing motorcycle leathers, carrying motorcycle helmets and custom made big wheels. I'm not making this up. I talked to them, asked what was going on and they told me they were at the park for the third annual Fourth of July big wheel race. I checked our ordinances and determined that our miscellaneous dangerous activities ban would best apply. The public cannot do any activity that could endanger other visitors or interfere with the public's enjoyment of the preserve. No need to mention the 15 MPH speed ordinance or need for a permit for a group activity. The men silently accepted my word and carried their big wheels backs down the hill. I waited a few moments and then heard cheering and skidding coming from the bottom of the hill. Time to call for a fill.

I headed downhill and saw a group of about forty with at least twenty people ready to race. Even before I got within earshot of the group I got the "get a life" comment. From a safe distance uphill I advise the group they were in violation of our ordinance and they would have to leave. There were no children involved in this race, only adults. Visions of the BLM shutting down the Las Vegas to Barstow off-road race came to my mind. I guess that this was my own miniature version of that. Using my best attempts at verbal judo I mentioned that if the group had gotten a permit that things might be different. No luck. There are video cameras to record the race for public access TV and now I'm being filmed. Last years winner is carrying his trophy and is bummed that he won't be able to give it to this years winner. Some of the racers even inform me that they have been cited in other parks for racing their big wheels. With lots of name calling and shouting (On the groups part) they finally disperse downhill to the trail-head. My fill units arrive.

A great time for good cop/bad cop to work. The group is out of the preserve so my fill units have nothing to worry about. Lots of joking between the group and my fills. I get referred to as the *\$#@&@Ranger. Well, you can't win them all. I never would have imagined this contact in my wildest dreams. But it really did happen.

1998 Park Ranger Conference

Natural Resources Tract Survey

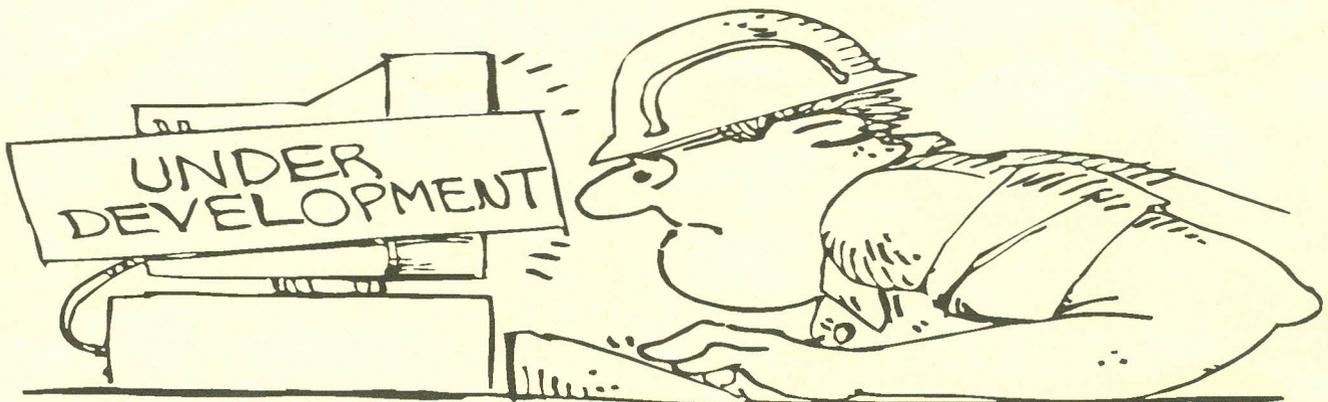
The natural resources committee is conducting a survey to find out what topics you would like to see covered at the 1998 PRAC/CSPRA Conference in San Luis Obispo next March. We've listed a few ideas we've had, please rate them in order of importance to you.

We've also left lots of room for your ideas. If you've got a topic or a speaker idea please list them below or give a call.

- _____ Oak Woodlands Management Update
- _____ Current Trends in Star Thistle Management
- _____ Re-introduction of Native Grasses
- _____ Resource Maintenance Management Plans
- _____ Overview of Current Zoonotic Disease issues (ie: Plague, Hantavirus, Lyme Disease)
- _____ Hazard Tree Assessment/Management Planning
- _____ Feral Pig Management/Abatement Strategies
- _____ Update on New Herbicides and Pesticides
- _____ Physical/Chemical Restraint of Wildlife

Your Ideas: _____

Send to:
Pam Helmke
1375 Branham Lane
San Jose, CA 95118-2505
(408)259-5477



Interpretive Planning Workshop Coming Your Way

Is interpretation part of your job?!
Is a lack of experience in planning interpretive programs
keeping you from excelling in this part of your job?
If so...have we got a workshop for you!

The National Association for interpretation's San Francisco Bay Area Chapter is proudly sponsoring a 2-day interpretive Planning Workshop for Park Professionals on November 18 and 19, 1997 in Santa Clara County (exact location yet to be determined).

Interpretive Planning Techniques
for Creating Visitor Friendly interpretive Services in Parks
Instructor: John Veverka

Workshop Registration :\$35.00 N.A.I. members, \$40.00 non-members

This two day course will provide an overview for state-of-the-art interpretive planning for park-based interpretive services that are visitor market based, and objective based. Workshop instructor John Veverka has over 20 years of interpretive planning and training experience. He is the author of the book interpretive Master Planning, and Editor of *InterpEdge*—the new international Journal for the cutting edge in interpretive communications. The main objective of the workshop is to give participants “real world” planning techniques that they can take back with them and begin to use right away to help make their programs and media more effective. The workshop will also provide lots of “hands-on” and “minds-on” experiences, with lots of ideas on how to put the “magic” back into interpretation. Workshop topics will include:

- The Psychology of the audience—how visitors learn and remember in Recreational Learning Environments
- Putting Tilden's Principals to practical use
- Interpretation as a marketing and management tool

- Six steps to doing an interpretive plan for “anything”
- An overview of interpretive Trail Planning
- An overview of interpretive Exhibit Planning
- Planning outdoor interpretive panels

Participants that are currently working on an interpretive trail plan, or developing outdoor interpretive panels can bring their project materials with them to work on during the course, or meet with John in the evening for individual project advice and ideas (on a first-come- first-served basis). John Veverka's book, **Interpretive Master Planning** is also available at a discount to workshop participants for \$20.00 (a \$25.00 value). Books can be ordered with workshop registration.

For registration information, call Robin Schaut at Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation, (408) 354-2752. Workshop space is limited to 30 participants.

There is Some Hope in the Battle Against Star Thistle

On the 15th of July, Don Rocha and I attended a agricultural field day in Woodland California to hear about a new chemical spray designed to control star thistle. The fact that 125 ranchers (oops, 123 ranchers and two park people) showed up, seemed to add to the fact that star thistle is a real problem everywhere. The field day was jointly hosted by the University of California at Davis Agricultural Extension, and the Dow Chemical Company. I happened upon the information about the field day by reading the California Cattleman, the journal for CCA. The chemical that was featured is Transline, which is registered in 48 states, but for some reason, not registered here. The Cattlemen were a little peeved at that, for sure. We all met at the Yolo Land and Cattle Company Ranch, to hear about this method of control, and to visually see the results of test plots on the ranch. It was kind of good to hear a rancher admit to not paying attention to his land, and also take a chance to try something new to correct his mistakes.

Needless to say, both Don and I were more than impressed with the results that we observed. Transline has the safest herbicide rating, and does not need an applicator license to use. At least, no restricted use permit. It is applied in early spring. The plots we saw were sprayed on the 14th of

March, but you want to get it upon emergence, and before flowering. Once the plant flowers, you only have a window of eight days to seed production. Like most herbicides, the chemical disrupts plant growth regulators by acting as a natural plant growth hormone. It takes about 2 months to kill the star thistle after application. There is soil residual. Unlike 2-4-D, which was also used as a test plot, you get seasonal control. It might last two, or maybe three seasons. Since star thistle does not like shade, this gives other plants a chance to come in and shade it out.

The test plots we saw were dramatic. The 2-4D had a re-emergence, and by July, the plants were already six inches or more in height. They also had a mowing and a burn plot that both showed emergence after application. The Transline had zero plants in the test plots. Of course, the control plots were solid star thistle. Transline controls all composites, (sunflowers, all thistles, etc), legumes, night shade, buckwheat. You need some moisture after application (you can wait for rain), to have it perk into the ground. It does NOT effect trees and shrubs. Once sprayed, it will only take a little maintenance to keep things under control.

(Story continues on page 7.)

To Live & Battle Another Day

by Jeff Geffney

When I was called and asked to write a summary of a recent struggle for park ranger advancement for the "The Signpost" I had a hard time focusing in on what exactly should be written or what our major obstacle has been. A major obstacle (as in life) has been ignorance. Ignorance of the job, dangers, and of the expectations placed on us. There is also the Sheriff and his political ploys to gain control of our money and our department. Top this off with the usual opposition from administration and their clout with the politicians and you've painted a pretty grim picture. This is a battle that could be going on in any agency. We looked to our more seasoned staff, people who have been on the front lines of this war for the last twenty years and who have asked for some reinforcements from the newer recruits.

The Santa Clara County Park Rangers' Association had a new battle for safety equipment (and we're not talking chaps, goggles and ear plugs). This has been a war that has been raging in our county for 20 years (Senior Ranger Matt Anderson has logged the most battle time, 10 years). The rangers have won a few battles and the county has won a few more. We took a survey (12/96) and found that to feel safe as peace officers 90% of our members wanted a baton, handcuffs, pepper spray, and body armor and 55% also wanted firearms. This initiated the most recent battle in this war and a complicated battle plan was formed that included meeting with administrators, talking to the Sheriff, enlisting the aid of local police agencies, and helping politicians to get elected.

Our department is bizarre in that we have compromised ourselves over the last 10-11 years. We pay the Sheriff and his department upwards around a million dollars a year to "augment" the rangers in our department. This means that there are two law enforcement philosophies for one jurisdiction, and two different perspectives on handling mundane things. A 6M (misdemeanor) traffic warrant is more urgent to a deputy sheriff than a person poaching deer or collecting a "California Dog Face" butterfly, when exactly the opposite is true for a park ranger. Deputies can not be ordered to enforce laws they can not and do not want to understand. This among other concepts are hard ones for politicians and administrators to grasp and how it all effects the big picture.

Without going into all of the history (ask some of the founding fathers of PRAC) the bottom line is that we are now in a very precarious situation. On the one hand we are determined to maintain our role as generalist and provide all of the services expected by our visitors and on the other hand we want to feel safe coming to work and doing our job. If we push too hard the county turns all law

enforcement over to the Sheriffs department. The parks fall apart while the deputies deal with matters that are important to police officers not park rangers. We lose status as we become "non essential" staff with no public safety functions. As Russ Hauck has stated (along with many other modern day poets), "As a profession, specialization is our enemy." In the midst of all of this are the administrators, politicians, and the Sheriff all hovering over us like group of turkey vultures waiting for a chance to swoop in and get their "piece."

After processing all of this information there was only one place to go, interpretation and education (and we're not talking nature walks). We walked precincts for incoming politicians, we gave money to their campaigns, and more importantly we talked to them. We explained what our concerns were and the options we had. I think it is important at this point to state how beneficial and helpful PORAC (Peace Officers Research Association of California) was in this process. They gave us input and we gleaned the process from them (for endorsements). Being PORAC members also adds some clout when calling a campaign manager. PRAC did it's part and we should thank Pam Helmke for speaking at the board meeting when the vote came down. I hope to see PRAC continue to seek out the path for this kind of validation and gain the same political "clout."

As a direct result the two votes that supported our position and request came from the two Board of Supervisors members whom we had walked precincts for, talked with, and were subsequently elected. They know our Association president and PAC coordinator by first name and treated us with respect and praise. Unfortunately there are five Board members and we walked precincts for a third candidate during that same period of time and found ourselves on the losing end of that election (unfortunately the winning candidate knew all this).

We are now faced with a Board that voted 2-3 in our support, which is better than 5-0 against us. We did however receive authorization for pepper spray and body armor. This process has taken about a year to evolve. I think this article has become too long and so I am going to end it for now. We have learned a lot and we are willing to share our information. If anyone is interested or would like help give me a call at (408) 779-3634. I will live to fight another day...

Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.
Martin Luther King Jr.— *Strength of Love* (1963)

The Battle Against Star Thistle

(Continued from page 6)

The very best news is that it is fairly cheap to apply. They are estimating that the cost will be from \$6 to \$15 dollars per acre, depending upon application method. It can be hand sprayed, ground or air sprayed. It will come in 2 1/2 gallon containers, and will be available in the fall. Don and I also had a lesson on the biology of star thistle. In essence, the presenter from U.C. Davis showed us that start thistle created its own drought by the way it robs the soil of moisture, even in good years.

We had a great day! A very instructional one, topped off by a tour, and a great steak lunch provided by the Yolo County Cattlemen and Wool Growers Association. All for just \$10 bucks!

I would guess if you called your local Ag extension office, they could put you onto their mailing list. Maybe after a while they will realize that we also have an interest in managing resources. (Story continues on page 9.)

Legal Update

Peace officer by default

by Michael Quane

Can Park Rangers maintain their peace officers status when they have not keep current on mandatory (peace officer) training required by POST and the State Legislator? Yes, well.... maybe! This answer is as confusing as it is simple.

In order for a Park Ranger to be a peace officer they must meet the minimum requirements, most of which are set forth in Penal Code section 830.31(b). These include:

1. You must have a job title or otherwise be designated as a "Park Ranger"
2. You must be paid and regularly employed as such
3. Your primary duty must be the protection of the park and preservation of peace
4. You must have completed the 832 PC course (currently 48 hours)
5. You must be recognized by your agency as a peace officer

Several anomalies exist in California law regarding peace officer authority relating to Municipal and County Park Rangers. These include a formal and informal peace officer model.

Two ways to become a Park Ranger peace officer:

I. The formal model is the POST "specialized peace officer" designation. This is a POST program for law enforcement non-police agencies. This program allows access to the management and training expertise of POST and demands full compliance to all requirements and changes in the law. Park agencies involved in this program must

comply with all regulation and standards to maintain peace officer status.

II. The informal model requires that only the minimum requirements (830.31(b) PC) are met to maintain peace officer status. Compliance with all the other peace officer standards are not required under the informal model.

If you meet the minimum peace officer criteria you are a peace officer by default. Meeting the minimum requirements and not the other POST standards legally make you a "de facto" peace officer.

A "de facto" peace officer is defined as one who actually assumes and exercises the duties of a public officer under color of a known and authorized appointment, but who fails to comply with all of the requirements and conditions as a precedent to the performance of the duties of a peace officer. (People v. Cradlebaugh)

The lawful acts of a "de facto" officer in the discharged of his duties are as valid and binding as those of a regular officer. (People v. Hect)

Even though you may legally be a peace officer without meeting the current POST standards, your actions will be judged in court based on the POST standards.

Special district Rangers or other Ranger types without the designation of "Park Ranger" will have to look to the Public Resource Code section 5500 - 5561 for their peace officer authority.

The Ranger's trail has never been an easy walk.

Photography

By Sandy Ferreira

For me, one of the most important tools that I use in the field is my camera. Photography has become a passion as well as a means to document our latest migratory birds and resident waterfowl in our parks. In fact, a few weeks ago, I spotted a banded Canada goose which also had a neck collar numbered C035. I recalled seeing this bird a few years ago in Central Park and began to look through my photo album in hopes of finding a picture. Well lo and behold I had one. It was taken in June of 1993, and here this same goose had returned to Central Park, five years later! This was very exciting. I was happy to see that he was alive and well. I sent in his band numbers to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and found out that he was banded originally in Sacramento and was too young to fly when banded in 1991. This particular Canada goose has not really migrated but has remained in the Sacramento Valley and greater bay area.

For many years I have taken pictures of the migratory birds, In fact, if it's a new arrival you can bet I have a picture of it. As soon as some of our frequent park visitors who are avid birders also see something new, they always let me know so I can get a picture.

Some of the pictures I have taken have been used in our park brochures, our educational and environmental displays, special city events, our Junior Ranger program, and summer programs to name a few and most recently, in our photo greeting cards. These cards feature pictures of our

wildlife and natural scenes, all taken in our parks and at different times of the year. The revenue generated from the sales of our photo greeting cards goes right back into our taxidermy fund. The taxidermy is available for Fremont schools to check out at no fee for educational classroom programs.

As you can see, photography has become an invaluable tool. It doesn't require any special skills, I think you develop them along the way. I suggest buying a good 35mm camera with several size lenses. One for close shots, a telephoto lense and a good 500mm lense which allows you to get good close shots of wildlife without disturbing them.

If you are interested in taking some excellent pictures, you can make a reservation at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. Here they have two blinds which provide excellent photographic opportunities. The best time of year for photography occurs from November through January when a variety of waterfowl and shorebirds are present. For those who are interested in using the photography blinds on the refuge, your must submit a written request and wait for a confirmation. The fee is \$10.00 for the day and the blind can be reserved only one day each week, on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday. It is available October thru March depending on habitat conditions. For more information, call the SNWR at 916-934-2801, they will send you a reservation form and a handout called the Photographers' Guidelines. Enjoy!

Smitty's Book Report

Do you have a park in your system that is considered a "natural park?" Ever wonder what the definition of "natural" really is? Ever really given any thought to the importance that park might have to the environment? Do you ever use scientific fact in your management decisions? I picked up a new book the other day. What else is new? This one is an edited book about the national parks and protected areas and their role in environmental protection. Yeah, I know. Here goes Smitty, speaking about the national parks again. Geez, we don't work in national parks. Why in the hell does he always review national park stuff! I'll tell you why. Do you see a lot of research done about Hauck City Park, or Helmke County Park? Not much, is there? Seems that most all the research being done is in the national parks. It is the "mystic" of the critter to the researcher. That, and they get to spend some time being paid to enjoy the beauty, I am sure. Also people (like me) buy books on national parks, and usually pass by any others. The bottom line is that is where the research is being done. I am sure that there is some research done in state parks, as an example, but that is usually not shared in published form with the "rest of us."

Where does that leave us county, regional and municipal people? It leaves us with having to take research that was done in national park "X", and apply to municipal park "Z". Not that that is all bad, mind you. You either need to do some research yourself, or apply research from elsewhere.

Obviously, the first step is to get to know what is out there. Books like what I am going to tell you about is a first step. WWW is another source.

As I told you above, **National Parks and Protected Areas; Their Role in Environmental Protection**, is

a good start. There is so much in this book, that I don't know where to start. There are chapters on what protected areas are, on politics, and section on planning and evaluating the ecological integrity of protected areas. There is a chapter on the role of networks and corridors in enhancing the value and protection of parks and equivalent areas. I especially thought the chapter on fire was exceedingly well done. There is also a section of several chapters on managing conflicts, and dealing with the human element.

The book ends with a section on how we can link science with management. As I read this section, my thoughts went back to my Yosemite backcountry days, and one of my bosses who was the research biologist for the park. He told me once, that science only works if administration deems it important. While I worked for him, we had two new superintendents. One saw the importance of research oriented decisions, the other did not. If the results of research didn't "fit the way he was used to doing things," he ignored it. Talk about one frustrated biologist! His motivation bounced up and down like a rubberball. And, the park didn't fair well as a result. Little things, that could lead to trouble.

Now comes the bad part. Because this is a fairly lengthy book (over 450 pages) with a lot of authors, the cost is very high. Fifty five smacks! Ouch! Glad Mildred doesn't check my account. Maybe she does. Nice to have a good wife who is willing to put up with that kind of stuff. Anyway, I found it worth the price. Maybe you can get the budget to buy it for your park library. Or, maybe you can borrow my copy.....or not.

Wright, R.Gerald, et.al, **National Parks and Protected Areas; Their Role in Environmental Protection**, Blackwell Science, Cambridge, Mass, 1996

Bicycle vs. Bobcat?

Pam Helmke San Jose Park Ranger

On a recent summer evening I was dispatched by our fire department to a bicycle versus bobcat, bicyclist down, at one of San Jose's larger regional parks. (Nope, the dispatcher was not making a joke.) On arrival we discovered a 35 year old male mountain bike rider laying along a service road. It seems he was bicycling down the road at about 20 to 25 mph when an adult bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) suddenly dropped off the side of the hill directly in his path. The road is only 10 feet wide with a cliff on one side and a hill on the other. The bicyclist told us he broadsided the bobcat, flipped over the handle bars tumbling several yards down the road. The bobcat was knocked for a loop and landed a few feet away, unconscious. A passing hiker witnessed the entire accident and as far as we can tell everyone was stone cold sober.

By the time park ranger units arrived the bobcat had regained consciousness and staggered off into the brush. The bicyclist suffered serious, multiple fractures to his femur and needed emergency surgery, receiving four stainless steel pins to hold his leg together.

For those of you who are interested, since this was an injury accident involving a vehicle on a public road an

accident report was required. Now do I cite the bobcat for an illegal merge or would crossing outside a crosswalk be more appropriate ?

And they say a park rangers life is dull and boring.

The Battle Against Star Thistle

(Continued from page 7)

For more information, you can give me a call, or email me at 74632.1257@compuserve.com, or call me at home (408) 356-5702. I am sure Don would not mind telling you about what he saw. He is available at the Santa Clara County park office, (408) 358-3741. The researcher is Joe Di Tomaso, (916) 754-8715, or email him at ditomaso@vegmail.ucdavis.edu.

Cheers. Smitty

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