

My Day in Court

by Lee Hickenbotham

I have been a Park Ranger for about five years. In that time, I have written a few citations. I have never had to appear in court on behalf of any of those citations until recently. I've heard court stories from other rangers. I even have had the City Attorney for the agency I work for advise me to come to him first if I ever got called to court. However, I never found the time to contact him for the advice I needed to keep me from being embarrassed before the court.

The day I had to go to court I did remember to dress in my class "A" uniform and take a copy of the citation with me to refresh my knowledge of the event.

The defendant's last name started with a Z which was good news for me since I thought I would sit and watch the other officers, two CHPs and a Sheriff, and learn the ropes right there in the court room. For some reason or another the judge started with my case first. There I was trying to appear confident but wanting to run out the door as fast as I could. I approached the bench with the defendant and the Judge asked me to begin. I started to read the notes of the incident from the back of the citation when the Judge interrupted me and asked me to introduce myself (strike one). I was already nervous from going first and being watched by the other officers. So I started over and introduced myself then continued to read my citation. When I had finished, the Judge asked me if I had a copy of the ordinance that I issued the citation for (strike two)? I informed the judge that I did not and the Judge then asked me if the citation was a misdemeanor or infraction (strike three)? I did not have a clue. I was unprepared and asked to sit down until they could get a copy of the ordinance. In the end everything worked in my favor and I won the case (thanks to the pictures I had brought).

The moral of this story is that we should always be prepared. We should have all the proper information available and with us as we enter the courtroom. If you have never been to court for a citation you have written, I advise you to take a morning and go sit in court. Yes it can be boring but the experience will help to prevent you from being embarrassed and providing us with a future *Signpost* article.



From the President's Desk

Dear PRAC members,

I recently received a note from our Scholarship Committee chair, Bill Hendrix. I'm sorry to say that we are not giving out either of our two scholarships to any candidates this year. The reason is lack of interest. Part of it is we have not been able to spread the word of the scholarships out to colleges. The other is even at the colleges that we do have connections with, students are not applying. There just doesn't seem to be that many students moving their careers toward the "Park Ranger" field. Is the Park Ranger moving toward the threatened species list? State and local park agencies have more openings now than they ever had before and the numbers of applicants have been low. Our student membership is also at a low. We need to reach out to our local universities and colleges and let them know we are here. If any of you have connections or ideas, please pass them on to me or your board of director. Also, if you know of any possible candidates for next years \$500 scholarships, please let them know. The information is on the web site, <http://prac.ws>

The other thing I want to mention is that elections are coming up again. We are seeking board member candidates for the Santa Clara/San Luis Obispo area (District 2); the Los Angeles/ Ventura/ Santa Barbara area (District 4); and my position the President's position. If you know anyone interested in running, please let Doug Bryce or I know. I will not be running for a second term as president. Before my term, I was very involved with the American Red Cross and am hoping to get reconnected with them. I will continue to stay involved in the back scenes of PRAC and will continue my work on the Standards and Training committee.

That's all for now. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me, phone (916) 875-6672 or email: onbelay@innercite.com

John Havicon, President, Park Rangers Association of California

More CPR changes

by John Havicon

In the last *Signpost*, I mentioned all of the changes happening for the "lay person" rescuer. There are also some changes coming for all of you "professional" rescuers. The changes are not as dramatic as the lay person's. You may not even notice the changes when you take your next recertification.

Professional rescuers are still expected to check for a pulse and signs of circulation in their victim as well as provide either rescue breathing or CPR, based on finding a pulse. Remember the "lay person" no longer checks for a pulse, only signs of circulation (consciousness, breathing, color of skin).

When delivering breaths, there is no longer the talk of giving full breaths. The American Heart Association want professionals to deliver the breaths at a slower, more gradual pace. So they want you to deliver the breaths once every five seconds, but take as long as two seconds in giving the breaths. If you are using a bag valve mask without oxygen attached your goal should be to squeeze the bag slowly for two seconds until you see the chest visibly rise. If oxygen is attached they want even less; squeeze

the bag for 1 to 2 seconds until the chest just begins to rise. Purer oxygen means less is actually needed.

You will be taught about "cricoid pressure" in your next class, placing pressure on the cricoid of the neck, to reduce aspiration, regurgitation, but it is not a practical field practice because it takes a third rescuer and once you start it you can't stop.

The AHA's goal for a professional giving CPR is to increase the compressions to 100 per minute instead of 80 per minute. The studies have shown that an adult cardiac arrest victim is more likely to be saved if a higher number of compressions are given, even with fewer ventilations. For professionals we will continue to do the 15 to 2 compressions for one-man CPR. What has changed is the two-man CPR. Two -man CPR will no longer be 5 to 1. Two-man CPR will now be 15 to 2 with one rescuer delivering the ventilations and the other giving compressio's.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need more information about any of these updates.

You can call me at (916) 875-6672
or email; onbelay@innercite.com

Shooting Away at Lead and PAH Contaminants

by Steve Hogue

From the 1930s to the 1980s, the Horseshoe Lake area of Bidwell Park was host to a rifle range and a skeet range. Today, the lead and skeet material left behind has become an environmental hazard which the City of Chico is proactively pursuing.

Many years ago, the City of Chico entered into an agreement with the U.S. Army (whom had a base where the Chico Municipal Airport is now located during WWII) to permit target practice in the Horseshoe Lake area. Rifles of all calibers were used to blast away at targets located across the small lake. Later, a skeet range was installed on the opposite side of the lake from where the Army fired their weapons. For several decades visitors fired an infinite volley of lead pellets into the slopes above the lake. All of the pellets, of course, were intended to find their target in clay pigeons. Whether the competitors were good or bad shots, a plethora of skeet crashed onto the park's soil, forever left behind, until now.

The lead from military weapons may never be accurately located because the lead rounds penetrated the hard pan soil, never to surface again. The shotgun pellets, on the other hand, landed on top of the dirt and the hard pan soil. Rains have washed many pellets down hill and towards Horseshoe Lake. Initial lead studies of the soil have indicated that target cleanup levels (TCL) for the area are around 254 mg/kg. The TCL for human health and ecological receptors is 254 mg/kg. At this particular level, the potential for impact on human health and biological receptors is minimal or non-existent.

Several methods for dealing with the lead issue have been discussed by the City of Chico. They include excavation and disposal, silica micro-encapsulation, soil washing and capping.

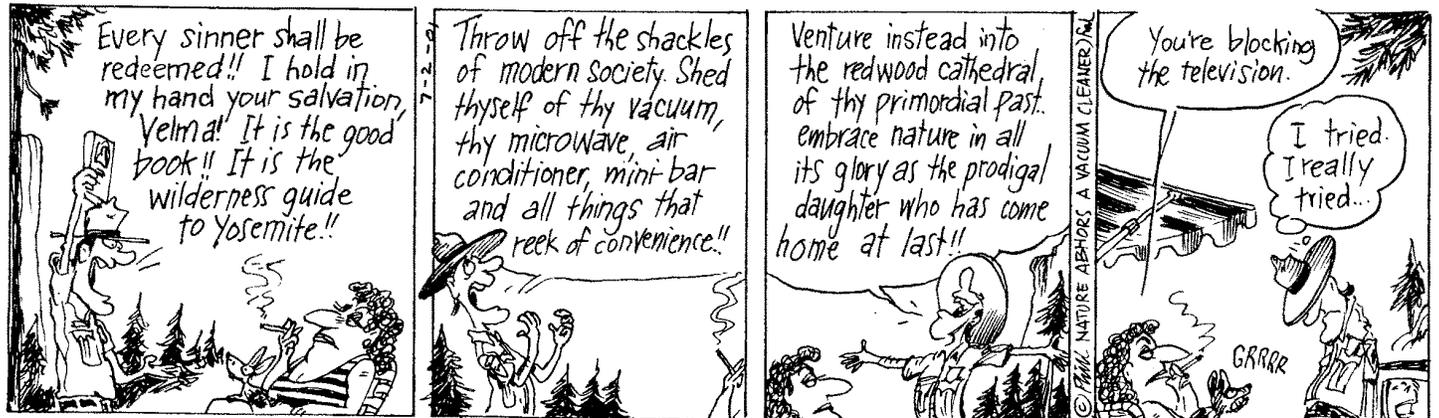
The greatest hazard identified so far, though, is skeet fragments. The binding agents used to produce skeets contain poly-nuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH). PAHs are known carcinogens. The TCL for PAHs ranges from 0.2 mg/kg to 0.37 mg/kg. The skeet fragments in the area exceed the TCL range. Because of this, removal of all skeet fragments is the only acceptable method.

Site cleanup costs range from \$510,000 to \$868,000. Estimated costs for capping are at \$1,200,000. Not only would capping be more costly, the city would also be required to monitor the site on a long-term basis.

Currently, only a preliminary study has been completed of the soil in the area. Water samples were not taken as part of the initial study. Further studies, ranging from \$15,000 to \$20,000, are planned and will be more extensive.

I suppose that it is understandable that people would unknowingly cause environmental damage years ago. I'm sure that lead studies nor PAH studies were really performed back then. It does strike me as odd, though, that folks were actually permitted to fire weapons at a sloping canyon wall where just above it were hikers! I am relieved that in today's time, my city has chosen to do the responsible thing. Not only have we abolished firearms, airguns, and bows & arrows from our parks but we are facing up to the challenge of correcting the damage we have permitted to take place to our land in the past. Even better, it is being done of our own initiative. This may not be a unique thing but nonetheless, it helps with setting the example of environmental responsibility.

FARLEY Phil Frank



Natural Resources Communication Workshop Announced

The Natural Resources Communication Workshop, sponsored by the Western Section of The Wildlife Society, will be held at California State University, Chico from **January 7-11, 2002**. The week-long workshop is designed to help natural resource workers more effectively communicate with general as well as technical audiences through personal presentations using good visual aids—especially 35mm slides and computer-generated images (e.g., PowerPoint images). Since many of the problems in natural resources management are people-oriented, more effective communication can significantly improve many management programs.

The hands-on workshop is practical-oriented and enhances participants' communication skills in planning, preparing, presenting, and evaluating presentations. A variety of topics are covered including selecting communication strategies for specific audiences, creating computer-generated graphics, and handling equipment problems. A special session entitled "Verbal Victories" provides hints for handling difficult, or even hostile, audiences.

As a special bonus, participants will receive a copy of "Effective Slide Presentations- A Practical Guide to More Powerful Presentations," a recently published book by the

course instructor, Dr. Jon Hooper. Dr. Hooper is a Certified Wildlife Biologist and longtime member of The Wildlife Society. He holds degrees in environmental communication and wildlife ecology. Jon has taught communication workshops for 25 years in locations around the country.

The workshop has been sponsored by the Western Section of The Wildlife Society for over 30 years. **The deadline for applications is November 2, 2001**; the course fee is \$595. Late applications are accepted (they're placed on a waiting list in case of cancellations).

Applying for the workshop is easy. On letterhead, applicants should describe: (1) their current position within their agency/organization, (2) how they would use the training, and (3) any special reasons why they feel they should be chosen as a participant. Participation is limited to 16 people.

Submit applications to: Dr. Jon K. Hooper, Dept. Recreation and Parks Management, Calif. State University, Chico, CA 95929-0560. For more information, contact Jon by calling (530) 898-5811, faxing (530) 898-6557, or e-mailing "jhooper@csuchico.edu."

End of Summer Debriefing

by Michael Chiesa

Well, Labor Day has come and gone. We are now ready for fall when we try to put our parks back together and maybe even get some training done to hone our skills. This brings me to what I would like to hear from the membership about. Are there any problems you experienced in your parks this summer that you feel a training workshop on dealing with that problem would be beneficial to the membership? Are there any skills you would like to improve on that PRAC could help provide training on? Please let me know what issues you faced this summer and ways PRAC can help address them. I have a few ideas I have been kicking around for workshops but I would like to hear from the membership to see where your interests are.

The Standards and Training Committee will be continuing to implement the new recommended training standards. Anyone interested in serving on the committee please contact me. I would like to set up a social function this fall so the members can get together informally and share some food and ideas. Most problems you face are not unique to your agency and when talking to others you might find someone who has experienced the same problems you are facing and might have ideas for you. Anyway, if anybody in the North or East Bay area would like to host a PRAC social event at his or her park, please let me know.

Some possible PRAC sponsored workshops I have been considering are trail building and maintenance, fencing, meth labs and explosives identification, basic interp. skills, wildland firefighting and control, water safety awareness, and supervisory park peace officer training (covering topics such as the Peace Officers Bill of Rights, citizens complaints, ICS, etc.). If any of these topics interest you, you would like to host them in your park, or you know any possible instructors please contact me. My goal is to cover some domains of the new recommended training standards with regional workshops.

Remember PRAC membership renewals will be coming out soon. It is a good time of year to help recruit some of your fellow employees for membership. PRAC membership is open to any uniformed park employee, not just rangers. PRAC is a great way for seasonal employees who are seeking permanent positions to learn more about the park profession, pick-up additional training, and make new contacts that might help them find a permanent position.

I hope you all had a fun and safe summer. I look forward to hearing from you. You may e-mail me at mchiesa@mcn.org or phone me at (707) 565-1234, ext. 99462.

A Book To Report On

by Lee Hickinbotham

Being a generalist ranger with resource management as a major part of the job requires me to ascertain all the knowledge I can in that field. I am always asking questions, reading books, or attending training to build that knowledge base in the event I am presented with a problem. One of our Preserves, a former cattle ranch turned Nature Preserve is being invaded with non-native grasses such as Italian rye, Harding grass, Wild Oat, Ripgut and other grasses that all look the same. We also have a problem with everyone's favorite, the yellow star thistle. We are trying to control these invasive nuisances by mowing, although fire would be our first choice, the residents around the Preserve with their multimillion-dollar homes don't see eye to eye with us. As I go out to mow I need to tell the difference between the natives and non-natives so that I don't mow down the wrong plant. The problem is that all the grasses look the same.

I know what you are thinking how do you tell them apart? Good question and the answer is that I picked up this great book. The book is titled *Know Your Natives: A Pictorial Guide to California Native Grasses*. It is written by Jeanette Wrynski and costs around \$25.00. It gives the common name of the grass as well as the Latin name. It also gives the season of growth, elevation range, mature height, flower characteristic, a general description of the plant and the habitat in which it resides. It also has colorful pictures of the grass, the seed head, and the seedling. This book is definitely one to add to your collection.

For a copy of *Know Your Natives* call or write to:

Yolo County Resource Conservation District
221 West Court St., Suite 1
Woodland, CA. 95695
530-662-2037, ext. 3

Remember to take the time to read and enjoy the book.

Feral Cat Population in Bidwell Park

by Steve Hogue

The Chico Park Department, like other agencies, has had its share of problems with feral cats. In 1997, Chico began a relationship with the Biology Department at CSU, Chico. Biology students would volunteer their time to trap feral cats in Chico's Bidwell Park and then turn them over to the Butte Humane Society. Because the cats were wild, they were euthanized. However, due to the low numbers of cats actually being captured, the biology students' work was ineffective.

To help out the cat trapping cause, the City of Chico passed an ordinance prohibiting the feeding of feral cats. After passage of the ordinance, only one individual was repeatedly warned by rangers about feeding the cats. After several warnings, he was cited. The incident brought out many supporters of the cited individual, as well as media coverage. The media coverage of how the City of Chico was dealing with the feral cat population prompted a group of cat loving people to form the Chico Cat Coalition. The cited individual was found guilty of violating the park rule, and ironically, was given a small fine and ordered to perform community service by feeding feral cats in Bidwell Park and helping to capture them.

Organizers of the Chico Cat Coalition met with the Park Director in an attempt to discontinue the City's usage of CSU, Chico biology students for trapping cats and instead utilize the Coalition. Members of the Coalition were willing to donate their own equipment, supplies, and time to trap the cats. Initially, the Coalition wanted to do the "trap, alter, and release" program with the park's feral cats. Due to the fact that there was such an abundant cat population in the park and a declining bird population, the request was denied. Instead, the Coalition went about trapping the cats, taming them as much as they possibly could, and then adopting them to homes.

Since August 1998, the Chico Cat Coalition has volunteered approximately 2,000 hours to capture more than 300 feral cats from an affected 400 acre-sized area of Bidwell Park. Included in the 300 cats were many pregnant cats captured during the spring seasons. I believe that the proof that the Coalition's hard work has paid off is in the mere fact that several months ago is the first time I have seen a California Quail in the discussed 400 acre area. Now in areas where I used to see colonies of cats, I regularly see coveys of quail.

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Submission deadlines ARE THE LAST day of JANUARY, MARCH, May, July, SEPTEMBER, AND NOVEMBER.

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