

Parks Conference 2004 California Adventure Rediscover the Magic

Mark your calendars for a magical time in Anaheim **March 8-11** for the **2004 Parks Conference**. This year's conference, held at the Anaheim Crowne Plaza (<http://www.anaheim.crowneplaza.com/>), will feature a variety of sessions designed to enhance your professional skill set, meals social gatherings featuring great interpretive programs, and plenty of time to network with colleagues from around California and Nevada.

If you have attend parks Conferences before, we have kept to the traditional schedule. Monday is a travel day but for those who wish to come early there are field trips to the Long Beach Aquarium, a Whale

Watching cruise, a bus ride to a sampling of Orange County Parks, including Mission San Juan Capistrano, *and back by popular demand*, the pistol shoot competition and golf game.

We hope everyone will have arrived by Monday afternoon because the State Parks Foundation is hosting a wonderful pasta dinner reception where we will be welcomed by the Foundation and State Parks Director and then be captivated by retired ranger Jim Long's six-projector slide and music program, "*The Range of Light*." This multi-media presentation transports its viewers on a journey into the heart of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and according to those who have seen it is not to be missed!

Before sessions start on Tuesday, the conference will open with a keynote and welcome from Orange County Sheriff Mike Cororna, who in addition to leading the 5th largest sheriff's department in the nation, is a member of the White House Commission on Homeland Security.

Lunchtime on Tuesday CSPRA and PRAC members will join their respective agency boards for a lunch meeting before going back to sessions.

On Tuesday night we will head on over to the House of Blues for an hour and a half interpretive program on the **History of the Blues** followed by a scrumptious dinner. The House of Blues restaurant also functions as a multimedia classroom/museum. Programs introduce you to the music, art, literature, history and the international impact of the blues. It's really great and brought to us by the generous sponsorship of FIRE, ETC. *Story continues on page 3.*

Save The Date **Second Annual Parks Advocacy Day** March 22, 2004 State Capitol, Sacramento

Following our triumphant advocacy effort last year, we will again rally the troops to meet with key legislators.

2004 Message Points:

- Urge support of parks through the budget crisis.
- Urge that State Parks be protected from non-mission use.

Strategy Sessions:

Four free strategy sessions will again be held in northern and southern California. Dates and places to be announced soon

Coalition:

- California State Parks Foundation (CSPF)
- Alliance to Rescue Crystal Cove
- California League of Park Associations (CALPA)
- California Police Athletic League (CALPAL)
- California State Lifeguards Association (CSLA)
- California State Park Rangers Association (CSPRA)
- *Park Rangers Association Of California (PRAC)*
- State Park Peace Officers Association Of California (SPPOAC)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

From the President's Desk

Happy New Year! It sure is hard to believe 2004 is here already. We have survived another holiday season and we are now preparing to move full speed ahead into the New Year. With the New Year, we also welcome our newest board members. Thank you to all who ran for office in the last election. Without volunteers to serve PRAC, we would not have any leaders to keep PRAC moving forward.

The coming of the New Year also means it is time to renew our membership dues. You should have received your dues renewal notice with your ballot. Be sure to send it back soon so your membership does not lapse and you do not miss out on anything. We will be launching a members-only section to our web site early this year. The only way to get the access information for the members-only section is to be a current member of PRAC in 2004. Login and password information will be sent to dues paying members with their 2004 membership cards.

With Don Webb's resignation from the Board, we had to appoint someone to complete his term as the Region 5 Director. A call for volunteers from Region 5 went out. Lori Charett answered the call and the board appointed her to fill the vacancy. Lori has served PRAC in the past as Region 5 Director and was gracious enough to volunteer to do it again. Good luck to you Don in your endeavors, I am sorry you had to cut your term short. Lori, thank you for stepping up to the plate and I look forward to working with you.

Todd Kellogg has resigned as the Executive Manager. The Board has appointed an Interim Executive Manager, Heidi Horvitz, to help keep PRAC on course and moving ahead. Heidi brings to PRAC over 15 years of professional experience working for California State Parks, serving the last 3 years as Supervising Ranger for Fort Ross State Historic Park and Salt Point State Park. I would like to welcome Heidi to PRAC. The Board looks forward to working with her to get PRAC where it needs to be.

The 2004 Parks Conference is just around the corner, March 8-11. I sure can't wait for it. Every year, each conference committee seems to raise the bar a little higher. I am sure the Anaheim conference will prove to be a real crowd pleaser. You should have received a registration packet in the mail. If not, you can request one by sending an e-mail to parkconf2004@aol.com or download the latest information from the PRAC web site. I hope to see you all there.

Also be sure to mark your calendars for the 2nd Annual Park Advocacy Day, on Monday, March 22 in Sacramento. This is an important day for park supporters to come together and show the legislators the value of parks and the importance of park funding. To help prepare our members for the day, The California State Parks Foundation will be hosting a Park Advocacy Day training at the Parks Conference, on Thursday, March 11, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. I hope you will be able to join us in Sacramento.

That's all for now folks. I hope to see you at some of the upcoming events. Until next time...

Stay safe,

Mike Chiesa

Don't Forget

Pay your 2004 PRAC dues Now

Be sure to include your PRAC Board ballot as well

Region 5 News

Lori Charett

Greetings! *I'm back*. No, you didn't miss the Region 5 election among the holiday chaos; we didn't have one. But you do have a new Region Director. How did that happen? Well, unfortunately Don Web was unable to continue to serve as Director, so Mike Chiesa put the word out to Region 5 looking for volunteers. You should have seen the fight for it, it was a knock down drag-out for the title! All kidding aside, I volunteered because I truly care about our

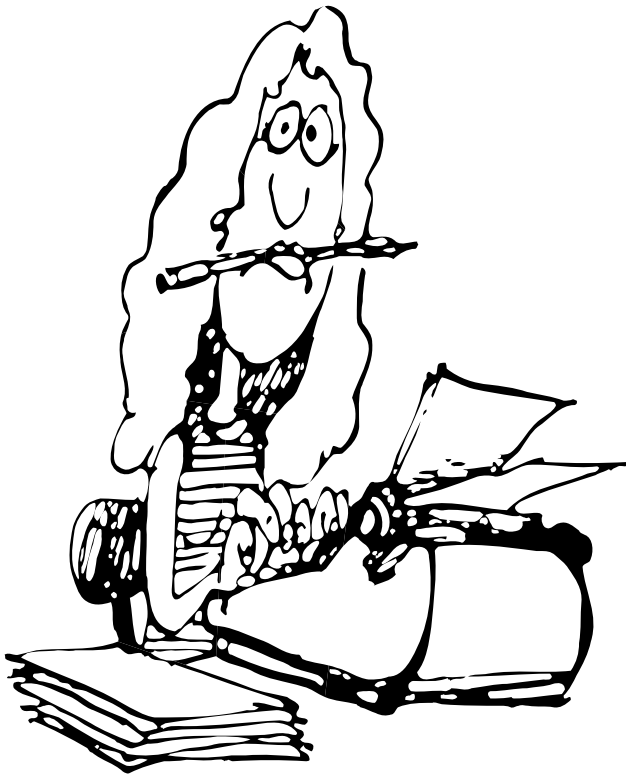
profession and its future and enjoy being involved in it. So, I will be picking up where Don left off. It really feels good to be a part of the team again and I look forward to serving PRAC and Region 5 as best I can.

For those of you who don't know me, I have been a member of PRAC for several years now (lost count), attend the conferences regularly and previously served as Region 5 Director. I am a Senior Park Ranger with the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, Open Space Division. I started my career with the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (State Parks) and headed west in 1991 to thaw out and pursue my career in Southern California's beautiful parks.

One of my New Year's resolutions is to jump on the bandwagon to increase membership, especially in Region 5. We have many newcomers to our profession and in our efforts to train them in their daily duties, we must not forget to talk to them about PRAC, our objectives, great training opportunities, and awesome conferences!

In this time of bad budgets, parks continually being hit with cuts, staff jurisdictions and responsibilities growing, it is vital we continue to support PRAC, strive to grow personally, and professionally and that is what PRAC helps to facilitate. So show your pride and jump on the bandwagon! Talk about PRAC to new rangers, park aides, park maintenance personnel, park managers and those veterans who have been putting off becoming members. Think of the changes you can make in 2004 and the more at the conferences, the merrier! Put it on your calendar- I'll see you there.

I welcome your ideas for future Region 5 training, picnics, etc. Please feel free to call or email me.



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Story continues from page 1.

Wednesday there is a special lunchtime entertainment (not confirmed as of this writing) more sessions, and the awards program, banquet and dance Wednesday night. This year, in addition to the CSPRA *Honorary Ranger* and the PRAC *Lifetime Member* PRAC will be handing out the first ever certifications for rangers who have met the 440 hours of training recommended in the standards and training guidelines approved by PRAC in 2001.

The varieties of sessions offered at the conference reflect the breadth and depth of our profession. From Crime Scene Investigation to a remote feed, Underwater Nature Hike, from Wilderness First Aid to Terrorist Early Warning, from

How to write a grant to How to Build a Trail, sessions should educate, inspire and in many cases, leave you with a certification to add to your professional resume.

For those of you who can extend your stay, on Thursday there will be several 8 hour certification trainings as well. More information will be coming soon. The Conference Committee is busy nailing down arrangements so that you can get your registration package soon. If you have a specific question, please call 310-858-7272 xt 133 and leave your name, phone number and your question or contact co-chairs Amy Lethbridge lethbrid@smmc.ca.gov and Frank Padilla fpadilla@parks.ca.gov and they will get back to you. See you in March!

Straight Batons vs. Collapsible Batons

by Chris Kemp

Recently, I certified several Rangers at my agency for the collapsible baton. Before the class people asked me which I thought was better: the collapsible baton or the straight baton. Each baton type has identifiable strengths and weaknesses, which is the focus of this article.

The straight baton is the traditional tool of law enforcement and is easily recognized. Upon visual inspection, the public can immediately tell you are carrying it and have a rough idea of your capabilities. That is, if you have it in your baton ring. It's an easy item to forget in your vehicle, especially in the heat of the moment when you are responding to a situation. Also, while running you have to hold on to it so it doesn't fall out of the baton ring and, if you trip, it can lodge between the ground and you causing a painful rib injury. When I worked as a park ranger for an agency that did not carry firearms, I preferred the straight baton for its visibility. The standard baton is the 26-inch baton, suitable for one or two-handed strikes. There are also 26 to 29 inch Kokobola wood baton that is a heavier wood. This would lend better to two-handed strikes to retain control. Whichever you prefer, just remember not to pull a T.J. Hooker move of throwing your baton at the bad guy.

The collapsible baton is the modern compliment to the straight baton and has other capabilities. It is carried on

the belt closed making it more discreet and can be worn at all times. I've seen some disputes stop at just the opening of the baton as it makes a big impression when deployed. In the closed position, the baton can be utilized as a yawara stick for strikes or pressure point stimulations. A drawback is that it requires more maintenance and many baton holders for the belt don't accept an opened collapsible baton (you have to close it to holster it). There are many different lengths of collapsible batons, each with their own characteristics. The shorter batons are better for the one handed strikes (20 to 26 inch batons), but you have to get closer to the suspect. The longer collapsible batons (26 to 32 inches) are more suited for two-handed strikes and keeping a longer distance from the suspect. For female rangers, belt placement of the baton is important as a closed baton on the belt sticks upward and can cause discomfort. However, there are holders for the belt that can be tilted at an angle so the baton is not pointing straight upward.

Whichever option you may choose, it's best to have the baton in an area where it can be drawn by either hand. You should be proficient in baton use, comfortable with the type/length carried, and know the law and your department policy. Before you bring out the checkbook to purchase a baton, ask others about theirs and try them out to see what works best for you.

The Holiday Season and Drunk Driving

by Don Pearson, Region 3 Director

The holiday season is here, and with it comes both happiness and tragedies. Besides the normal hazards that the winter months brings this time of year we will be confronted with the drinking driver.

Drinking can be a deadly driving partner. Roughly, one out of every three people in the United States will be in an alcohol related auto accident in their lifetime. Look around your workplace, who might be the next victim? Alcohol is a factor in more than 33% of all traffic accidents this time of year.

If you do not drink you do not have to worry about poor judgment or coordination behind the wheel, however, as rangers, this becomes part of our job during the holidays, because of shift work. Many of us are on the road during the most dangerous times; Saturday and Sunday evenings and early mornings. If you are working the holidays or not here are a few things to watch out for:

- Weaving and swerving, in and out of traffic
- Very slow speed
- Braking erratically
- Acceleration on slowing rapidly
- Drifting

Remember, no one can make you as safe as you can. Watch out for the drinking driver and have a safe holiday.

New Anti-Venom

Provides Better, Safer Snakebite Recoveries

by John Havicon

For over fifty years, rattlesnake bite victims have relied on anti-venom derived from horse serum, (antibodies developed from the blood of horses), to counter the reaction. Horse serum proved to be the most effective treatment, but it did have problems. Nearly all of the victims treated, suffered what was called “serum sickness,” an allergic reaction to the serum itself. Patients would develop high fever, rash, myalgia, anaphylactic shock and even death. Doctors sometimes feared the serum was worse the actual snakebite.

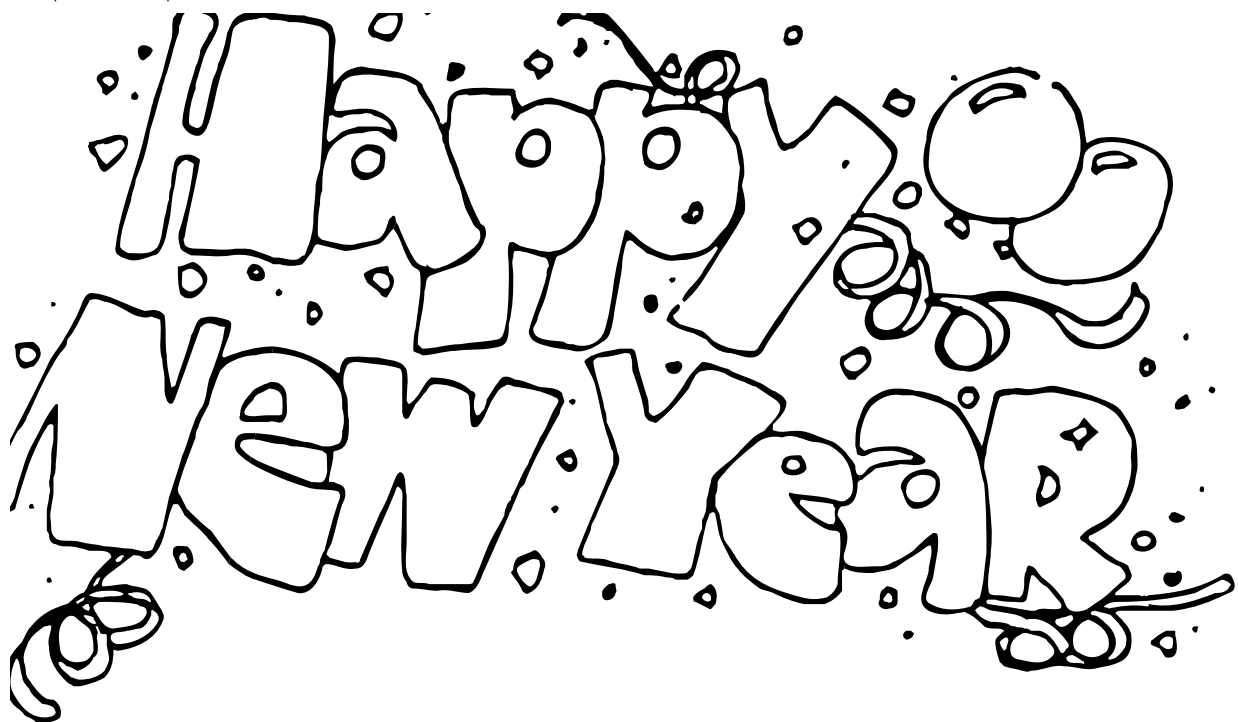
In October 2000, a company, Protherics PLC, developed a new anti-venom approved by the FDA and is now being distributed to emergency hospitals throughout the United States. This new anti-venom, called CroFab, (polyvalent crotalide anti-venom ovine Fab) is produced by injecting sheep with the venom and developing serum that will neutralize the venom in patients.

Dr. Hal Renolet is an advisor for California’s Poison Control in Sacramento and is considered one of California’s foremost expert on poisonous snakebites. I asked Dr. Renolet about the pros and cons of the new serum. “The main difference between this and horse serum is the sheep serum is more tolerant to the human body and is not causing the adverse reactions of the horse serum. The sheep serum has a shorter life than the horse serum and the patient will need more vials over a longer period of time.”

Ideal treatment with Crofab should be within the first six hours of the snakebite. The patient will receive 4 to 12 vials of CroFab for up to 18 hours. Cost for treatment will range from \$6000 to \$9000.

Field treatment of victims should be transported immediately, either carried out or slowly walked out. Poisonous snakebite victims will more than likely have an immediate reaction within 15-minutes but symptoms can be delayed for as long as 3 to 4 hours. The victims wound should be placed at or below the level of the heart. You can use a constriction bandage above the wound, (toward the heart), to slow down lymphatic flow. Constriction should not be tight and you should be able to slid one or two fingers easily under the band. Never apply ice to the wound as it increases tissue damage.

If advanced medical care is delayed longer than 30-minutes, suctioning may be used, however the California Poison Control Center no longer recommends the field treatment of making incisions at the bite and trying to suck out the poison out. The main problem was that most rescuers making the incisions often cut tendons, ligaments, nerves and arteries, causing serious injuries. The only suction device still recommended is the “Sawyer Extractor” as no incisions are performed using it. The “Sawyer Extractor” looks like a syringe with a plastic suction cap. Place the cap over the bite and depress the plunger. A suction is made when the plunger is depressed, drawing out the venom. Since you are trying to draw out the venom through the original bite wounds, the process is slow and tends to slow with the coagulation of the blood. The “Sawyer Extractor” should be removed about every minute or two, the wound wiped clean and then re-applied for continued suctioning.



Interpreters' Corner

by Denise Edwards

Recently I was asked to visit a second grade classroom to talk to the students about my job as a park ranger. Luckily I had just completed the 40-hour Certified Interpretive Guide program instructed by Amy Lethbridge. The course was a week long, intense program designed to prepare park professionals on the proper way to develop and deliver interpretive programs, hikes, and impromptu educational talks. It covered everything from handling individual questions and on the spot interactions including enforcement techniques to delivering educational interpretive programs to large audiences or special group populations.

So was I nervous? I was terrified. Then to make matters worse. Two days before my big debut, the teacher calls to inform me that half of the students that I would be talking to were primarily Spanish speakers. To this, I calmly informed the teacher that I personally did not have much experience talking to such audiences, but that I would do the best I could under the circumstances.

So I frantically began my research to prepare for the big day. I thought I would start by looking up Spanish words that could come in helpful. I then decided it would be handy

to memorize various agencies' mission statements. After I had practically reviewed the entire history of the park ranger profession it dawned on me that 2nd graders probably were not going to quiz me on the life accomplishments of John Muir or the date that Yosemite became a park.

After this revelation, I relaxed and referred to my newfound knowledge and more importantly to my notes from the course. The key, of course, is knowing and understanding your audience. Now for you parents out there, you already have a pretty good understanding of what kids are able to comprehend at what ages and what modes of teaching work best for what grade levels. For those of you, like me who have no clue as to when potty training should occur or what an appropriate bedtime is for a nine year old, here is some advice.

First, if possible, get as much information from the teacher as to what the children are learning and what the focuses of their current lessons are. If you are unable to do so, here are some basic guidelines. For ages 5–8, try to make your program as hands on as possible, use simple terms or explain big words. Pick only 4 or 5 main points to stick to. Make play a part of the presentation or use an activity to keep imaginations going. Involve all the senses and use colors, shapes and include lots of visual aids. Kids at this age will try to share their stories and ideas in an effort to try to please you. The use of question and answer will encourage more interaction but try to keep all answers positive even if they are wrong. For this age, reading skills, map reading and history concepts will be limited.

For older children, ages 9–14, play, visual aids and question answer techniques can still be very effective, but you can also begin to challenge their thinking with new concepts and ideas. Give hints to the more difficult questions to lead them to the right conclusions. The use of breakout sessions, group or individual activities can enhance participation. Role playing, the use of maps, songs, stories and more complex directions to activities will keep the attention of the group longer.

For any age, it will be helpful to do your homework and be prepared with a theme. There must be a purpose for your interpretive program. Follow through, if possible with a related demonstration, activity or discussion that will enhance the learning and if possible provide something that each person can take away with them, something as simple as a junior ranger sticker. The most important thing to remember is to have fun.

I survived my trip back to the second grade and may have even provided a pretty successful presentation. But I gotta tell you that the lights and sirens sure didn't hurt!



**A California Adventure
Parks Conference 2004**

Am I That Guy

by Carl J Certiberi,

Park Ranger, Sly Park Recreation Area

There it is, the sun coming up over the snow capped Sierras. Here I am sitting behind the best desk in town, behind the wheel of my patrol truck, sipping my steaming hot coffee. One of the most scenic sites I could imagine. So what's on my mind?

Who's going to agitate me today? Will it be the boss, who's decision making is so complex it totally lacks logic? How about that coworker, whose attitude is so sour, biting into a ripe lemon seems a sweeter taste? I know, it's that perky "the glass is half full" employee who just can't quite get a grasp on reality. How about the park visitor, do I really need to go there? Haven't ripped one of their heads off in while.

Here we are, branded with the image that we drive around all day in the woods. Not much to do but keep a head count on the squirrels. I guess our secrets out. Fortunately for us we do not have to deal with politics, personalities, domestic violence, child abuse, vandalism or disrespect. Nope it's just warm fuzzy varmints and driving around for us. As for me, I keep my varmint counter in the truck with me.

Wait a minute. Is that my sour attitude? Am I "the glass is half empty," who stole my half a glass guy? Could this be happening to me? But I love my job. Is my attitude affecting the park visitor's experience? Quality customer service?

Although we work in beautiful settings, we are not exempt from job stress. We do need to balance our life, that's reality. So what is job stress? According to *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, stress, in general is a "physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation." Ok, now that we know we were not invincible, let's learn to look for the signs. If you catch symptoms early, you have a better chance of fixing the problem so you don't end up with more chronic and serious problems. Here's what to look for:

- Job dissatisfaction
- Sleep disturbances
- Short temper
- Upset stomach
- Headache
- Low Morale
- Teeth Grinding
- Disturbed relationships with family and friends

What about possible causes? If you can figure out the cause of your job stress, then you can find a cure. Here are some possible causes:

- Overwork: working late, taking work home, not taking vacation
- Impending layoffs
- Being in the wrong career
- Conflict with boss or co-worker
- Stupid people (Ok, that ones mine)

Is the situation curable? You'll need to be proactive if you want to cure your job stress. Here are some fixes that address the causes listed above:

If over work is your problem, take a vacation, leave work on time as often as possible, and avoid taking work home.

If you're worried about lay offs, all you can do is make sure your prepared should that happen.

If you find that you have made a wrong career choice, or your career is no longer fulfilling, it may be time for a change. Make your choices very carefully.

If you are having conflict with your boss or co-workers, try to work them out. Although it may be difficult to resolve personality differences, challenge yourself to figure out a way to get along better.

If your stress is having a profound effect on your life, don't be afraid to get professional help. Accept the fact that some people are stupid. (Ok, also mine.)

Another tool that has worked for me is to channel my stress onto a piece of paper. Write it down and keep it, or destroy it, but focus it externally.

So it is possible to balance our lives between a beautiful work place and work place stress. I try to remember each visitor contact I make, be it good or bad, will be remembered by that visitor. I can make a positive difference in somebody's recreational experience. Quality customer service has to start from within us to make an external difference. As for me, how am I helping my stress, I researched and wrote an article I hope my peers can relate to, and did it from my patrol truck.. Suns up now. and the coffee is cold. Boy that stresses me out. One day at a time I guess.

Sources: *Career Planning with Dawn Rosenburg McKay*
Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

**For the 2004 Parks Conference
registration information**

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