



NEWSLETTER

14900 FRUITVALE AVENUE ● SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA 95070 ● (408) 867-2200, EXTENSION 376

May 21, 1982

News From Around the State

Santa Clara County Dave Christy, former Director of Santa Clara County has taken a new position as Director of San Mateo County. The Department, is talking of closing two parks in the system, Uvas Canyon, and Sanborn/Skyline, as a move to save money. In 1971, a County Charter Admendment was passed by the voters to provide 10¢ on \$100 dollars assessed valuation for park development and acquisition. This provided the Department millions of dollars for this purpose. Like most departments the County became property rich, and operations poor. They went back to the voters for approval to use a certain percent of these development funds for operations. The taxpayers again approved. Now the County Board of Supervisors is trying to take this money away from the Department, and place it in the general fund in an effort to help the overall budget crunch. They will need voters approval to do it. Since the voters have earmarked these monies for parks, a movement is starting to pressure the Board of Supervisors to back off from this attempt, and to use the funds in the manner that the voters intended. You can help! Please write:

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
County Government Center, East Wing
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, CA 95110

City of San Jose San Jose will be cutting their parks and recreation budget 60%. Most of the cuts will be in the recreation area. Swimming pools, recreation centers, etc. Park Maintenance will be cut back. The rangers, however, will not feel to much of cutback, if at all.

Kern County. A note from one of our members in Kern County suggests a series of articles to be published in the "California Ranger" on each of the agencies in the State. Kern will be the first such article to be highlited. We think that this "Parks of California" feature is a great idea, but we need all of you to contribute. Articles should be sent to:

Heidi Doyle
Channel Coast Area State Beaches
24 East Main Street
Ventura, CA 93001

West Valley College A new slide/tape program is almost completed. The subject "Conflict Management." The program features the methods of dealing with people in conflict, and highlights the approach, separation, position for safety, plus other phases of conflict management. This is the fifth in a series of park slide/tapes designed for training purposes. Other are:

Restroom Housekeeping
Campground Maintenance
Rescue and Recovery
Rigging the Stokes Litter

"Conflict Management" is scheduled for completion in the fall.

United States Forest Service Word has been received, that "somehow", 11% more money has appeared in the USFS budget for recreation, above what the Service has asked for. The Forest Service also predicts that they should be back to "normal" by fiscal year 1983.

San Jose Concludes Vandalism in the Parks Study To Begin Implementing Recommendations In the Spring

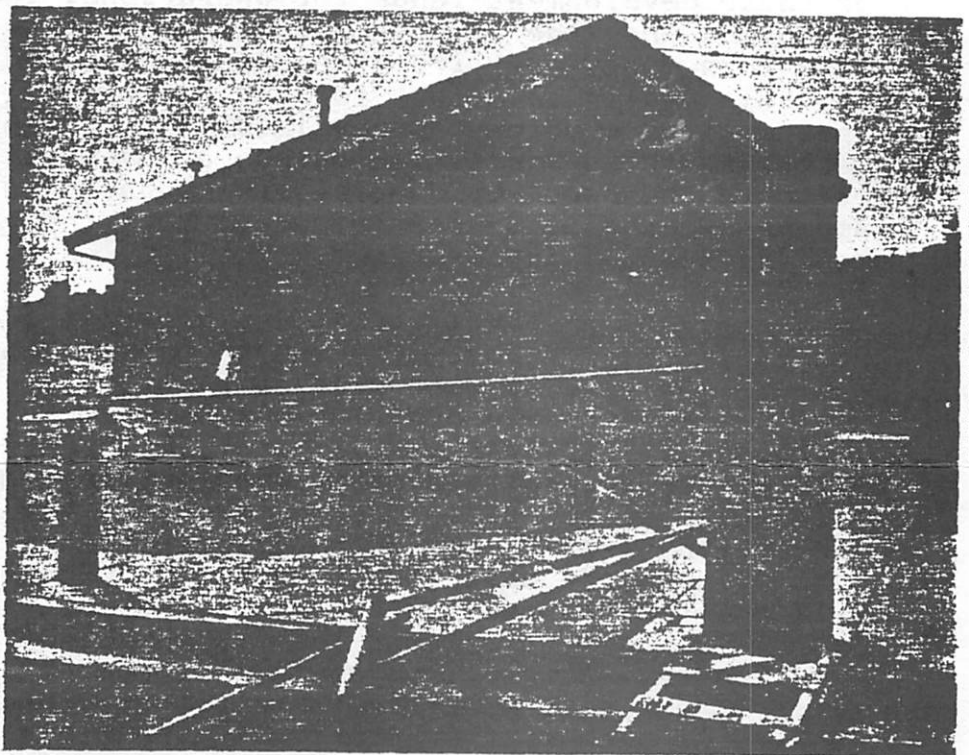
After two years of extensive research, the San Jose, California, Parks and Recreation Department recently completed a study of vandalism in its parks and is now using the study's findings to implement a comprehensive plan to reduce citizen fear for personal safety, vandalism and other forms of deviant behavior in its parks.

The study was begun in September 1979 in response to growing concern for the safety of San Jose residents while in the city's parks. It was undertaken with full backing from the city's administrative and civic leaders, Parks and Recreation Commission and citizens.

In collecting data for the study, Jane Tindell, project coordinator, and the rest of the project staff conducted hundreds of surveys and interviews of individuals and agencies both within and outside the parks and recreation profession.

Such agencies and organizations as the Mexican-American Community Services Agency, the American GI Forum, Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the National Center for Community Crime Prevention, the National Park Service, and the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, among others, contributed information during the early data collection phase of the study.

Local sources such as San Jose State University, the San Jose City Council,



Photos by Gina Farnquist and Sharon DeCarlo

The San Jose study of vandalism in its parks found that graffiti was the type of damage which occurred most frequently. Graffiti, along with a damaged gate, is evident in this picture of a San Jose park facility.

the city's planning and youth commissions, and the San Jose police department were also tapped for information.

Even several Canadian agencies, including Recreation Canada magazine, were contacted during the information gathering stages of the study, said Tindell.

Citing the complexity of assessing

vandalism and related inappropriate behavior in urban parks, Tindell said a descriptive case study approach was most applicable in studying the problems in San Jose. Resources did not allow for complex statistical analysis, she said.

Four of the city's 150 parks were

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San Jose Study Takes a Deep Look at Vandalism

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chosen as case study sites. The four picked were viewed as having the most chronic vandalism problems.

Based on the many interviews and surveys of officials of groups with ongoing relationships to the four study sites, Tindell and her staff formulated a list of factors and issues that related to damage problems in the parks. Eighteen different factors were cited, including: times of day and week damage occurred, types of incidents which occurred most often, patterns of site use by the public, efforts already taken to reduce and prevent damage, and dollar costs of damage at selected sites.

Simultaneous to the four case studies, the project staff surveyed and interviewed key parks and recreation department administrators, supervisors and support staff members.

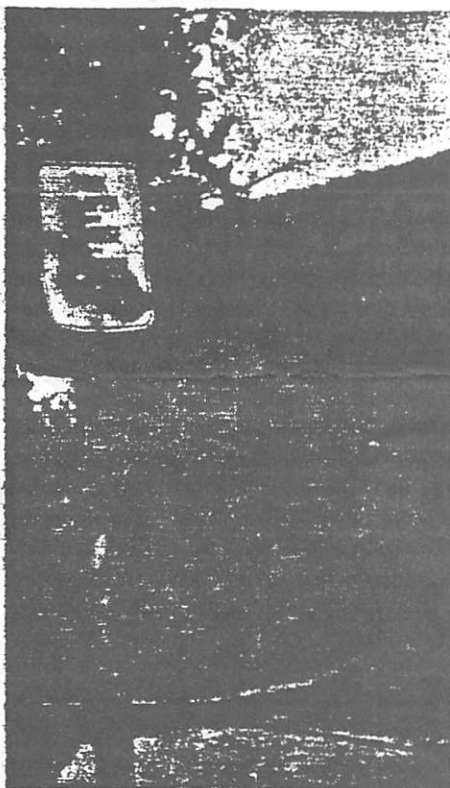
Graffiti was the type of damage which occurred most frequently; males, between 10 and 25 years old, were most often the culprits; and weekends, between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., were when the majority of the acts took place.

Data analysis was done by the project staff, with assistance from San Jose State University Recreation and Leisure Studies Department students. Data covered not only parks vandalism and property damage, but also touched on such related areas as: architectural and landscape design, community participation in prevention programs, crime and crime prevention, juvenile delinquency prevention, litter control, park law enforcement, park planning, school violence and vandalism, urban planning, and violence and violence prevention.

The study's early data answered many crucial questions. For instance, Tindell and the project staff learned that graffiti was the type of damage which occurred most frequently; males, between 10 and 25 years old, were most often the culprits; and weekends, between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., were when the majority of the acts took place.

The reasons most often attributed to acts of vandalism, as gleaned from the study's surveys and interviews, included boredom and loitering (lack of oppor-

tunity for involvement in other constructive activities), drug abuse (including alcohol), diversity of cultural groups (different values and languages), fragmented



family units, gang membership or group competition, lack of parental supervision, peer pressure and status needs, unemployment, unresponsive school system and truancy.

The data indicated that park and recreation staff felt "variably responsible for and comfortable with attempting to confront persons doing damage and hold them responsible for their acts," although some expressed fear of possible retaliation and the perception that "it's not my job."

The study further revealed that vandalism in all 150 of the city's parks between January 1980 and June 1981, amounted to about \$114,000. Estimated costs of vandalism at the four neighborhood park sites which served as case studies was \$10,500.

To the question "what are the most effective means of reducing and preventing damage in parks," the most common answers were: increased citizen involvement in program and facility planning; painting of murals; more supervised recreation programs; increased park ranger and police patrolling (particularly at notorious trouble spots); more evening and weekend use; institute restitution programs, whereby parents would be responsible for actions of children, or,

whereby offenders would work off the cost of damages, or, whereby offenders would be required to repair the damage they committed; provide consistent enforcement (enforce curfew and park closing hours more rigidly and make more arrests); installation of security features such as night lighting and alarm systems; increased family use of sites; increased parental involvement in activities with youth; specialized programming for youth; installation of more durable equipment, i.e., "vandal proof" fixtures and concrete and metal equipment; programs providing greater opportunities for positive interaction and cooperation among diverse groups.

With the majority of the data in hand, the project staff prepared a preliminary summary of the study's results. Portions of the summary were used in "Parks and

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Recreation for the '80's: A Long Range Plan for Parks and Recreation Services for San Jose, California," which was released in the summer of 1981.

The summary, as excerpted from "Parks and Recreation for the '80's," presented a broad overview of strategies to be considered in the development of a plan to combat vandalism in the parks. As noted in the introduction: "it illustrates a strong commitment to community involvement in solving these problems; a positive, preventive philosophy; and, the necessity of implementing multiple strategies simultaneously—i.e., both education and enforcement—to ensure greater impact and success."

The plan then goes on to list 26 different suggestions for consideration by an advisory group consisting of representatives from local public school districts, the police department, recreation and park maintenance staff members, park

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San Jose Study on Vandalism in Parks is Completed

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rangers and selected citizen groups and nearby businesses.

The study's final recommendations were grouped into nine categories. These included: community education and involvement; crime and delinquency prevention; enforcement, security and surveillance; facility and equipment design and use; legal and justice system; parks maintenance; recreation programming, services and staffing; reporting and monitoring system; and, staff training, responsibility and teamwork.

Within each of these categories, items were further divided into two basic areas of responsibility for implementation. These two areas were:

- parks and recreation department, and other city department's where appropriate (police, general services, attorney's office, city council).
- community entities external to city government (service organizations and agencies, schools, businesses).

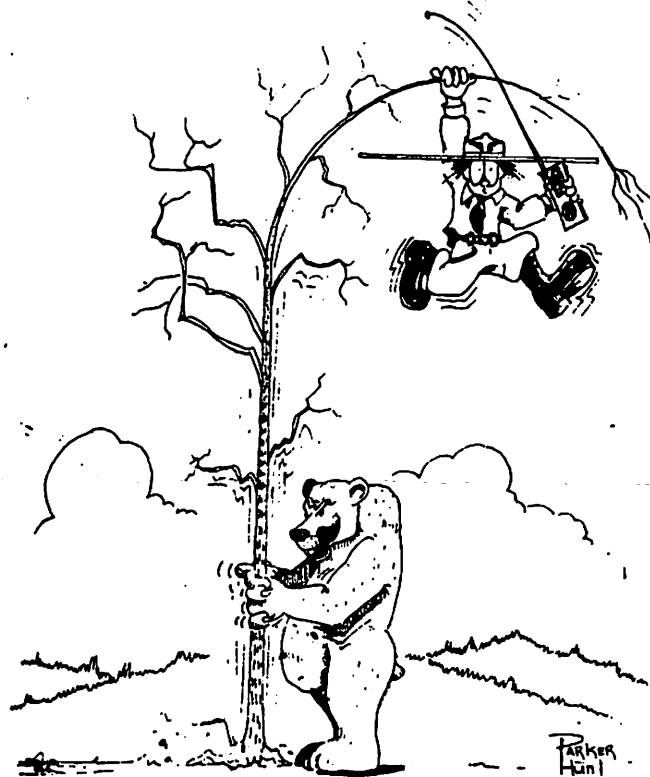
Tindell said the study's recommendations would be reviewed by an inter-departmental task force and appropriately implemented into four of the city's parks as pilot project sites this spring. Specific plans of action, she emphasized, will be tailored individually for each park site.

Editor's Note: The results of "A Study of Property Damage in the Parks of San Jose, California: A Final Report," including recommendations for action that will be part of San Jose's "Citizen Safety and Reduction of Vandalism in Parks Plan," are available from Jane Tindell, Special Project Unit, Citywide Parks and Recreation Services Division, Parks and Recreation Department, 151 West Mission Street, San Jose, Calif. 95110, or call (408) 277-4661.

In addition, the San Jose Parks and Recreation Department has developed a research list of sources contacted during the course of its study. For a minimal charge to cover duplication, postage and handling, the San Jose Parks and Recreation Department will send you a copy of this valuable guide. For more information, contact Jane Tindell at the above address and telephone number.

The following article is from the National Recreation and Parks Assoc. "Dateline: NRPA" March 1982, Volume V Number 3.

Ranger Ralph



What do you mean it will take you two to three hours to get here going 55 miles per hour?

NRPA Journal