

The Signpost

May-June, 2013



420

Patrick Boyle Region 1

April 20th this year falls on a Saturday. Most of us will be busy with Earth Day Activities such as tree planting, stream clean up, and invasive species removal, or other activities in our communities. Unfortunately we always wind up turning down offers to help out on this day.

For my agency **420** brings on a different set of management activities. April 20th has evolved into a sort of counterculture holiday in North America, where people gather to celebrate and consume cannabis. (smoke a dube, a jay, share a bong) Every year this date has corresponded to a large influx of folks making their way to Humboldt County and the Emerald Triangle. (Kind of a new age pilgrimage.) Here in Humboldt they have music in the local clubs and bars, as well as special **420** merchandise in the stores. Most folks thought **420** was the code that people were cited under for smoking pot or the amount of THC (the part that gets you high) that was specific to Humboldt Pot. Actually it all came about from some high school kids in the bay area who decided to meet at 4:20 to smoke some dope. That went viral and here we are waiting for everyone to light up at 4:20 on 4/20. (Some folks even take this to the extreme of starting at 4:20 am and then light one up again in the afternoon.)

Arcata City Park was the focal point for this smoke in with our coastal campgrounds getting hammered by folks looking to party late into the night. Most people look on pot as a pretty mellow drug and here in Humboldt County it is difficult to get a conviction for smoking pot, even more so with the advent of the 215 card. Most enforcement agencies try and deal with it as best they can. This has put our department on “an all hands on deck approach” to attempt to manage this large event. We have a small 13 site campground that would have over 500 people trying to crash for the night. A couple of years ago Humboldt County and the local agencies actually started to take a stand against this event. The City of Arcata actually closed the park and patrolled the community forest around the dates of the event. We started manning our parks 24 hours prior and during the event to keep the crowds contained. Needless to say it has been a huge drain on our small staff and resources. During the past couple of years with the pot culture going more main stream and with the above management practices things have lightened up a bit. Maybe sometime during the next ten years we will be able to celebrate Earth Day by doing something Earthy rather than manage a bunch of people looking to get to high and party.

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From the Presidents Desk

On May 6th a memorial service will be held in Sacramento to honor California Peace Officers who have died in the line of duty. Six names on the memorial are from our California parks community. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington D.C. also bears the names of many more park professionals who made the ultimate sacrifice including seven federal officers from the California and Nevada parks community. Each name inscribed at these memorials is a life to be remembered, cherished, and never forgotten.

If you cannot attend the Sacramento service, please, find that special area in your park or open space too take a few moments to reflect and remember those that have gone before us and to hope that no other names will be added to these memorials.

In Honored Memory

Ranger Harmon Schwoob	U.S. Forest Service	EOW: Sept. 20, 1941
Park Ranger Charles Scarborough	National Park Service	EOW: June 21, 1954
Park Ranger Kenneth Patrick	National Park Service	EOW: Aug. 5, 1973
Park Ranger Thomas Brown	National Park Service	EOW: Aug. 31, 1973
Officer Kenneth. McGregor	East Bay Regional Parks	EOW: June 4, 1974
Officer Paul George	East Bay Regional Parks	EOW: June 4, 1974
Park Ranger Richard Schnurr	California State Parks	EOW: Nov. 26, 1974
Park Ranger Patricia Scully	California State Parks	EOW: May 6, 1976
ParK Ranger James Fleetwood	National Park Service	EOW: July 5, 1977
Officer Howard Huang	L.A. Co. Parks & Recreation	EOW: March 11, 1984
Park Ranger George Kowatch III	California State Parks	EOW: Nov. 2, 1987
Park Ranger James Morgenson	National Park Service	EOW: July 23, 1996
Special Agent Dan Madrid	National Park Service	EOW: Sept. 24, 2005

We are rangers. We keep those who would harm the land as well as those who would harm their fellow man at bay. We care for the sick, search for the lost, assist those who cannot assist themselves. Sometimes we bring home those who would not otherwise return.

Mark Magnuson, Chief Ranger, Rocky Mountain National Park

Remarks from the memorial service for Jeff Christensen, NPS Park Ranger,
Rocky Mountain National Park

Pam Helmke, President

Blessing and Curses of a Small Town

Patrick Boyle, Region 1

Working in a small community has its share of blessings and its curses. Everyone knows your business better than you do and often times the rumor mill is way more exciting than what actually happened. It can be like that game of telephone, where everyone whispers something in the next person's ear and by the time it gets back to the sender, the message is totally new. It can also be a great support system to help out in times of emergency or need. I really enjoy working in a smaller park and community. Visitors are not just numbers and statistics but real people who I see on a regular basis. If you get to stay in a place long enough you get a chance to watch the kids grow up.....go from riding a bike to driving a car.... to getting married and having kids on their own. You know your trouble, your finicky campers, the chatty ones, and the set and forget visitors. You are also more likely to get involved with people and interacting with folks in ways you would never get a chance to in a larger setting.

I have been invited to weddings, graduations and funerals by park visitors. Small town politics can be as cut throat as national elections. I was once told in a public meeting "to sit down because I had not lived in the community long enough to voice an opinion let alone have one." The park I live and work in is located along a busy two lane twisting highway lined by large redwood trees. I have been on more than my fair share of traffic accidents between being on the volunteer fire department, and responding from the park.

Last year during a windy day with thunder storms I had just come off duty and poured myself a cup of coffee when a car pulled into my driveway to report a terrible accident at the entrance of the park. I called it in and responded. On arrival there was a small pickup truck in the middle of the highway with part of a tree through the cab and a woman crying hysterically at the back of the truck. I could see that her husband was pinned and twisted around in an unnatural position in the cab. When she saw me, she started calling my name and crying out for me to save her husband. Due to the extent of her injuries I did not recognize her until she called my name.

As I called in an update I could feel and hear my voice cracking due to the fact that I knew these folks and had a very good history and relationship with the victims. After getting the woman assessed and triaging her major injury and treating her for shock I left her in the care of another volunteer and went to check on her husband. She was still screaming hysterically but calmed down a bit when I began assessing her husband. Unfortunately there was nothing I could do other than open his airway and hold c spine as I was unable to remove him from the vehicle. As our local volunteers began arriving I put the word out of who our victims were. Whenever it is a local involved in an accident of this magnitude the word usually spreads pretty fast and furious through the community.

Ted and JoAnne ran the local market down from the park for 20 years before retiring three years ago. They still have lots of family and friends in the area and travel past the park on almost a daily basis. It was a freak accident with the top of a redwood tree falling down and going right through the front window and out through the back window without ever hitting the ground. One of those 30 second either way would have changed everything accidents. This accident hit the community hard and knocked the wind out of everyone's sails. For the next two weeks I had the victims' family members and friends calling to check in on me and to talk about Ted. Being first on scene and even responding as a local volunteer in a small community is tough in a normal situation. Responding to someone you are close to and have seen on a regular basis makes all those feelings more intense after the fact. This was one of those scenarios that no matter what, you could not have changed the outcome. But you find yourself questioning everything again and again. The community support for the family has been tremendous, and the service for Ted was one of the largest I have ever attended in this small town. The local market is still full of flowers and mementos on the front porch. This is one of the blessings and curses of working and living in a small community.

“On All Fours”

Richard Weiner, Region 4, Director

For those rangers that could not make it to this year conference, you missed some exciting sessions and hands on thrills. I'd like to tell you about one of the activities that I attended, the ATV certification class.

We started our certification with a short talk by two State Park Rangers instructors describing what the day would entail. We then proceeded out to the training track to get acquainted with our ATVs including the protective gear, environmental responsibility and local laws involved in operating an ATV.



hill climbing. By the afternoon our instructors gave us the two thumbs up and off we went for a 45 minute ride in the Hollister Hills ATV park. It was an exuberating ride among the trees, with uneven paths, going up steep grades and putting on the rpms.

We returned to our training track, took off all our protective gear and were presented with our certification as having passed the Riders-Course for ATV. I highly recommend this for any ranger that might think of using ATVs in their parks.



Basics instructions were then given which included turning the ATV off and on, gas throttle and braking. Once we knew how the ATV operated, it was time to get the hands on experience by hopping on the ATV. We started by going around large circles using our bodies to turn and then doing emergency stops. Next we did figure eights where we tried the techniques we had just learned. We then took our ATV over obstacles of different sizes to see what it would be like going over large branches. Last but not least we took our ATV up embankments to simulate



Park Professionals Receive Major Awards

During the California Parks Training in Seaside this February PRAC presented two awards for life saving actions by park professionals. Nominations were sent to the Major Awards Committee for actions that occurred in 2011 and 2012. The Major Awards Committee, consisting of Mark Hada representing CSPRA, Candice Hubert representing members at large, and Marie Fong representing the PRAC board; carefully reviewed each peer nomination. The Committee conducted an independent review interviewing witnesses, examining written documentation and looking through media reports to evaluate the actions of the nominees and assure that they met the criteria for each award. The Committee then made its recommendations to the full PRAC board for final approval. For 2013 two awards were presented:

Medal Of Valor



Sacramento County Park Ranger Christopher Kemp was selected to be the first to receive the Association's highest award, the Medal of Valor. Ranger Kemp was selected for this honor for his actions on August 15, 2011 when Ranger Kemp, who was off duty and in civilian attire, stopped for gas in Stockton. Per police reports describing multiple witness accounts, Ranger Kemp stopped a murder from occurring. While fueling his vehicle

Ranger Kemp saw an adult male -over 6 foot tall and about 300 pounds- viscously beating a woman at a nearby business. Other bystanders were trying to intervene but without success. The victim, a local school principal, had been beaten unconscious, and witnesses said she was being "tossed like a rag doll". Ranger Kemp called 9-1-1 and, without regard for his own safety, ran to assist the victim. Without backup, or complete protective equipment, Ranger Kemp confronted the assailant and made multiple attempts to stop the assault. Ranger Kemp was forced to draw his weapon to stop the assailant from continuing to beat the unconscious victim. The suspect fled the scene and Ranger Kemp remained with the victim to protect her and to render aid. The suspect was later arrested and charged with multiple felony crimes including attempted murder, stalking, and domestic violence.



Lifesaving Award



East Bay Regional Park Police Officer William DeLeon-Granados was selected to receive the Association's Life Saving Award for his actions on July 15, 2012. Officer DeLeon-Granados was on uniformed patrol in Tilden Regional Park in Berkeley when he found an unresponsive adult male bicyclist lying on the ground. The bicyclist was not breathing and had no pulse.

Officer DeLeon-Granados' quick actions in rendering first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (compressions and mouth-to-mouth ventilations) directly resulted in the victim's survival. When the local fire department's medical personnel arrived on scene to relieve Officer DeLeon-Granados and provide further medical assistance, the victim had already regained a pulse and was awake due to quick and decisive actions of Officer DeLeon-Granados. The victim was transported by air to a local hospital in Bay Area for advanced medical care and was later released from the hospital to rejoin his family.

In addition to their awards Ranger Kemp and Officer DeLeon-Granados received several commendations from members of the State Senate and State Assembly for their heroic actions.

The awards presentation occurred in front of their peers to a well deserved standing ovation during the 2013 California Parks Training Evening Banquet in Seaside.



If you know a uniformed park professional that has performed above and beyond the call of duty or whose actions directly resulted in the saving of a life in 2012 or 2013 please contact your regional director. Nomination forms may be downloaded from the www.calranger.org. Any uniformed park professional from any agency in California or Nevada may be nominated. Membership in PRAC is not required and the nominee does not need to be a ranger.

Behind the Scenes of a Conference

Patrick Boyle Region 1

This was my first time ever working on organizing an event of this magnitude. The things that go on between the schedules and all the details can be quite overwhelming at times. Needless to say my learning curve went through the roof. The people who worked on this event were instrumental in its success. It could not have been done without their time and dedica-



tion to this event. Now that it is over I realize how much work went on by how few emails I have in my inbox each night. It was not uncommon to have 20-35 emails a night regarding the conference compared to my usual 1 or 2. Someone asked me how I kept it all together during the weeks leading up to the event..... my simple answer.....fear....fear of failure and coffee They do wonderful if not scary things late at night, when the boogeyman keeps you awake cause you know there was something important you were supposed to do and forgot.

guarantee a certain number nights to be booked for your event to get certain prices and amenities and hope the numbers come through otherwise you eat the cost of those unbooked rooms and your costs for other items goes up. Where costs really add up are in what they call the service charges and special taxes that are added to everything. So dinner is \$50 but you have a 30% service charge + the tax of almost 18% and dinner is now running you \$75 a plate. These charges also apply for room set up, additional tables, screens,

Some behind the scenes issues.....

Signing a hotel contract is scary.....You negotiate everything you can and the details are daunting. You

projectors, podiums, and any other items you may need from the hotel. Some people wondered why the internet was not included...well it was simple math and it cost more to the room rate. (That and I did not even to think to ask prior to having the contract signed) Getting the government rate did not leave us a lot of negotiation in that regard for additional services.



Just when you think the schedule is set.....I do not know how many times we had to adjust the schedule of classes and presenters. Either due to schedule conflict, cancellations, speakers needing more time...the scheduling was a constant juggling act. Some nights I wondered what the heck I got myself into.



Technological Innovations.....This year we tried something a little different to save some costs. We put the info out on the internet sites for both PRAC and CSPRA.....We sent out Save the Date Cards to our members and the agencies via snail mail and were able to update info on a regular basis as we got it finalized to the web. Jeff Price really earned his \$ and I was surprised to see him with a full head of hair at the conference after all the hell we put him through with all the changes and updates. I was betting he was pulling it out strand by strand every night he



saw another email from me.... One thing we did learn was that we did not need Jeff doing twice the work updating both web sites. We should have put all the info on a single site and linked both CSPRA and PRAC to that site...DUH... At times it got a little confusing on your end and ours as to which update made what site.....Sorry about that....And then right at the very end Jeff's system went through a meltdown and we were unable to make any final updates or changes for the final two weeks. Being a Luddite at heart I just knew technology would fail me somehow.



A couple of what I believe to be some of the finer moments.....The tours and their attendance got us off to great start....We floated the Boat so to speak on the bay tour and Ft Ord National Monument was amazing. California State Parks Director Major General Anthony Jackson's keynote address was inspiring to



say the least...The International Track addition was fantastic and made me forget all of the petty things I worry about in my department....Dinner at the Aquarium in front of the big tank with the turtles and sharks and having all the exhibits to ourselves along with a behind the scenes tour.....PRICELESS. I am still in awe of holding my plate and staring out into the deep blue.....Lasts but not least all of you who attended the event and made for great lasting memories and friendships.

These are only a few of the things that went on.... As they say the devil is in the details and in the end it all seemed to come together very nicely. The hard work and dedication everyone put into this event was awesome. All of our presenters came to us this year as volunteers. We had folks from the State, our local agencies, nonprofit groups, and folks from the Feds, all take time out of their busy schedules to come help us out. Special Thanks to all the folks who stepped up in this regard and made this event what I consider a great success.

The planning for 2014 is already under way and Mike Lynch and Jeff Ohlfs have put together a great venue in Yosemite as it is celebrating 150 years of being a park. Check out the info on the web page. <http://www.parkanniversary.org>



Buy it Where You Burn It:

Join our public outreach effort to protect California's parks from pests moved on firewood

Perhaps you have put up one of the campground posters encouraging people not to move firewood. Maybe you have seen a billboard with the Buy it Where You Burn it slogan. The incentive and justification for this outreach campaign is simple — untreated firewood is a great vehicle for insect pests and diseases of trees, including invasive pests that are altering natural environments in California and the rest of the US. The threat is quite real—long distance spread of the Asian longhorned beetle, emerald ash borer, goldspotted oak borer and polyphagous shot hole borer is via the transport of infested wood. The same is true for a multitude of other pests that make a home in bark and wood, or incidentally hitch a ride on the surface of firewood.

While various efforts have been undertaken to deal with this threat it's clear that the problem is not going to go away or be easily mitigated. Quarantines have been established for specific pests and some states have enacted laws restricting the movement of untreated firewood. Still, regulations and laws have their limits. Perhaps one of the greatest challenges is getting the public to understand the problem and act appropriately. California became more involved in this issue in November 2010 when the nonprofit California Forest Pest Council passed

a resolution to form the California Firewood Task Force, a coalition of agencies, organizations and other stakeholders working to protect the state's forests and natural environments from invasive pests.

The principal Task Force effort is outreach and education. For the past two years, we have conducted outreach campaigns targeted at campers. Our materials highlight the message "*Buy it Where You Burn it*"—a slogan created and used in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho—as well as the logo for the national *Don't Move Firewood* campaign. We are continuing this effort during the 2013 camping season and encourage you to get involved.

Rangers are critical for delivering this message because you are a direct point of contact for the public and are deemed highly trustworthy. Park visitors value the environment they are visiting and are willing to do what they can to protect it but may not recognize that their personal actions can make a difference. With your help, we can educate the public and change behaviors to better protect California's wonderful parks and wildlands. Outreach materials are available at no cost. To learn more, visit www.firewood.ca.gov or contact Janice Alexander at jalexander@ucdavis.edu.

The New Iron Ranger of Sonoma

from Bill Trunick via PRACnet

Visitors to Sonoma County Regional Parks can now pay for day-use parking with credit cards. New parking pay stations that accept Visa, MasterCard and Discover Card were recently installed at Crane Creek, Helen Putnam, Maxwell Farms, Sonoma Valley, Riverfront and Sunset Beach, Spring Lake, Ragle Ranch, Steelhead, Healdsburg Veterans Memorial Beach, Gualala Point, and Westside Regional Parks.

The units are replacing the older self-pay stations that require visitors to place cash in envelopes and drop them into collection boxes. By providing more convenient payment options, the new equipment is expected to increase compliance with parking rules and reduce the staff time spent collecting and reporting cash receipts.

In addition to accepting credit and debit cards, the parking machines take \$1, \$2, \$5 and \$10 bills. The units produce a receipt that drivers place on their dashboards, and the receipt is valid at any Regional Park on the day of purchase. Sonoma County Re-

gional Parks have the machines set up so that they cannot process larger denominations or coins and cannot make change. This makes it easier for staff to not have to deal with filling the machines and processing the coinage.

In August, Regional Parks contracted with VenTek International of Petaluma (<http://www.ventek-intl.com/parks-recreation-afm/>) to buy and install the pay stations. When additional funding is available, more pay stations are planned.

Day-use parking is \$7 at all Regional Parks. Frequent park users are encouraged to purchase an annual Regional Parks membership.

About half of the machines currently in use are solar powered. The other half are hard wired into our entry stations. We have seen an increase in fee compliance with the machines at our unstaffed entries. We will still be staffing the entry station during the peak season as staff can process the transactions faster and give visitors added information.

Tom Smith Receives the CAPRCBM Presidents Award

On March 7th Tom “Smitty” Smith was presented with the California Association of Park & Recreation Commissioners and Board Members Presidents Award for his life time of service to the Parks and Recreation profession.

Smitty was one of the original faculty members when West Valley College in Saratoga opened its doors in 1961 and worked with fellow instructor, John Nicholas, to develop and teach in the Park Management Program. During his time as an instructor Smitty also worked seasonally as a Park Ranger for both the National Park Service and Santa Clara County. Smitty is also one of the founders of PRAC, a past president and the recipient of our associations Honorary Life Time Membership Award for his work supporting parks and open space in California. After retiring from West Valley College he continued to teach park related courses at San Jose State University for 10 years.

If all that wasn't enough Smitty was asked to serve as the Acting Director of the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department until they could locate a permanent director. He also continues to work as a consultant on natural resource issues.

Smitty is also a published author and as volunteered extensively with Boy Scouts of America. Smitty continues to serve as a mentor and role model for park professionals across the United States. In recognition of his 50 years of service to parks Smitty was presented the CAPRCBM presidents Award in front of his family and many friends.



Left to Right: Mildred Smith; Tom Smith; Dr. William Hendricks, Professor, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and Former PRAC President; Lisa Killough, Former Director of Santa Clara County Parks

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