

A Helping Hand

by Pam Helmke

In 2004 San Jose Park Ranger Jane Lawson and her supervisor, Mike McClintock put their heads together to find a better way to dispose of surplus body armor. Like many police support groups Jane thought that the old body armor could be used by park rangers in less affluent countries instead of taking up space in a land fill.

Working through the International Ranger Federation Jane located a potential recipient. Mike began the long process to allow the City of San Jose to donate the surplus property. In 2005 Park Ranger Roger Abe transferred to Alum Rock Park and Jane moved to another facility. Roger took on the project as part of his normal duties. Roger followed up with the IRF contacts and, realizing that some funding would be needed, began making contacts for donations.

Over 30 vests were collected, cleaned and packaged for shipment. After speaking with the IRF and other wildlife groups it was decided to ship the vests to the African Game Rangers in Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Virunga National Park is home to one of the last troops of Mountain Gorillas, an endangered species with only 300-400 animals left in the wild. Most of the surviving gorillas reside in Virunga National Park.

In addition to poachers, the Game Rangers also deal with the effects of a local war, migrating displaced populations, drought, and famine. Working for little, if any, pay and with very little equipment an average of 8 Game Rangers are shot and killed each year.

The task of shipping a heavy box of body armor is much more complex than one would think, but Jane, Roger and Mike have pressed on. They combined forces with PRAC, the Park Peace Officers Association of San Jose and added Vanessa Rogier, the public information officer for San Jose's Happy Hollow Park and Zoo to the team. A combination of donations from groups such as PRAC and some timely bake sales raised the money needed to ship the heavy box. Vanessa worked with the World Wildlife Fund to develop a safe and secure shipping process to make sure the vests reach the Game Rangers in need. California rangers and Happy Hollow Park and Zoo raised over \$700.00 to cover all the costs.

As of this newsletter, after almost two years of hard work, the team is awaiting the final approval form the City to ship the vests.

We hope that by the time you read this the first batch of vests will be on their way.

The San Jose Rangers and Happy Hollow Park and Zoo are continuing their efforts to raise funds and secure usable vests to be shipped to other rangers in need. If you would like to lend a helping hand please contact Vanessa at 408-277-4193.

From the President's Patrol Truck

The peak season is upon us and we are in for a busy summer. Some Rangers call it the "90 days of Hell." However I call it the "90 Days of Fun." It is the busiest time of the year. A time when our parks are most used, a time to educate, protect and preserve the resources the visitors come to enjoy. It's also a time when we as park professionals are the most visible.

Speaking of park professionalism; at the general membership meeting in March, there was a motion from the membership to pursue a discussion with CSPRA (California State Park Rangers Association) to merge together as one association. This motion is not a surprise to those of us who have been attending the annual conference over the years. Since 1981, PRAC and CSPRA have joined together to put on the California Parks Conference.

I invited CSPRA's president Angi Nowiki to our quarterly Board meeting to discuss the possibility of a merger between the two associations. The Board discussed many benefits one being membership.

Over the years PRAC's membership has fluctuated between 200-300 members. As of May 2006, PRAC's membership has dropped below 200 members. This is discouraging to me; however, that is a letter for another newsletter. PRAC isn't the only one suffering from lack of membership. CSPRA's membership is currently around 200 as well. By merging the two associations together, it will increase the membership and create one association that will have a lot more to offer a park professional.

The Board pointed out to Angi that one of PRAC's strength is training. Whereas CSPRA is politically strong. The combination of the two strengths could be a benefit for one association. Angi stated that CSPRA is not necessarily interested in a merger but rather forming an umbrella that the two associations would be under. Under the umbrella PRAC and CSPRA would maintain their current boards and identities.

CSPRA discussed the idea and recently informed me that although they like the idea they want to look into other organizations already established. I will do my best to keep communicating with CSPRA as well as looking into other options into building up PRAC's membership base.

Finally, I would like to talk about training opportunities for all of you. The Region Directors have been working hard to provide training opportunities to the membership that will meet the PRAC Standards. Within the last couple of months PRAC has had fire management training, using bloodhounds to locate lost hikers and coming soon, look for interpretive trainings in regions 1 and 4. Check the website www.calranger.org for all the up to date training.

Until next time...

Lee

Sonoma County Regional Parks Receives Grant To Fight Abalone Poaching

by Ranger Mike Chiesa, Sonoma County Regional Parks

Sonoma County Regional Parks was awarded a \$14,149.30 from the Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Commission last April to purchase equipment to assist the coastal park rangers with enforcing abalone laws.

Many of the coastal regional parks have prime abalone habitat, providing recreational opportunities for sport divers to dive for abalone. The Sonoma coast provides some of the few remaining, accessible, legal areas for sport harvest of abalone. To ensure the resource is sustained for future generations, the California Department of Fish and Game has enacted laws and regulations to control the take of abalone in the state.

As peace officers, Sonoma County Park Rangers are actively involved in enforcing regulations and laws pertaining to fishing, and abalone in particular, on the Sonoma Coast. Rangers work closely with Department of Fish and Game Wardens, California State Park Rangers, Sonoma County Sheriff's Deputies and the California Highway Patrol in the enforcement of Fish and Game laws along the coast. Our park rangers provide a vital line of protection for the abalone resource in the Regional Parks, allowing Fish and Game wardens to patrol other areas of the coast.

To help track violators, and people that are at or near their season limit, an informational database was developed to share information between the various law enforcement agencies on the Sonoma and Mendocino Coasts. The database provides intelligence informa-

tion on suspected poachers and helps catch violators who alter the number of abalone recorded on their abalone permit report card or purchase more than one report card and thus take over the season limit. Timely collection of information for the database, and the ability to view the database information in the field, is critical for the database to be useful. To assist with this worthwhile enforcement and resource protection mission, the grant allowed the Sonoma County Regional Parks to purchase eight Pocket PC handheld computers with digital camera and magnetic card-swipe reader attachments. These devices will give the rangers the tools they need to easily access the abalone database information in the field as well as be able to quickly and more efficiently enter information into the database. In addition, the grant allowed for the acquisition by North Coast Regional Park Rangers of a Generation III night vision monocular and a handheld thermal imager. The night vision and thermal imaging equipment will be useful in assisting the Sonoma County Park Rangers with detecting and apprehending violators illegally taking abalone during hours of darkness.

Thank you to the Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Commission for providing some much needed and useful equipment that will assist the Sonoma County Park Rangers with their duty of protecting the resources in the Sonoma County Regional Parks. For the latest information of current sport fishing regulations visit the California Department of Fish and Game web site at www.dfg.ca.gov.

Make your own Tennis Ball Trauma Kit

by John Havicon

Here's a little trick I learned from a CHP training officer. He collects the clear plastic tennis ball cans and turns them into mini trauma kits for his staff. They are durable, waterproof and are small enough to fit in a glove box. You can easily grab your "Tennis Ball Trauma kit" and have what you need to take care of most life threatening medical emergencies. Since it's clear plastic, you can see exactly what you have. The basic thought is to keep it simple!

Here are the contents:

BSI

- 2 Pair of latex gloves
- 1 CPR face mask (Laerdal sells face shields that fit in wallets for about \$1.00)
- 2 Individual packets of hand wipes

Trauma

- 6-10 4X4 sterile gauze pads
- 1 2" X 6yd roller gauze

Minor cuts

- 4 to 6 - 1"X 3" adhesive bandages
- 2 to 4 - Large Adhesives

There is plenty of room for other items such as

- Tweezers
- Aspirin, Acetamenoprin, 2-3 individual packets
- Antacids 2-3 individual packets
- Medical tape

All items can be bought at your local drug store, (except the face shields, which I found at my local Red Cross). These little kits are also great for backcountry trips as they are durable and don't take up much room. I found they also make good simple gifts for my friends and family!

Park Rangers Association of California Board Meeting Minutes

Harrah's, Laughlin, NV, March 6, 2006,

Meeting called to order at 2033 hrs.

Roll Call of Board Members:

Present: Lee Hickinbotham, Pam Helmke, John Havicon, Dave Updike, Lori Gerbac, John Lufrano, and Mike Chiesa

Absent: Matt Cerkel

• Minutes from previous meeting: Lee stated that we would be approving the minutes from the 01-31-06 meeting at the General Membership meeting on 03-08-06. Pam stated that she had some corrections to the minutes but could not find them at this point. She further stated that they were not related to content, only spelling or grammar.

• Lee stated that the meeting minutes will be posted on web after reviewed and approved by board.

• Directors Reports: Directors reported on their individual actions. Full reports to be given at GM Meeting on 03-08-06.

• Lee stated that David Brooks could use some new software for his computer to help with editing *the Signpost*. Lori motioned to purchase David Brooks software to upgrade his computer for *the Signpost*. Dave Updike seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

• Lee brought up idea of setting the Board meetings on a regular schedule. After a lengthy discussion the board agreed to set the Board meeting schedule as the 3rd Monday of January, June, September and at the conference.

• Lee discussed possibly having conference call vote voting for board meetings. Dave motioned to bring before membership for possible vote of membership, to a limit of 2 meetings per year. John Havicon seconded. A discussion ensued. Pam expressed concern about this being used as an excuse for Board members to not attend meetings. Lee said that was why we would limit it used. Mike envisioned it being something that would only be used if the Board member could not attend due to circumstances beyond their control. The motion passed unanimously.

• Lee discussed that CSPRA President Ron Brean discussed some concerns about conference profit sharing. Lee stated that Ron would like to address conference profit split. Mike brought up some history with conference profit sharing. The agreed upon profit split between the two associations is based on conference attendance. It is split percentage-wise by organizational attendance. Non-PRAC and CSPRA members attendance is split 50/50. Both boards had agreed beginning with Tahoe, 2003, to leave the conference account as a perpetual account to ensure funds were on hand from year to year for conference operating costs, security deposits for venues, etc. Lee formed a subcommittee of John, Mike, and himself to meet with CSPRA subcommittee. Lee would like conference committee to close out books by April of each year so each board will know how the conference did

• SB153: Lee discussed this bill. A letter will be going out to members about it encouraging members to lobby their legislators about it.

• The Board discussed the agenda for the General Membership meeting. Agenda to include items as listed in By-laws and info on SB-153, AB-814, and Walt's report on Napa Valley College-POST-PRAC and OES and parks response. Joe Edmiston will do report on the bills.

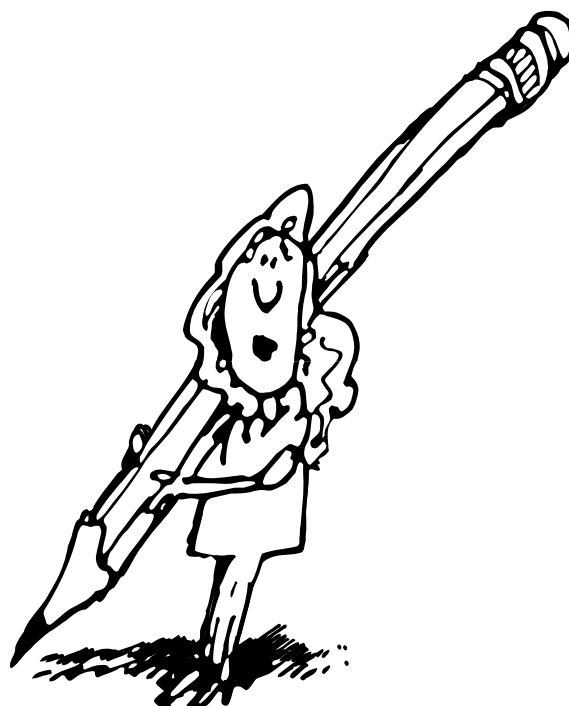
• Lori posed a question from Orange County. Would PRAC waive the firearms training requirement for Generalist Ranger requirement. Board discussed it and agreed that we did not want to change standards for requirements for certain areas.

• Lee discussed standards committee and would like to form a member subcommittee to review generalist ranger certificate process. Lee will do a session on 2007 on how to fill out forms.

Open Floor:

• Pam solicited donations from individual board members of money toward shipping surplus vests. Pam also handed out posters for donation of used cellular phones for orangutans.

• Meeting adjourned at 2133 hrs.



Park Rangers Association of California
2006 Annual General Membership Meeting
Harrah's, Laughlin, NV, March 8, 2006

Meeting called to order at 1232 hrs.

Roll Call of Board Members:

Present: Lee Hickinbotham, Pam Helmke, John Havicon, Dave Updike, Lori Gerbac, John Lufrano, and Mike Chiesa

Absent: Matt Cerkel

- Minutes from the previous board meeting were approved by the board unanimously.

- Lee introduced himself, made general announcements. Membership and financial report were provided. Lee told membership that copies were available for those that wanted them. Lee stated that the information would also be posted on the web site.

- Lee acknowledged the founders of PRAC and the 30 year anniversary. Founders Tom Smith, Raleigh Young, and Bill Laurence were in attendance. The members did a standing ovation in their honor.

- Director's reports: Each director introduced themselves and reported on their actions (refer individual director's reports).

- Smitty asked question about scholarship fund, it was not itemized on financial report. Mike responded that the lack of scholarship information on the financial report was an oversight but there would be a correction on the web posting financial info for scholarship and recipients would be announced today by Lee.

- Jeff Ohlfs discussed the **International Ranger Federation** and their conference would be held June 12-29.

- Steve Thompson brought up discussion about combining **PRAC** and **CSPRA**. Smitty discussed idea of combining the two associations and said that he would like to see them keep their separate identifies but come together under one larger organization.

- Raleigh made a motion for board to study issue and come back with recommendation to membership on a course of action within 3 months. Smitty seconded. Discussion ensued. A vote was called, it passed unanimously.

- Dave Updike and Walt Young provided an update on the **OES** and **Napa Valley-POST Training** partnership.

- PRAC-Napa Valley-POST: Walt outlined his research on PRAC entering a partnership with Napa

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Valley College to provide for POST-accredited training classes. PRAC would provide the instructors and recommended classes. Napa would sign off on the instructors and process the paperwork. The cost for a course would be approximately \$100.00 per hour which would include pay for the instructor, fees for Napa College, and payment for the host facility, as well as a return for PRAC.

- OES: Walt explained his discussions with OES regarding a mutual aid program for parks throughout the state. Walt recommended that PRAC serve as the clearinghouse for the information such as agencies that are willing to respond to assist other agencies and coming up with a resources typing system, similar to that which is used for fire response.

- Joe Edmiston reported on the Governor's bill for limiting the state's ability to enter into bonds. This would affect the ability for parks to get future funding through bond measures. More information will go out to the members as it becomes available.

- Lee discussed the standards and training and reviewed the process for applying for PRAC' professional certificates. He explained that it was not a difficult process and that the application materials would be streamlined to make it easier.

- Lee brought up a proposed by-laws change amendment. Proposed change to by-laws would allow for board member participation in Board meetings via telephone conference call when circumstances prevented them from attending a board meeting. This would be limited to no more than two meetings per year. Smitty thought this was a good idea and wanted to call for a vote of the membership at the meeting. Mike pointed out that the by-laws only allowed for a change of by-laws by a mail-in vote of the membership. Smitty then suggested amending the by-laws to allow for by-laws amendment votes at the General Membership meeting.

- Scholarships: Each year 2 scholarships are awarded. Lee announced scholarship winners. The scholarship award winners this year were Kathleen Jones and Stephanie Ferris. Kathleen Jones was the winner of the Thomas Smith Scholarship.

- Meeting adjourned at 1315 hrs. Next General Membership meeting will be at the Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite on March 7, 2007.

Snakebite!

by Pam Helmke

It's a warm summer day as you patrol through the gentling rolling hills of California's oak woodlands. As you pass by an old stock pond, now a popular fishing hole, you are flagged down by a frantic teen seeking aid.

The reporting party tells you his friend was just bitten by a rattlesnake. The victim, a 19-year old male, tells you it was a small, "baby" rattlesnake and he was bitten on the hand trying to catch it to show his friends.

The rattlesnake is a pit viper belonging to the genera *Crotalus* and *Sistrurus*. They are identified by their triangular-shaped head and heat sensing pits located near the eyes. Rattlesnakes also have elliptical pupils and all but one species have specially modified scales that form a "rattle" at the tip of their tail. Rattlesnakes can be found through out North and South America.

Rattlesnakes hunt by locating the body heat of their prey using their heat sensing pits. They stalk and attack their prey, biting it with specialized hollow fangs. The fangs inject venom in to the prey during the bite. The prey is released and tracked until the venom immobilizes it. Rattlesnake venom is generally composed of several digestive enzymes and spreading factors which result in localized muscle damage and systemic injuries including generalized bleeding and shock.

Your young victim is one of approximately 7,500 snake bites that happen in the United States each year and, according to the American Association of Poison Control Centers. Rattlesnakes cause the majority of bites by identified venomous snakes. The good news is few that half a dozen of these bites will result in death.

As you assess your victim he begins to complain of pain around the bite site and you notice that the area is already beginning to swell. He also starts to complain of a funny metallic taste.

Due to your isolated location you request an aero-medical evacuation through the local EMS agency and begin basic life support. This victim is showing definite signs of envenomation. While up to 10% of rattlesnake bites can be "dry bites" where no

venom is injected the fact that your victim tried to pick up a "baby" snake reduced his chance of a dry bite. While many people incorrectly think a young snake has more potent venom the reality is young snakes lack the control to limit or not inject venom when biting out of fear or self-defense versus hunting.

Prehospital care for this patient should include general support of his airway, breathing and circulation. Minimize any movement and remove any jewelry or tight fitting clothing in anticipation of continued swelling. If available, high flow oxygen is warranted. The bitten limb should be immobilized in a neutral position. Starting with your first exam and every 15 minutes thereafter use a pen to mark and time the boarder of the advancing edema.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention strongly recommends against many old fashion first aid techniques such as constricting bands, ice, incising and using mouth suction on the wound or giving any type of stimulant or aspirin. CDC studies also show that there was not a demonstrated benefit when a negative pressure venom extraction device (e.g., The Sawyer Extractor) was evaluated.

As you await the arrival of the advance life support helicopter you continue to monitor the victim's vital signs, carefully watching for difficulty breathing, hypotension, tachycardia or any neurological effects.

Once the ALS team arrives the patient is quickly loaded for rapid transport to a facility equipped to provide the appropriate antivenom. The patient is stabilized in the Emergency Department and transferred to Intensive Care. Over the first 24 hours he receives 3 doses of CroFab Antivenom and is fortunate that he is not allergic to the treatment.

Thanks to your rapid assessment, treatment and response your victim is discharged from the hospital seven days later. He will require additional medical care for tissue damage to his hand but he is expected to make a complete recovery.

Extra... Extra... Read all about it! Upcoming Training—Save the Date

by Lori C. Gerbac

No, you are not seeing things, **Yes**, there is an upcoming training scheduled (finally)!

In my efforts to help PRAC members fulfill the disciplines outlined in the PRAC Standards in Training, I met with some members over the last several months and we determined what training topics were needed. Anthropology was one topic where many of us fell a little short in knowledge, experience, and/or formal training. The vast majority of our Parks have rich anthropological history and culture, as well as archeological features that have perhaps been previously excavated; the artifacts catalogued and interpreted, and buried again. I think among many of us, the archeological discovery and preservation process is a mystery, as well as the laws and agency responsibility surrounding the identification and proper handling of such treasures. I am hopeful that this upcoming training will help clarify many of these mysteries and help all Park Professionals learn the critical elements of archeology, laws that apply to our region and a bit of Southern California history on indigenous people.

Title: Archaeological Ethics and the Law

When: Thursday, August 31st

Time: 12:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Where: San Diego Museum of Man, Gill Auditorium
1350 El Prado, Balboa Park San Diego, CA 92101

Cost: \$35.00 (PRAC members), \$40.00 (Non-members)

Description: This workshop will explore the ethical, legal, and practical dimensions of archaeology. Participants will learn about the archaeological process, site stewardship, and Museum preservation. Participants will also study current and historical aspects of archaeological laws that affect public property. Participants will also gain knowledge of historical and modern southern California indigenous cultures with a focus on the local San Diego Kumeyaay. The workshop will be lecture style with tours of select Museum exhibits. Participants who arrive early are free to explore the Museum's exhibits at no extra charge. Museum hours are from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm.

We need a minimum of 20 participants for this training. To reserve your space contact Lori Gerbac at region5@calranger.org or call 858-538-8082 and write your check out to: Park Rangers Association of California, send your check by August 10th to: Lori Gerbac, Sr. Park Ranger, 12115A Black Mountain Rd. San Diego, CA 92129.

News from the Mount Tamalpais Watershed

by Matt Cerkel

Well summer is finally here after a long winter and not much of a spring. How have your parks held up? Here in Marin on Marin Municipal Water District's Mount Tamalpais Watershed our maintenance department is still performing storm repairs from the New Years Eve storm and the nearly non-stop rain of the late winter-early spring. Another side effect of the winter rains is the incredible growth of light flashy fuels (grass) and what this could mean for the upcoming fire season. As always, the press has declared it could be the "Worst Fire Season Ever!" Of course, I have noticed the grass is much higher than normal, but at the same time, the fire season will get a late start due to the late rains. You never know...train for the worst, and hope for the best.

To help with both the upcoming fire season and doing storm related repairs on fire roads MMWD is just putting into service a new dual propose 2000 gallon all wheel drive water tender. It is fully equipped to serve as water tender on any fire incident and equipped to be a water truck for maintenance projects. In addition to the Water Tender MMWD is well equipped for this fire season, MMWD has a Type 3 Engine, four Type Engines, three Brush Patrols, a Type 2 Dozer, and a Dozer Tender.

As I have mentioned in previous articles in *The Signpost* MMWD has put together a very good operations manual for its rangers. While the law enforcement, daily operations, and EMS sections went into effect in April, the final additions are being completed and they cover firefighting, search and rescue, and maintenance sections. I can be proud to say I played a part in putting it together. An idea have related to operations manuals is perhaps PRAC could maintain a reference library, maybe online, of operations manuals and policies and procedures from the different ranger agencies from across the state. It would be a great resource for rangers and their employers.

Finally, I know many of you have followed through articles in *The Signpost* over the past three years as MMWD has dealt with the question of what level of authority its rangers should have. On May 17th, the MMWD Board of Directors unanimously voted to have MMWD staff look into what it would take to restate the rangers as peace officers (unarmed). This was a very positive development! While nothing is for certain, it is a big step in the right direction. I hope that soon the MMWD rangers will once again be peace officers.

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Submission deadlines ARE THE LAST day of JANUARY, MARCH, MAY, JULY, SEPTEMBER, AND NOVEMBER.

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