



## **Parks Conference 2013 or 2013 Annual Parks Training**

**February 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>  
by Patrick Boyle**

You may have noticed the double header name at the top of the page. Just a note this is the big event PRAC and CSPRA put on for you, our members, but we cannot do it without you. In order for CSPRA to get support for this event and to send their people, the State will not support any type of event with conference, workshop, or seminar in the title due to budget or management issues. I think we can all understand how touchy the political situation is right now. It is never a good thing when the director resigns their position under these circumstances. So now when you see the working title of 2013 Annual Parks Training you will know what we are talking about.

Once again we are set for the Embassy Suites at Seaside (Monterey). Remember Tahoe? The \$84 room rate, the free cooked breakfast, and the managers' nightly reception with complimentary appetizers with beverages. Just replace snow with sand and there you are.....

We are still looking for your input for training ideas and topics. There's still time to place those requests. If you want to help in any way or present a training let us know.

### **Our Trac Chairs**

- Public Safety            Matt Bellah            [mbellah@parks.ca.gov](mailto:mbellah@parks.ca.gov)
- Interpretation           Sarah Skinner        [sskinner@parks.ca.gov](mailto:sskinner@parks.ca.gov)
- Resource /Maint        Pam Helmke           [president@calranger.org](mailto:president@calranger.org)

Drop these folks a line or any of your region directors. Start collecting those silent auction items, don't put away the Hawaiian shirt yet, and don't forget to let us know how we can make this conference (training) work for you.

For more details keep checking us out at <http://www.calranger.org/2013conf/index.html> or drop me a line. [region1@calranger.org](mailto:region1@calranger.org)

# From the Presidents Desk

## How May We Serve You?

Over the last 8 months your board has reached out to the membership asking how we can help. Surprisingly, we've heard very little back. With budget and staffing reductions impacting park and open space agencies across the nation it seems like there should be issues that PRAC can help with. The greatest strength PRAC has is its members. Together we can find answers, lend support and work together to protect our natural and cultural resources. But we don't know where that help is needed unless we hear from you.

Since January we've tried to award two scholarships. The board actively solicited for applications at colleges and training programs across the state. We placed dozens of applications directly in students' hands and yet no one applied.

We sent out a survey to over 125 members asking what we could do to help you in your training, we only got a handful back.

We've asked for a volunteer to sit on the PRAC Valor Award Committee an opportunity to recognize one of your own for service to the communities your serve. So far only silence.

When we meet face to face with members we hear about the issues facing your agencies, cuts to training budgets and we read in the news about Rangers going above and beyond.

We know we can help, we just need to hear from you. You just have to ask.

Contacting us is simple, if you don't know who to turn to you can start with me, my e-mail address is [president@calranger.org](mailto:president@calranger.org) or you can just contact the office at [office@calranger.org](mailto:office@calranger.org) Betsy will get your message in the right hands.

You just need to let us know. How can we serve you?

***Pam Helmke, President***

**From the Bedside Table  
Of Patrick Boyle**

# **The Time of the Buffalo**

**by Tom McHugh**

This is not a story, it is history. "It is the history of this magnificent beast that roamed our great nation from Alaska to the Carolinas." It begins at the fossil record and follows the plight of the buffalo through the 1970's. You may be surprised to know we even had buffalo here in California. Not only does this book trace the history of the buffalo but also how the buffalo shaped our history as early as the Pleistocene era. How it shaped the Plains Indian society, influenced the early settlers, and changed our culture forever.



Tom does an excellent job describing all the ceremonies involving the buffalo and its importance and all its uses to both the Indians and the early settlers. It also describes how the near extinction and plunder of these animals probably did more to drive the Indians on to reservations than all the Horse Soldiers and disease that swept down upon them. It is estimated that individual herds may have reached 1 million animals during their peak. I once worked with a herd of 5,000 cattle and I still cannot imagine 1 million of them thundering across the plains in a cloud of dust sounding like a freight train.

Hope Y'all got a chance to do a little reading in the shade by the river this summer....

## **Thoughts on Nature**

*Man is Nature's sole mistake.*

**W.S. GILBERT**

*There is no beauty in Nature.*

**Charles Baudelaire**

*A Place to throw empty beer cans on Sunday.*

**H.L. Mencken**

*The shock of the real. For a little while we are again able to see as the child sees, a world of marvels. For a few moments we discover that nothing can be taken for granted.*

**Edward Abbey**

# Award of Valor Review Committee

Beginning in 2012 the Park Rangers Association of California is seeking nominations for the Award of Valor. The Park Rangers Association of California Award for Valor may be presented to any park professional who risks his or her own life to an extraordinary degree in saving or attempting to save the life of another person, or sacrifices him or her self in a heroic manner for the benefit of others. This award recognizes the recipient's demonstration of unusual courage involving a high degree of personal risk in the face of danger. The heroic act does not have to be related to the recipient's official duties nor occur at their official duty station.

Nominations are to be received by January 1st of each year and a three member committee composed of one member of the Park Rangers Association of California Board of Directors as selected by the President of the Park Rangers Association of California; one member of the California State Park Rangers Association Board of Directors as appointed by the President of the California State Park Rangers Association; and

one active, regular member of the Park Rangers Association of California at large.

Each Committee member shall serve a three year term.

The Board is currently seeking applications for the member at large seat on the Award of Valor Review Committee.

If you are interested in recognizing your peers for valor please contact Pam Helmke, President to submit your application.

Any person may submit a nomination to the Award for Valor Review Committee. The nominee must be a park professional, employed by any California or Nevada municipal, county, state, regional or federal park agency, open space district or special district.

The nominee is not required to be a member of the Park Rangers Association of California.

More information and a nomination form are available on the web site at [www.calranger.org](http://www.calranger.org).



**You're Invited!!!**

**Region 1 & 2**

**Day at the Ballpark!**

**September 5 2012**

Come join us for some fun in the sun to watch the Athletics take on the Angels at the Oakland Coliseum. Can anyone say Division Wildcard Series? This is a Wednesday Day Game. Lets support those other green collar guys. Take the day off, play hooky, or just go out for lunch and do not come back. (Just kidding Boss) I am working on group tickets so get in touch with me as soon as possible. The more the merrier! Bring along a friend or co-worker, Need not be a member of PRAC to attend. Maybe if you bring a new member I might even buy you a hot dog! May be able

to get \$15 tickets behind home plate if enough people are interested. Otherwise looking at a block of the \$2 tickets. Great Seats in the plaza level. Look for more info on PRAC Net or drop me an email. Let me know if you are interested and if you have a preference on seating. Operators are standing by for this limited time offer!!! Well at least my computer is sitting by at my desk....

Patrick Boyle

[region1@calranger.org](mailto:region1@calranger.org)

# Coming Soon to a Ballot Near You

In just a few weeks the chair of the PRAC nominations committee will be asking regular members of PRAC to nominate candidates for the Board of Directors. Regions 1 (Northern California) Region 3 (Central California) and Region 5 (Southern California) will be open this year. In addition, the board is hoping to receive applications for a Student Liaison to the Board.

Board Members serve a two year term and the Student Liaison serves one year. Over the last several years the nominations committee has had difficulty filling out our ballots. Like all elections, participation is the key and we'd like to give our members a full ballot this year.

## ***Requirements for Serving on the Board***

- **Must be a Regular (voting) member of PRAC**
- **Must be willing to attend a minimum of four Board Meetings each year (typically by conference call)**
- **Must be willing to attend the General Membership Meeting held at the California Parks Training and Conference each year**
- **Board Members represent their Region and assist members with community education and organize at least one training and one social function each year,**
- **Board Members are also encouraged to submit articles to the *Signpost* newsletter.**
- **Board Members may also be assigned to serve on a variety of standing or ad hoc committees.**

## ***Requirements for Student Liaison to the Board***

- **Must be a student or regular member of PRAC**
- **Complete the required application**
- **Must be a student in an accredited college or university in the PRAC service area with a major that supports a career in park management**
- **The Student Liaison serves as a voice for the student members and is appointed by the Board.**
- **Student Liaisons may also be assigned to various standing or ad hoc committees including serving as a volunteer coordinator during the annual California Parks Training and Conference.**

Serving on Board is an excellent way to meet park management and land management professionals from across the state. As a Board Member you will also be assisting your peers in professional development and will most likely make new friends along the way.

The time commitment is minimal, typically a few hours each month, and the benefits are immense.

When the Nominating Committee calls for nominations we hope you'll consider running for your region or nominate a worthy candidate.

# Membership

## Patrick Boyle Region 1

As you all should know by now we are a member driven force. Without members we have no mission, no incentive, and no money. At the moment we are way down in numbers as both individuals and agencies have had to tighten their budgets. In some cases agencies no longer exist. In some cases, they have been merged with another department. We are also seeing a drop in full time employed Park personnel across the state.

Now is the time to renew your membership or join. We are having a pledge drive so to speak!

(Sorry no flash drive with all the past PRAC highlights) But if your membership has lapsed or you have not personally joined, consider doing it now. I mean as soon as you finish reading this now! By joining now you get the rest of this year and all of next year for one low price. If you are currently riding on your agencies coattails, or if your agency can no longer foot the bill, consider an individual membership. Or get your team together and pass the hat around to get an agency membership.

### Membership Dues Structure

<i>Category</i>	<u>Annual Dues</u>
<i>Active Membership, voting- 1 year regular membership (includes travel mug)</i>	\$50
<i>Active Membership, voting- 3 year regular membership (includes PRAC hat)</i>	\$110
<i>Active Membership, voting- 5 year regular membership (includes PRAC shirt)</i>	\$175
<i>Retired Membership, voting</i>	\$35
<i>Associate Membership, non voting</i>	\$35
<i>Student Membership, non-voting</i>	\$20
<i>Agency Membership, non voting- up to <u>24 employees</u> 6 mailings per year</i>	\$100
<i>Agency Membership, non voting- <u>25 or more employees</u> 12 mailings per year</i>	\$150
<i>Supporting Membership, non voting</i>	\$100

We like keeping dues reasonable. We know you do not make bankrolls of funds each week. It's hard to cash in all those sunsets and smiles for gas to get to work. But just to be a part of this great group of dedicated individuals and to catch the networking on Pracnet makes my membership worth way more than my dues. We are slowly bleeding out folks. Without members we cannot continue. Betsy and Jeff have both drastically reduced the insignificant amount we already pay them each year just so we can keep the server running and the bills paid. Your Board does not receive any \$ and is strictly volunteer.

We have had 23 Agency Memberships on average that account for \$2600 each year. However

this year we only have 9 Agency Memberships for 2012 for a total of \$950. A significant drop. And our total individual membership is at 108. We had over 200 members in 2009. Another significant drop.

Time to go all in and quit thinking about and just do it! Sign up!

There has been some discussion of changing the dues. I know times are tough but what are you willing to pay? What would your agency pay? What is this worth to you? We need to hear from you...It's been pretty quiet out there. I'll post this as a discussion thread on the web.

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

NAME _____		
ADDRESS _____		
CITY _____	STATE _____	ZIP _____
PHONE _____		
HOME _____	WORK _____	
EMAIL ADDRESS _____		
EMPLOYER OR SCHOOL _____		
JOB CLASSIFICATION OR MAJOR _____		

**Voting Membership**

REGULAR.....\$50 \_\_\_\_\_  
 RETIRED.....\$35 \_\_\_\_\_

**NON-Voting Membership**

AGENCY:  
 (1-24 PERSONS—6 MAILINGS)..... \$100 \_\_\_\_\_  
 25 PERSONS—12 MAILINGS)..... \$150 \_\_\_\_\_  
 STUDENT.....\$20 \_\_\_\_\_  
 ASSOCIATE..... \$35 \_\_\_\_\_  
 SUPPORTING..... \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

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**First Class**