

# The Signpost

March-April, 2011



## A Snapshot of the Upcoming Interpretive Track at the 2011 Conference...

If you haven't met Mr. Frank Padilla, Jr. yet, do let this chance at the 2011 Conference pass you by. With a career history to make any park professional turn green with envy he has amassed a great collection of skill that he will be sharing with conference participants this year in Yosemite. Firefighter, Magician, Storyteller and Trail Management Specialist are just a few of the jobs that Frank is currently doing since retiring from State Parks in March 2005. Since his retirement Frank continues to provide training and workshops on Fire, Magic and Trail Management at trail conferences, park agencies and non-profit groups. His latest accomplishments were participating in the development and production of the "Volunteering for Trail Maintenance" training film which will be discussed at the conference

and winning a first place medal for Children's Magic Category at the 2010 Pacific Coast Association of Magicians conference.

See the outline below for a full outline of Frank's offerings to those lucky enough to make it into his sessions.

### **Session/Workshop Title: *Train the Trainer: Trail Crew Leader Training Course***

**Summary:** This workshop is designed to provide Park Agency staff information on how to conduct a Volunteer Trail Crew Leader course for trail volunteers who are eligible to become Trail Crew Leaders. This Train the Trainer workshop will cover the materials needed to conduct a 4 hour training session.

**Educational Objectives:** At the completion of this session participants will have a basic understanding of how to conduct a Volunteer Trail Leader course

**Proposed Length of Session:** 120 minutes

- This workshop is limited to 20
- Participants in this workshop should have a good understanding of Basic Trail Maintenance skills.

### **Session/Workshop Title: *Science Fun for Campfire Programs***

**Summary:** Want to add some zany fun to your campfire program? Then you will want to attend this fun filled workshop offered by Frank Padilla, Jr., aka Pancho Loco Wacky Scientist. Frank will demonstrate science based experiments that will be simple and fun, and will play well as openers or icebreakers for campfire programs.

**Educational Objective:** Participants will learn simple science based experiments that they can use in their interpretive and campfire programs.

**Proposed Length of Session:** 120 minutes

- This workshop is limited to 20

## **Minister Of Trade**

Jeff Ohlfs (NPS-Joshua Tree) is looking for your old and new agency patches. He brought back ranger patches from all over the world from the last World Ranger Congress. Now, he needs to stock up for the next Congress next year. If you'd like to have a Bolivian, Australian, or African ranger patch hanging in your office see Jeff at Yosemite! So Spring clean out your desk and closets of those old uniforms.

# Stories From Behind the Redwood Curtain or Pay No Attention to the Man Behind the Keyboard

by Patrick Boyle, Region 1

I am not really sure exactly what year I became a card carrying member of PRAC. It's not as if there is a "member since" on my card like American Express. As my camp host used to say "I've got a great memory. It's just short." So I started reminiscing a bit, as we tend to when we get older. I remember attending a trails workshop at Mid Peninsula Open Space, a verbal judo class in Sacramento, and a Project Wild workshop through PRAC. I think the first conference I attended was in San Rafael, and I have been to Santa Rosa, Yosemite and twice to South Lake Tahoe. So what exactly am I doing on this trip down memory lane?

Well like any story, I better start at the beginning. Not the very beginning of course, like my earliest childhood memory, more like the middle. I started working for Humboldt County Parks in May of 1992 after spending a summer working seasonally. I was obviously much younger than I am now. (A mere child of 24) Still they handed me the keys, said good luck this summer, and don't take any bad checks. So with very little training or fanfare I inherited the job of managing a 300 acres of Old Growth Redwoods. It has a 30 site first come, first serve campground; a group reservation camp of 28 sites; and one of the most popular swimming holes in Humboldt County, along with one seasonal employee.

At the end of that first summer when the kids had finally gone back to school and life started to have some semblance of normalcy, I started to wonder what had I gotten myself into. Living on site has its advantages and disadvantages. (More on those for another article....) But what I realized is I needed some help. Professional if it was in my health plan, of course it wasn't. Our department did a good job on maintenance training but not a lot of anything else. I think it was finally in 1996 (There is that memory thing again) that I stumbled across PRAC. That is my best guess as that is the oldest *Signpost* I could find in my files. Little did I know where that thread would lead....

One of the conferences I attended Lee Hickinbotham gave a little speech at the banquet dinner between his raffle ticket sales. I vividly remember the lights shining off the top of his head when he removed his pink PRAC hat. But what was even more memorable were these words. "How many of you have attended workshops and conferences sponsored by PRAC? And how many of you have sponsored these workshops? Volunteered at the conference or workshops? Or even written a letter to the *Signpost*?" These next statements, don't quote me on, but it went something like this. "This organization only works

through you. It is here for you, it is about you. What has PRAC done for you and more importantly what have you done for PRAC? If you only eat from the plate the rest of us will go hungry" or some other metaphor like that..... He was talking about me. I was taking all the benefits without giving much back.

I know we all have a lot on our own plate let alone attempting to balance one more thing. (I finally went to a dinner platter with side rails; I don't tend to spill so much that way.) So I understand making the commitment to one more thing. The other excuse I always used was what did I have to offer? I am not a law enforcement type, I am not an expert. I couldn't think of what I had to give or add to this organization. Now that a few more years have passed, I have some younger folks looking to me for guidance. Now that is a scary thought I try not to dwell on to much. So I guess I do have some experience under my belt to offer and share.

Someone asked me recently what has PRAC done for me? I can tell you this; it has made me a better park professional. (Replace that with your title if you like, it all applies.) It made me realize all the aspects that are encompassed in being a complete well rounded ranger type. I am of the belief that "a ranger is everything to everybody." I am supposed to be the expert, so it challenged me to expand my knowledge and keep my "A" game together. It has helped me make my agency better. But it has also shown me that I am not alone. There is an entire group of like minded individuals facing the same challenges and joys that I do on a daily basis. I can not imagine how my professional career would be without this group of dedicated individuals whom I have learned so much from. That's you, in case I lost you somewhere in these ramblings.

So now the rest of the story ....I could not let my region go without representation and I threw my name in the ring. So for better or worse, richer or poorer, I added a commitment to PRAC (to you) onto my plate. Lee, your speech did not fall on deaf ears! It just took a while to find some confidence to go for it. (I still do not think I have confidence to wear the pink hat just yet, but my wife thinks it's my color.) Thanks to all of you who went for it and took a chance on me by writing me in. I hope to prove worthy of the task and I know we can accomplish a lot together. I urge each and everyone to go for it, get involved. I know I sound like Lee here but, these programs are for you, about you, and put on by you. I love the PRAC Net Forums, I look forward to reading the *Signpost*, and I look forward to seeing you in Yosemite

*"Involvement with these issues means you are involved with the good people. The people with the live hearts... the live eyes... the live heads.... Think of the people in your lives. Who are the people you surround yourself with? Who are the people that make your life worthwhile? Usually they are the people who are committed to something.*

*So in the final analysis commitment in and of itself whether you win or not, is something that truly makes your life worthwhile"*

**Harry Chapin speaking about Pete Seeger**

[HTTP://WWW.CALRANGER.ORG](http://www.calranger.org)

# Outdoor Recreation Intern

## Great Basin Institute

Submitted by Park Ranger Marie D. Fong

Nevada is among the nation's most urban states. Tourism is the main industry in the state and since the economic downturn Nevada has seen a major increase in use of public lands by residents. This coupled with significant state, county, and city budget cuts for parks and recreation, has meant the recreation resources are used more than ever, yet there is less funding available for conducting public programs and community events at parks. In Washoe County alone, more than 150 seasonal park positions have been eliminated due to budget cuts. This leaves the parks significantly understaffed and unsupported.

The Great Basin Institute is recruiting for one outdoor recreation intern to provide on-site support to the Nevada Bureau of Land Management, Elko. The Intern will assist with land management and visitor services needs that are presently under-supported in the Elko area. Activities may include, but are not limited to: visitor services (staff support for visitor centers and information kiosks); environmental educational, outreach, and interpretive talks to general public; development of youth initiatives for the Take-It-Outside Programs and National Public Lands Day; maintain site conditions (campgrounds, designated recreational sites, etc); environmental monitoring in Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's); trail development (hiking, biking, OHV, horses); natural resource management; and recreation use permit administration. This intern will also assist in the research and development of a cost-benefit analysis and implementation plan for the use of alternative energy resources (i.e. wind and solar) to power water pumps and lighting at BLM recreational camp sites.

**Location:** Elko, Nevada

**Compensation:**

- Living Stipend: \$18,000
- Education Award: \$5,350
- Health Insurance

**Timeline:**

March 7, 2011 through February 10, 2012

**Qualifications:**

- Coursework in Recreation/Tourism, Environmental studies or related field (with interest in clean/renewable energy development) or equivalent experience;
- Knowledge of clean energy movements and renewable energy development projects in the western US;
- Experience using Microsoft Office software;
- Experience providing education and outreach to the general public preferred;
- Good communication skills (both verbal and written);
- Ability to work independently and in a team environment;
- Motivated, self-starter, detail oriented, and possess good organizational skills;
- Experience with project development, preferred;
- Applicants should possess relevant or related field experience – knowledge of and/or experience working in arid environments, preferable;
- Ability to lift up to 50 lbs;
- Ability to navigate and set a bearing using a compass and to read a topographical map;
- Experience operating 4x4 vehicles on off-road terrain;
- Ability to collect, QA/QC, and post-process data using handheld GPS units;
- Experience using ArcGIS software preferred;
- Possess a clean, valid, state-issued driver's license and the ability to operate a 4WD vehicle on and off paved roads; and
- Meet AmeriCorps eligibility requirements: (1) U.S. citizenship or legal resident alien status, (2) eligible to receive an AmeriCorps Education Award (limit of four in a lifetime or the equivalent of two full-time education awards), and (3) pass National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR) and federal criminal background checks.

Applicants having education and/or experience in recreation, tourism, interpretive services, communication (specifically public speaking) or engineering are strongly encouraged to apply.

**How to Apply:**

Qualified and interested applicants should forward a cover letter, their résumé, and a list of three professional references to Bridget Walden, at [bwalden@thegreatbasininstitute.org](mailto:bwalden@thegreatbasininstitute.org).

This program is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religion. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

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