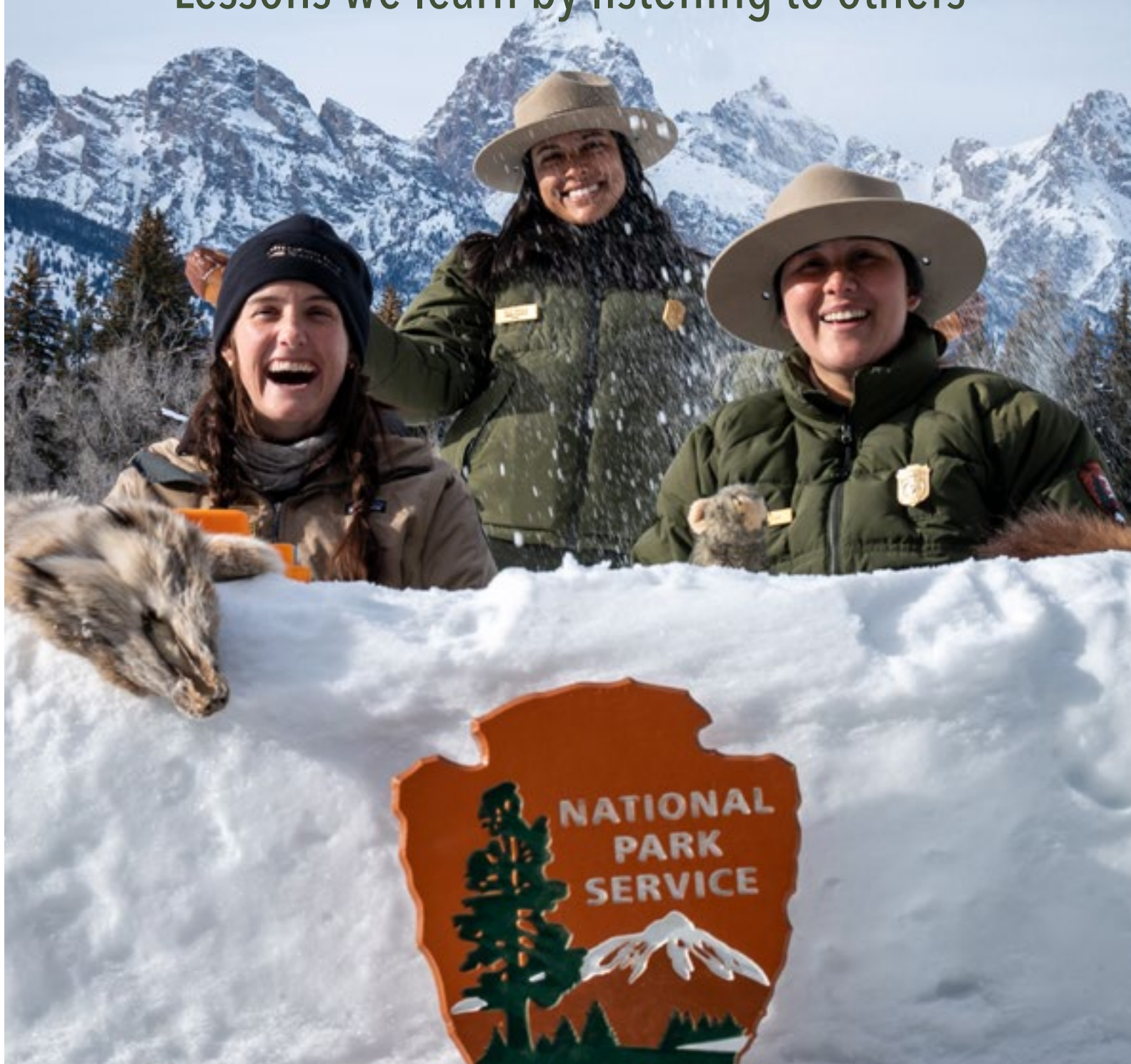


The Journal of the Association of National Park Rangers

RANGER

Stewards for parks, visitors & each other

Lessons we learn by listening to others



Contents

Winter
2024

Heading into the new year with lofty goals

Editor's
notes

— Melissa DeVaughn

- 3 President's message
- 4 Darla Sidles shares a leader's perspective
- 6 Kids say the darnedest things — and we can learn from them
- 8 So There I Was : Early arrival during a spring storm
- 10 What our international peers can teach us
- 12 Ranger Rendezvous 46 Photo Contest
- 15 Let's make Ranger Rendezvous 47 one for the record books
- 16 Interpretation: Kids really do say the darnedest things
- 17 In Print: Fighting for Women's Rights
- 17 Donor List
- 18 Administration: Always learning
- 19 RR 46, Kudos, Welcome to the Family
- 20 Protection: Spans of Control
- 22 Cultural Resources: Preserve important histories but fairly and equitably
- 23 Annual Life Century List

ON THE COVER: Who says winter isn't a great time to see our parks? Park rangers Erin and Dyani work the "snow desk" at Grand Teton National Park on a sunny February day. Photo: NPS / C. Adams

A PRIMARY FOCUS OF ANPR'S WORK IN 2023 CENTERED ON GROWTH: How can we as an organization continue to represent the needs of today's rangeland professionals, and attract and expand our membership? During Ranger Rendezvous 46, in Jacksonville, Fla., a small but committed group of attendees tackled that conundrum. We broke into focus groups to come up with suggestions on ways to stay viable in a world that is vying for our attention in ever-increasing ways.

While no magic solution came from those meetings, what did resonate among these core members is that they want ANPR to stick around. And we plan on it!

One way to do that is by listening to all people, from every angle: How do you see our parks? What can we do to improve? How can we be better park employees, stewards, and supporters? In the pages ahead, look for advice from all walks of life — the international community, a high-level administrator, and even small children. Everyone can help us learn to do better, and perhaps see things just a little differently.

As for growth, ANPR strives to gain new membership, and bring back enthusiasm for real-life conversation and human interaction. Our attentions are pulled in every virtual direction imaginable, but nothing replaces one-on-one conversation and the connections we make as members.

We challenge each and every member here to spread the word. Just think: If every one of you could convince just *one* person to join ANPR, we'd be twice as strong in just a year.

Now, *that's* progress!

— Melissa DeVaughn
Ranger magazine editor

Can you win this editor's challenge?



What's so funny?

The first person to successfully describe *exactly* what happened during this photo taken at Ranger Rendezvous 46 will win the opportunity to award three ANPR gift memberships to three people of their choosing. Send all responses to mdevaughn@anpr.org. Photo: Warren Bielenberg

RANGER

THE JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL PARK RANGERS
Vol. 40, No. 1 Winter 2024

Ranger (ISSN 1074-0678) is a quarterly publication of the Association of National Park Rangers, an organization created to communicate for, about and with National Park Service employees of all disciplines; to promote and enhance the professions, spirit and mission of National Park Service employees; to support management and the perpetuation of the National Park Service and the National Park System; and to provide a forum for professional enrichment.

In meeting these purposes, the Association provides education and other training to develop and/or improve the knowledge and skills of park professionals and those interested in the stewardship of national parks; provides a forum for discussion of common concerns of all employees; and provides information to the public.

The membership of ANPR is comprised of individuals who are entrusted with and committed to the care, study, explanation and/or protection of those natural, cultural and recreational resources included in the National Park System, and persons who support these efforts.

ANPR business address is 12675 N. Sunrise Shadow Drive, Marana, AZ 85658, anpr.org. Members receive *Ranger* as part of their membership dues. See the website or *Ranger* for membership/subscription details.

FINAL DEADLINES

Spring issue Jan. 30
Summer issue April 30
Fall issue July 30
Winter issue Nov. 15



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

President	Rick Mossman, RETI
Secretary	Demmy Vigil, RETI
Treasurer	Rick Harwell, VIP

Board Members

Education & Training	Rae Emerson, RETI
Fundraising Activities	Wendy Lauritzen, RETI
Internal Communications	Greta Ketchner, UPDE
Membership Services	Shannon Wilson, RETI
Professional Issues	Emily Johnson, AKRO
Seasonal Perspectives	Troy Hunt, EDUC
Strategic Planning	Lauren DeGennaro, ZION
Government Affairs	Mike Pflaum, RETI

Staff

Executive Director	Bill Wade, RETI
Business Manager	Melissa DeVaughn
<i>Ranger</i> magazine editor	Melissa DeVaughn

Professional Ranger section

Cultural Resources	Alan Spears, NPCA
Protection	Kevin Moses, SHEN
In Print	Rick Smith, RETI
Administration	Marin Karraker, SEAZ
Interpretation	Gary Bremen, RETI

Copyright © 2024. All rights reserved. Articles and images in this publication are the sole property of ANPR and *Ranger* magazine, except where otherwise indicated. Republication in whole or part is not allowed without written permission.

Gearing up for the busy summer season ahead

President's message

— Rick Mossman

I hope you had a great holiday season, and now it's time to start applying for all those backcountry, camping, and climbing permits for this coming summer. More and more agencies are imposing permit requirements to an ever-increasing population. The hope, of course, is to try and protect our natural wonders by limiting use. Although it's sometime a hassle, I think we would all agree it's necessary. I find it ironic that my first summer season in the NPS as a campground fee collector, at the new Buffalo National River in 1975, there were talk and opinion pieces about the need to limit visitors to the national parks because, as the saying was in those days, "We are loving the parks to death." Now, almost 50 years later, we're still saying the same thing.

But of course, politicians and private businesses beholden to the almighty dollar don't want limits – they want to squeeze every dollar out of as many visitors as possible. They are not concerned about the visitor's experience, not caring that the visitor is tired, depressed, or heartbroken they can't get into the park, or get a permit for their hike, or whatever. Some things don't change until they break. We need to continue to support the park service (and other agencies) as they institute limits to try and save the resources we all want to protect. We also need to gain the public's support of doing this.

Switching gears to this last Fall; *Ranger* Rendezvous 46 was a great success. Even though it wasn't a large turnout, the folks attending all had a great time. ANPR Executive Director Bill Wade did an outstanding job setting up a great program.

I encourage you all to attend this year, when the Rendezvous will be held in Rapid City, S.D. It's a great location – check out Mike Pflaum's "Save the Date" article, on Page 15 of this issue, and mark your calendars. It's true; there are more 30 NPS units within a day's drive of downtown Rapid City. So, if you haven't been in this part of the country, please attend the Rendezvous and learn more about this corner of the world.

— Rick Mossman,
ANPR president



Letters to the editor

ANPR welcomes discourse among its members. Tell us what you think matters in the world of rangering, or send us feedback on the articles we feature.

Do you have an opinion you want to share? *Ranger* magazine welcomes all respectful input and feedback. Please limit letters to no more than 250 words, and send to mdevaughn@anpr.org.

Subscribe to our newsletter

If you'd like to receive a few emails a month from ANPR, including our e-Newsletter, *Ranger* Rendezvous updates, and other things happening within the organization, then provide your email to stay in the loop. Go to www.anpr.org/media/newsletter and scroll to the bottom to subscribe.

The leadership experience

Recently retired Rocky Mountain NP superintendent reflects on a successful career

Recently retired Rocky Mountain National Park Superintendent Darla Sidles has had an illustrious career in the National Park Service, one that culminated in October 2023, when she was presented the prestigious Stephen T. Mather Award by the National Parks Conservation Association during ANPR's Ranger Rendezvous 46 in Jacksonville, Fla. ANPR caught up with Sidles, who agreed to share some of her thoughts on her career, and lessons she learned during that time.



Darla Sidles, recipient of the Stephen T. Mather Award, and recently retired as superintendent at Rocky Mountain National Park. Photo: NPS

Name: Darla Sidles

Where you were born/raised?

I was born in Oklahoma, but moved a lot as a child, which helped fuel the nomad lifestyle that fits the NPS so well! I was raised mostly in the Midwest and Texas. I went to college at the University of Texas at Arlington, and Western Washington University in Bellingham, Wash.

Where do you live now?

We live just north of Tucson, Ariz.

Can you give us a history of your career?

I started in 1986 with the SCA as a volunteer with the U.S. Forest Service in the Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest, in northwest Washington state. I worked seasonally as trail crew, and was a wilderness ranger for five years. I did a second stint with the SCA as an interpreter at Arches National Park.

I had additional seasonal jobs that included DENA (dispatcher), BIBB (trails), ZION (biological science tech), and got on permanently while at ZION, working as a bio tech, vegetation manager, wilderness manager, and ending the last four years as a planner, heading up the General Management Plan (also during the implementation of the shuttle system). I also did two details in Washington, D.C., as assistant to the director and as a legislative fellow to Sen. Daniel Akaka of Hawaii, and a detail as acting superintendent at FOLA.

I was the first superintendent of the Grand Canyon Parashant National Monument in 2001, deputy superintendent at INDE (2006-2009), superintendent at SAGU (2009-2016), detail as deputy superintendent at GOGA (2014), and finally superintendent at ROMO (2016-2023).

During your first year(s) working as an SCA volunteer, what is the most useful lesson you learned from your superiors?

When I was working at Arches, my most useful lesson is that there is a “niche” for everyone, and sometimes you just need to try a few

different career fields and jobs until you find the area that ignites your passion. Don't give up if your first few jobs aren't the right fit. The NPS has so many different and interesting career avenues; get out of your comfort zone and try a variety of things!

Case in point: I worked seasonally for eight years, looking for the right fit. I had the opportunity to go to great parks, work with amazing people, have wonderful adventures, and learn so much about the diversity of NPS positions that ultimately prepared me for my later years as a superintendent.

What were the most helpful/ useful lessons you learned from your peers or others not in your same discipline?

It takes all of us to do the good work, and no one “division” or unit is more important than another. Seasonally, I did everything from cleaning toilets, to trail work, to interpretive programs, to dispatch, to wilderness patrol, to fire fighting, to resource management. I learned that relationships, with people in all divisions and at all levels, is extremely important to the park's success, as well as your own. In disputes or challenges with other park staff, park partners, or visitors, always try to find common ground and go from there.

Tragedy – whether it is the death/injury of a park visitor, loss of a co-worker, a natural disaster, etc. – can help shape future leaders, as they tend to rise naturally and step in to help. Did you have any such incidence during your career that necessitated the need for you to lead amid a stressful situation? If so, what were some of the lessons you took away from that experience.

There were definitely numerous examples of that! But the most difficult time was in 2021 at ROMO, contending with all the many challenges of managing a park during the first year of COVID, ROMO's largest ever wildfires that destroyed thousands of acres and almost all of our seasonal housing, and implementing the NPS' first pilot of a parkwide timed-entry reservation system ... all within the same eight months. It was a very challenging time, and I look back on it now and wonder how we ever got through it. But we did, because the staff was so incredibly dedicated and we were happy to work together as a team to deal with both the reactive and the proactive issues we needed to work on.

Staying in good contact with the staff during those times where we were separated either by COVID-19 and working from home,



John Garder of National Parks Conservation Association, awards Darla Sidles the Stephen T. Mather Award during ANPR's Ranger Rendezvous 46 in Jacksonville, Fla. The Mather Award, first presented in 1984, is named after the first director of the National Park Service. It is awarded to those who have shown strong leadership and dedication to the NPS. Photo: Warren Bielenberg

or by wildfires and closed roads, was critical. During those eight months, I don't recall ever wondering if we could do it, because we just did it. We got up every morning and tackled the challenges head on, taking time to talk to each other, and finding ways to laugh whenever possible. I am so thankful for the ROMO team, our communities, the many Incident Management fire teams that assisted us, and the good company of peers across the park service. The human connection was the most important aspect of the strong resiliency that was needed to get through that difficult time.

Can you describe your rise to the superintendent position at Rocky Mountain National Park for me? As the first woman to hold that position, did you feel there were any barriers to break, subtle or otherwise? If so, what were they?

I had a varied career and three previous superintendent-level positions leading up to ROMO, so I felt ready and qualified for the position. I didn't really think much about being the first female superintendent until people kept bringing it up to me, which I found fascinating. I just tried to work hard and be a good leader. By the time I retired, I finally had a greater appreciation for being the first female superintendent, and I was proud of our accomplishments. Yes, there were subtle barriers along the way, which unfortunately seemed to become more pronounced as I moved into increasingly higher-level positions. But I did not allow the occasional slight to bother me for long, as I realized those issues are really more about the people that say or create them than they are about you. Either ignore it or address it, but do not let them stand in your way, just keep going.

‘While we must hold our NPS core values close, we must be flexible in our work, improve our diversity, and adapt to changing times and conditions.’

— Darla Sidles

How, as a leader, did you gain the trust of your colleagues? How did you make the workplace productive and conducive to improvement?

I strongly believe that developing and nurturing relationships is the most important first step to building trust and credibility. Get to know your staff, volunteers, park partners, community, and stakeholders. Listen, take action, and report back. Try to make the work environment something that people want to be part of, be flexible, make it a safe and inclusive place. Create a larger vision where everyone can see themselves contributing to the goal. To be clear, all of those things can't be done by one person. I relied heavily on my leadership team, and made it a priority to hire the best folks who could help create a healthy work place. If you hire great people, you tend to get great results.

What lessons have you learned from not only being the first woman to lead such a prominent park as ROMO, but also from all of your years of experience? And what bits of advice would you give mid-range NPS professionals so that they too can have a rewarding career?

I learned so many lessons throughout my career, and am grateful for all of them because they help me continue to grow and do better.

I learned that you (or the park) can't be everything to everyone. You will always have supporters and detractors, and you can't please them all. Focus on park priorities, triage the work, and keep the end goal at the forefront. Take care of yourself so that stress does not take a huge mental and physical toll. It's simply not worth it. Work is important, but not more important than you or your family.

As for advice:

Resiliency is key to survival: Don't. Give. Up. Focus on the things that you can change or have some kind of influence over. Do that, and don't fret about the many things you can't control.

Prioritize staff and NPS core values. There is so much fluff and administrative burden out there right now; it can be seriously demoralizing and distracting. First and foremost, take care of yourself and your staff. That is truly the most important thing. Second, keep the NPS mission and core values sacred. Which leads to...

Don't be afraid to take (calculated) risks. Speak up, and be part of the solution. Stand up for your principles and your values, and don't let the detractors sidetrack you. Be confident and strive to "do the right thing" (which can be different than "doing things right").

Finally, our world is constantly changing, and we can not remain insistent on doing things the same way we've always done them. Case in point, visitor use management and overcrowding: Challenges like this must be proactively addressed in new ways. While we must hold our NPS core values close, we must be flexible in our work, improve our diversity, and adapt to changing times and conditions. Just like climate change, it's "adapt or die." ♦



I spy with my little eye

Kids can teach us a thing or two with their enlightening views of parks

By Bruce McKeeman

PERCEPTION IS REALITY, PARTICULARLY TO A CHILD. Their perception is based upon age, grade level, family experience, travels, and the amount of reading they enjoy.

As an example, when we see pictures of volcanoes, they are typically a side view of a cinder cone or shield volcano and may include eruptions of lava and flows down the side of the volcano. Imagine the perception of a 5-year-old standing on the top of Kilauea and being asked how he feels about being on top of an active volcano.

You may get a sour look and a response of, "This isn't a volcano! A volcano is shaped like this."

This is what grandson Sean once did, upon being told these very words, following his comment up by making a cone-shaped triangle with his hands.

As Anna Roberts, seasonal ICC intern at Zion National Park, observed, "Children have no preconceived notions of what is and isn't possible in nature, so the conversations that go on are sometimes hilarious and often enlightening. Kids have endless storage in their brains to stash away random facts that they can blurt out only when someone like me mentions a completely unrelated subject. In addition to the ability to remember the most obscure animal facts, they have a natural inclination towards curiosity that it seems many adults have lost throughout the years."

Many of the National Park Service's programs for children expanded in the 1970s when the system expanded into urban areas such as Golden Gate, Gate-

Grandson Sean, trying to explain to Grandpa McKeeman, that volcanoes are only cone-shaped, while standing on the top of Kilauea in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.
Photo: Bruce McKeeman

'Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.'

— Margaret Mead

way, the Arch, etc. Programs such as Summer in the Parks and Parks For All Seasons were prevalent in Washington, D.C. This was also a time when Environmental Study Areas (ESAs) were encouraged in the parks. There was one alongside Madison Elementary School in N.E. Washington with four biomes for the children and park rangers to explore and understand.

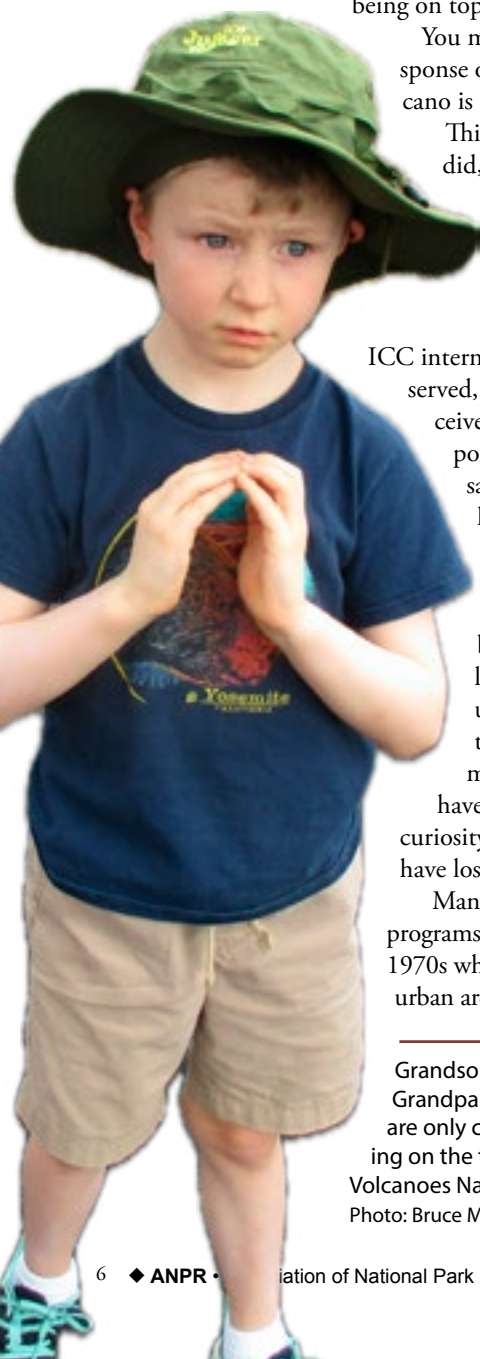
Perhaps most popular is the Junior Ranger Program, which set its national standards in 2005 and continues to grow and develop to best engage with young visitors. Parks work diligently to engage children of multiple ages and abilities, and help them explore the park. Activities are as wide-ranging as connecting with the exhibits in the visitor center to finding examples along the trails and associating with the cultural purposes of an historic area. They include connecting with the purposes of the park and identifying important clues for understanding why the park exists. The Junior Ranger books provide activities for a broad span of ages and request the appropriate number of activities to be completed depending on their age/ability level. Some children find special places in the park to work on their activities and may even ask to go back to a certain place so they can check on "my bone bench."

The Every Kid Outdoors Program provides a pass to federal areas for each fourth-grader (10-year-old). This has increased the number of families visiting the parks and other recreation areas seeking activities and programs for their children. There has also been an increase in families, some of whom have never been to our areas previously, looking to understand the purpose of our federal agencies.

As one chief of interpretation said, "When I heard President Obama talk about this in his Inaugural speech, I knew what I would be working on for the next several years:" preparing exhibits, activities and information for children and their families who probably have never experienced a park previously. Once we enrapture the child, we engage the entire family and years of support for the system.

Southern Utah University has an internship called the Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative. Seniors and recent graduates are working in parks such as Zion focusing solely on Junior Ranger and other youth programs. Recent SUU graduate Anna Roberts is one of them, and here is what she had to say.

I have always enjoyed working with kids because they bring a specific energy to a space that can't be replicated with adults, especially when working in a National Park. As a summer education intern at Zion National Park, I've been working since mid-May with kids to teach them about the rocks and animals they might see on the trail. As I'm teaching children about things I encounter daily in Zion, I notice they are seeing everything with fresh eyes and





Ranger Anna Roberts presents a Junior Ranger program to youth visiting Zion National Park.
Photo: Bruce McKeeman

‘Once we enrapture the child, we engage the entire family and years of support for the system.’

— Bruce McKeeman

with an enthusiasm that just can't be matched. Many adults I have talked to over the course of this summer feel responsible for taking care of the earth, but carrying the weight of stewardship can often come at the price of looking at the human relationship with the natural world with a sense of urgency to protect it instead of with wonder and curiosity.

Children, however, have not yet experienced this sense of responsibility and are still figuring out the consequences that can happen when we don't take care of our public lands. They are just learning that the earth is a beautiful place to play and explore and naturally have a strong sense that they have a part in taking care of nature. They experience the outdoors with wonder and a reverence for life and see bugs, birds, and animals as friends that they can and should protect. Children are just being taught in their own families the importance of sharing and treating friends or siblings with respect, and most kids easily apply that to the natural world. The random facts about animals they remember from story books or school create a bridge from their world to the natural world that we as park employees can strengthen and create. I love to help create those bridges and see the moment of realization when kids learn that they can be a part of their community and the ecosystem as a force for good. As kids are getting involved, their parents are rediscovering their sense of wonder and are getting involved alongside their kids. Children's desire to explore and learn about nature spreads to their loved ones, making a child's perspective and input possibly the most valuable thing to focus on when teaching about our public lands and national parks.

Granddaughter Abigail at her "bone bench," working on a Junior Ranger activity packet at Dinosaur National Monument. Photo: Bruce McKeeman



It isn't enough for us to provide age-appropriate programs; we need to know what the children and others received from the programs. Did they get it? Was it engaging? Did it make them want to explore and discover? After all, curiosity is the ability to seek and acquire new knowledge, skills, and ways of understanding the world. It is at the heart of what motivates young people to learn and what keeps them learning throughout their lives.

The feedback loop is sometimes difficult to discover, but it means everything to determine success. This feedback is necessary to confirm that we have the right emphasis in our activities and programs to connect the children with our park's purpose and story. The child's perspective is the difference between excitement and passivity.

As the old story goes – a family was traveling to western parks, and the mother had the two children, about ages 6 and 8, keep journals. After visiting the Grand Canyon, she was curious to see what impressed the children and if they had experienced the same awe and wonder as she had experienced. After they had gone to sleep, she looked at the journals and one said, "Today I spit one mile!" Obviously a child's view and excitement will be completely different than ours.

It is up to us to provide opportunities for children to explore, it is up to the children to tell us if the connection exists and our programs are effective. These views will be the connections between the resources of the parks and the enticement for further explorations and visits and developing the future generation of park advocates and employees. ♦

Bruce D. McKeeman, is an ANPR Life Member and 36-year NPS ranger. He retired in 2006. Special thanks to Anna Roberts, graduate of Southern Utah University and seasonal ICC intern at Zion National Park, and Jennifer McKeeman Clark, NPS brat and mother of two avid Junior Rangers, for their assistance with this article.

Eager arrival under the oak

By Dennis Burnett

SO, THERE I WAS, APRIL 10, 1983. LODGEPOLE, SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK.

The clock had just struck 2300. The snow storm was still raging outside. The Vermont Castings wood stove was putting out a good amount of heat. We had not yet heard the “ding, ding, ding” of the Unimog rotary snowplows heading out, so we probably didn’t have over six inches of new snow on the roads. And that’s when the contractions began. Ginny was nine months pregnant and had run the Wolverton Ski Area up until two weeks before. Shouldn’t be an issue, we thought.

The Volvo wagon was tucked in the garage with four studded snow tires and tire chains. Pacing around the living room of our 1,000 square foot house (a former ranger station), Ginny said we should probably think about heading down the mountain, so it was time to initiate Plan A.

A call to our local ranger paramedic, Randy Coffman, was first on the list of what we had to do.

“Uh, Randy, it seems as though Ginny has gone into labor, so could you head over and spend the night with Linsay (our 2.5-year-old daughter) so we can head down the mountain.”

“No problem,” he said, “I’m on my way.”

Linsay was in bed and Randy knew the basics, so we headed for the car.

As we left the garage just past midnight, we were pushing at least six inches of new snow. The first few miles from Lodgepole is a slight upgrade to the Wolverton intersection. Although we were pushing significant snow, the Volvo wagon trudged along. From the Wolverton intersection it would be downhill through Giant Forest and continuing down the General’s Highway, a twisting, curvy, one-of-a-kind scenic road; one of the most unique in the National Park Service. There is an elevation drop from 7,000 feet to 843 feet at Three Rivers. The road has what seems like 100 hairpin switchback turns for the 13 miles below Giant Forest — not for the faint of heart or those prone to car sickness.

As we approached Amphitheater Point, Ms. Rousseau began her “Lamaze” breathing. This usually occurs when the labor pains grow in intensity.

When I suggested, “Ginny, that breathing is for later” she replied “It *is* later.” We made it past Amphitheater Point and continued for another half mile to snowline, where we stopped in a convenient pullout under a large oak tree. It took us over an hour to travel the 12 miles, pushing snow most of way. It was 0145, April 11, 1983.

Of course, never leaving the house without a park radio (no cell phones in this era) I called Randy and explained the situation and that we weren’t going to make it to Visalia.

That brought us to Plan B: Randy said he would contact District Ranger Tom Tschohl to take over the “baby-sitting duties” and would head our direction in the sub-district ambulance (a converted Ford van). At this point it became apparent that the unborn one

had decided that it was time, so get ready. We were both EMTs, so let’s see if we remember what to do.

We won’t go into the particulars, but at 0207, son Bryant Whitney Rousseau Burnett joined us in the front seat of the car. Ginny sat in the passenger seat with young Bryant in her arms. Having been appropriately prepared with towels and blankets, nary a stain resulted from the birth.

As it happens, the two-week-old Volvo wagon had a great heater. Our previous vehicle was a VW PopTop. As many of you know, VW heaters,

back in the day, didn’t work well in the winter, especially when driving downhill. Two hours of labor seemed a little short, but I’m also thinking that this storm, as well as the elevation change, may have had something to do with Bryant’s accelerated entrance. We thought we could easily make it to Visalia. In hindsight, a home birth with a wood stove and Paramedic Coffman assisting would have been just as good a story.

Randy arrived at our little pullout about 2:45 a.m. His first comment to me was “how much damage to the car?”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“Your wheel tracks below Giant Forest appeared to run into the guard rail,” he replied.

Well, we slid a little bit in a few spots, so I guess we just missed it. Whew!

Randy evaluated “Mom” and said “you’re doing fine.” He cut the umbilical cord and attempted to start a fluid IV on Mom. But Ginny was having none of that.

“I hate needles,” she said (And she still does).

We transferred Mom, son and Randy to the back of the ambulance, while I took the wheel and we continued down the mountain with a quick stop at the visitor center for water.

About an hour later, we quietly rolled into Kaweah Health Medical Center and casually entered the Emergency Room. As it happened, our OB/gyn was there attending another birth. He was surprised we had delivered en route but just asked if we were doing OK, and we said yes. He continued on with his birth and then got back to us in about 30 minutes. Meanwhile, we contacted our pediatrician, who arrived soon to assess the newborn.



THEN: Bryant Whitney Rousseau Burnett made a grand Sequoia entrance back in 1983. Photo: Dennis Burnett and Ginny Rousseau

"Clarity affords comfort, but true adventure lies in the unknown!" (Bryant)

The complications of checking out: As we began filling out all the necessary paperwork for the birth certificate and release from the hospital, the real drama began.

Question: "Who delivered this child?"

"We did," replied Ginny, referring to herself and me.

Further explanation brought to light that under California State Law, the "delivery"

person is the one who cuts the cord. Well, this didn't go over well with any of us. We explained that Randy didn't arrive on scene until more than 30 minutes after the birth, so he couldn't have

delivered. This discussion continued on for another 20 to 30 minutes with many unhappy campers. Eventually, a final compromise was reached with Randy and Dad both signing the birth certificate: April 11, 1983; 2:07 a.m.; The Generals Highway, one-half mile below Amphitheater Point; Sequoia National Park, California.

Over the next couple of years, whenever we traveled past the familiar pullout along the General's Highway, we would say "Oh look, there's the oak tree Bryant was born under." It wasn't long before older sister Linsay asked, "Do all babies come from oak trees?" As Bryant got older and more knowledgeable, he once asked, "Why did you name me after Whitney Houston?" We had to explain that he was named Whitney after the tallest mountain in the Lower 48s that sits in Sequoia National Park. We also explained to him that Bryant is name of his maternal great-grandmother. The Bryant family settled El Dorado County, Calif., in the mid-1800s. He is a sixth-generation Californian.

Since that snowy, blustery entrance into the world, Bryant has always been drawn to the lesser traveled trails, streams and backcountry. The mountains into which he was born both ground and recharge him. Although he makes a living as a professional stunt man in the entertainment industry, like his parents and many others, the wilderness always calls. ♦

Ginny and Dennis began their NPS careers in the early 1970's. They each worked 13 parks in 35 years, and not always together. Their shortest commute was between Shenandoah and WASO; the longest was Cape Cod to Grand Canyon. They retired together in January 2007.



NOW: A daredevil from birth, Bryant Whitney Rousseau Burnett works as a professional stuntman, here at Citygroup Center, 560 feet above street level on the set of "Matrix 4." Photo: Dennis Burnett and Ginny Rousseau

Families That Bank Together.
Stick Together.

Refer Your Family for \$50



SCAN ME



FOR DETAILS

FEDERALLY INSURED BY NCUA



INTERIOR FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Your Natural Resource for Financial Services
Interiorfcu.org

An international view



What Gordon Miller taught us by bringing together the world's rangers

By Tony Sisto & Deanne Adams

Gordon Miller brought together rangers from around the world to share ideas and support each other in their careers. This international sharing of knowledge led to the first World Ranger Congress in 1995, an event that continues to this day. Photo: Tony Sisto

THE JULY 10 MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR ENGLISH PARK RANGER GORDON MILLER was over. As we filed out of the small parish church in Edale, England, near the Peak District National Park, the recessional music began playing: It was the Beatles singing Joe Cocker's song, "With a Little Help from My Friends." Many smiles, some chuckles, as everyone there knew exactly why this song was appropriate.

Gordon attracted friends like bugs to flame. His interest in rangers and the protected areas and cultures from around the globe was true and heart-felt. And he knew the world, having traveled extensively on every continent except Antarctica. Travel and friends were how he got his work done.

ANPR was introduced to Gordon in 1992 at the Ranger Rendezvous in Spokane, Wash. He instantly caught our attention and our support for his idea – to bring together cadres of rangers from around the world in a sustainable global forum, to learn from the varieties of our professions. ANPR proudly joined the stellar work that rangers from England, Wales, and Scotland had already accomplished, and signed on to the accord at Losehill Hall, creating the International Ranger Federation (IRF). Today there are more than 160 member associations affiliated with the Federation, including ANPR as a founding member. (See *Ranger*, Summer 2023, "Founder of IRF").

Gordon began his travels decades ago with the express intent of meeting with rangers to see how they worked, what their issues were, and how these were shared, if at all, with neighboring regions

or countries. From this, he learned two key things: There were tremendous similarities and goals in all the ranger jobs he witnessed; yet there was often little if any true sharing of knowledge and skills. Indeed, some had little knowledge of any rangers outside of their own country.

This insight led to organizing the first World Ranger Congress, in Zakopane, Poland, in 1995, in which Gordon was instrumental. It is one thing to organize a successful international meeting – the complex work, finding locations, logistics, goals, etc. But to become so successful that it sustains itself over nearly 30 years takes more than a one-off. Now held every three years on average in different world locations, the 10th Congress will take place in France in 2024.

Until the end, Gordon believed to the depth of his soul in the importance of parks and protected areas, and, more importantly, that professionally recognized and experienced rangers were critical to these areas' survival.

We knew Gordon well, and traveled with him often. We saw him in his professional role, working in large groups and small, and joined him with his many friendships. The year before he died, we visited him in his beloved Peak District, and drove with him to familiar places and haunts. We said our final goodbyes this past summer in a eulogy at his memorial service in Edale.

We can easily say that we learned "lessons" from Gordon, but it went deeper than that. With his enthusiasm, his commitment, his compassion, and his love for the career and the practitioners in it,

Gordon took us all beyond our own provincial interests and showed us the world – just as he did for others in so many countries. Whether or not you call them lessons, Gordon would understand and approve the following practices:

First, always be an ambassador for parks and protected areas, and for the importance of the job that you do. Believe in your job and yourself. Second, in suggesting solutions, propose a different way, not a better way. You will never know if it is better until later. And finally, look beyond borders, either real or self-created. It is very easy, even without intent, to put those blinders on and forget they are there.

Nearly 30 years ago, a ranger from Uruguay, Juca Gambarotta, met Gordon. Recently, upon hearing of Gordon's passing, Juca wrote: "Gordon was a magical person. Not for nothing I called him 'Gandalf.' He believed in me since our first exchange of letters. A great person, and I thank life for the privilege of knowing him."

As do we all. Thank you for the lessons, Gordon. Godspeed, friend. ♦

Tony and Deanne are retired from NPS, and lifetime members of ANPR. Deanne is past president of both ANPR and IRF. Tony was past editorial advisor for Ranger, and past chair of the International Committee for ANPR.

‘Gordon was a magical person.
Not for nothing, I called him ‘Gandalf.’’

— Juca Gambarotta,
park ranger, Uruguay



Photo: Peak District National Park

Pilot Rock®

PARK • STREET • CAMP SITE PRODUCTS

Across our different product lines we offer hundreds of choices in style, size, features, materials and colors.

Commercial quality products able to withstand years of use and exposure.

Made in the USA since 1959.

RJ Thomas Mfg. Co., Inc.
Cherokee, Iowa
800-762-5002
www.pilotrock.com
customerservice@rjthomas.com



The Winners Circle

ANPR photo contest attracts dozens of submissions

WHILE ATTENDANCE MAY HAVE BEEN LOWER THAN hoped for during Ranger Rendezvous 46 in Jacksonville, enthusiasm for the annual photo contest was off the charts. With dozens of submissions in six categories, the competition was steep.

Winners from each category receive a \$25 Amazon gift card, and the best overall photo receives an additional \$100 gift card.

With all votes, in, the following are your 2023 winners:

- **Ranger Rendezvous:** Kendra Balazs
- **Human Connection:** Tie between Rick Mossman and Warren Bielenberg
- **Cultural/Historical:** Warren Bielenberg
- **Wildlife:** Tim Setnicka
- **In the Details:** Mark Herberger
- **Landscape:** Liz Roberts
- **Best in Show:** Liz Roberts

The 2024 Ranger Rendezvous photo contest will take place in Rapid City, S.D., in November. Polish that lens and start shooting!



▲ **Best in Show**
by Liz Roberts,
Grand Canyon NP

Also voted best **Landscape**

◀ **Wildlife**
by Tim Setnicka,
Denali NP



By Rick Mossman,
Yellowstone NP

Human Connection (tie)

▲ Warren Bielenberg,
Great Smoky Mountains NP



▲ In the Details

by Mark Herberger,
National Mall and Memorial Parks

The Winners Circle



▲ **Cultural / Historical**
by Warren Bielenberg,
Great Smoky Mountains NP



◀ **Ranger Rendezvous**
by Kendra Balazs,
Ranger Rendezvous 45,
Tucson, Ariz.

Save the date!



Badlands National Park Photo: NPS

Ranger Rendezvous 47 to be hosted in Rapid City, S.D.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW AND PLAN TO ATTEND **RANGER RENDEZVOUS 47** in Rapid City, S.D., Nov. 2-9, 2024. The core program will begin Wednesday, Nov. 6-9, with training and the ANPR Board meeting Nov. 2-5. Note that next year's Rendezvous runs Saturday-to-Saturday, rather than the traditional Sunday-Sunday schedule. This change is being made to accommodate those who need travel time on the weekends.

Rendezvous 47 will include a compelling mix of training, informational presentations, field trips, and networking. Social events include such ever-popular mainstays as the hospitality suite, the annual photo contest, and the awards ceremony and reception. After a smaller-than-average turnout for Ranger Rendezvous 46 in Jacksonville, ANPR organizers are hoping to rebound with a larger-than-ever 2024 event.

Rapid City, the thriving second largest city in the state, is situated at the eastern base of the scenic and historic Black Hills mountain range, with Badlands National Park just to the east. As you can see from the dates, Ranger Rendezvous 47 is being planned a bit later in the fall than some years, but the fall weather in the Black Hills area is milder than some would expect. The later date also gives seasonals, who often are wrapping up their seasons in late October, a better chance at adding the event to their calendar.

The average high temperatures in early November are in the low 50s. There are six national park system units, four state parks, and a premier state trail in the immediate area. In addition, there are approximately 17 national park system units within a half day's drive of Rapid City and more than 30 units within a day's drive for those who may want to plan their own tours before or after the Rendezvous.

The Rendezvous headquarters hotel is the Holiday Inn Rapid City Downtown, which is within easy walking distance of the heart of the city, including restaurants, Main Street Square, museums, public art, and more. Rapid City Regional Airport is currently served by five major airlines. Your Rendezvous planning committee will soon be hard at work lining out the details for the Rendezvous and more information will appear in the Spring issue of *Ranger* magazine. You can also check the ANPR website for updates. We hope to see you in Rapid City in November! ♦ — Mike Pflaum, Board Member for Government Affairs



A Native sculpture in downtown Rapid City. Photo: Visit Rapid City



The Journey Museum and Learning Center is located quite close to Ranger Rendezvous conference headquarters. Photo: Visit Rapid City

INTERPRETATION

The question behind the question

“Are we in Wisconsin?”

IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL DAY: THE WHITE OF THE SAND AGAINST THE blue of Lake Michigan’s southern shore, the marram grass moving gently in the wind, the Chicago skyline floating over the water in the distance. But the school kids on their field trip to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (redesignated “National Park” in 2019) just didn’t seem to be listening to anything I was saying. We had walked through the oak savannah, past ponds, through jack pine forests, and out to the water’s edge. We looked at flowers, identified birds, and picked up smooth rocks, possibly knocked into the lake from rocky bluffs to the north and worn smooth by water and tumbling until they were deposited here, along with their much smaller counterparts — the grains of sand that created the park’s namesake. But why would one of the kids ask such a strange question when they were in the INDIANA Dunes, not ten miles from where they lived?

EDUCATION THROUGH UNDERSTANDING

Questions from visitors can be funny. Many of my coworkers would quip that when people went on vacation, they turned off their brains. But that little girl over 30 years ago taught me something. Sometimes it’s worth listening to the “dumb questions” to try and figure out where they came from.

A friend working at Cape Cod National Seashore once told the story of a visitor from the Midwest who came up to her at the visitor center information desk with a very worried expression on his face. He had been out walking the beach mid-morning, and it was wide and flat. He just went out again in mid-afternoon and the beach was “severely eroded away.” My friend could have laughed in the visitor’s face. Instead, she explained tides, and how the moon’s pull on the ocean is so strong that it makes the water levels rise

and fall twice a day. The visitor left happy and relieved. His question partially arose from a lack of knowledge, but it was really born of a desire to be helpful and a true concern that *his* national park was in trouble. Isn’t stewardship what we all strive for in protecting the parks?

After talking about the endangered eyeless shrimp that lives in the flooded passages of Mammoth Cave, a visitor on my Echo

River boat tour asked, “What do they taste like?” Many on the boat (probably including me) laughed at the joke. Who would eat an endangered species? But they weren’t joking. Someone who is used to seeing large shrimp tails ringing an ice-filled glass with a puddle of cocktail sauce and a slice of lemon in the middle has a very different mental picture of shrimp than I did. But whose fault was that? It was mine for not thinking about my audience. They weren’t scientists. From then on, I made sure to emphasize that a full-grown Kentucky cave shrimp reaches a whopping 1-1/4 inch ... and I added on a joke about needing an awful lot of them to make a shrimp cocktail, just in case.

More recently, while guiding boat trips for the Biscayne National Park Institute, I discovered that talking about sponges and the harvesting of sponges (“sponging” was an important industry in the Florida Keys in the 1800s) increasingly requires more explanation. I have been asked, “Why did they want sponges?” What to me was pretty obvious — sponges being used for bathing, washing, art, decor — was a foreign concept to younger people who only know sponges as a yellow rectangular thing at the kitchen sink with a green scrubber on one side ... or sometimes wearing pants and living in an undersea pineapple with his pet snail named Gary.

It takes a certain kind of person to have the confidence to voice something that perplexes them. Asking questions in front of a group is hard for many people. I, for one, am incredibly grateful for those who do make the effort ... even if they sound dumb. When I take the time to consider their perspective, it makes me a better ranger, a better interpreter, and maybe even a better partner, friend and citizen.

IT’S ALL ABOUT PERSPECTIVE

Back on the beach at Lake Michigan, I let out an exasperated sigh and explained to the little girl that no, we were not in Wisconsin. We were in the INDIANA Dunes ... in the state of INDIANA.

She asked, “Then why did I find this?”

She held out her upturned hand towards me. In the center of her little palm was an errant piece of road gravel she’d picked up on the beach...a rock with sharp edges that to her understanding must have washed in from rocky bluffs up north.

Maybe she’d been listening after all.

Gary Bremen wrapped his 36-year NPS career in December 2022. His current focus is to visit the 154 parks he has not yet been to...and to ask all the questions that come to mind.



Illustration by Roan Hall

IN PRINT

Fascinating story captures path to creation of Women's Rights NHP

By Rick Smith

IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT ONE CAN ATTRIBUTE THE CREATION OF A SITE IN the National Park System to one person. Marjory Stoneman Douglas and the Everglades, John Muir, perhaps, and Yosemite. Conservation groups have played significant roles in the creation of other areas. Women's Rights is a different story. Judy Hart, an NPS employee, was the driver of the creation of this area. Without her dogged determination, and the support from directors, regional directors, and a supportive Congressional delegation, the park would not have happened.

Why is this important? Prior to the establishment of Women's Rights, there were only three sites in the system that celebrated the accomplishments of women: Clara Barton, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Maggie Walker. Women's Rights became the fourth. Since that time, eight additional sites celebrating women have been added to the system. Half the population of the United States is certainly under-represented when it comes to national park sites and the stories they tell.

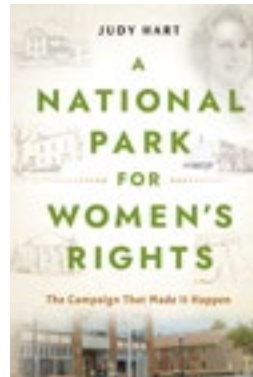
Reading Hart's book, I became acquainted with the term "idea park." Rosie the Riveter and Manzanar are other examples of idea parks. Women's Rights is animated by the idea that women not only get to vote and hold property but also to have an equal seat at the table where major decisions are made. And as Hart points out, these ideas will exist in perpetuity at Women's Rights.

It's interesting to speculate how close this park came to not being authorized. President Carter signed P.L. 96-607 on Dec. 28, 1980, the last day he exercised the authority to sign Acts of Congress into law. It seems doubtful that the new Reagan administration, with its Secretary of the Interior James Watt would have been overly enthusiastic about such an addition to the National Park System. That certainly is Hart's point of view. With the authorizing legislation signed, the hard work was about to begin, translating the words of a Public Law into a functioning unit of the National Park Service system. The park commemorates the 1848 Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, N.Y. It was held in the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. Three-hundred or so people attended on short notice, including about 40 men. Unfortunately, when the idea of such a national park area was first being discussed, the Wesleyan Chapel was a functioning laundromat. Elizabeth Cady Stanton's home (she was the principal organizer) still was there but had been substantially altered.

Anyone who has had dealings with historic properties knows the NPS's preference for historical authenticity as opposed to recreations. Moreover, the area was severely underfunded. While the original request from the Regional Office was for \$400,000, the Reagan administration's first budget allocated just \$5,000 for its first year. During the first six years that Hart was the superintendent of the park, the operating funds were: 1981, \$5,000; 1982, \$60,000; 1983, \$106,000; 1984, \$148,000; 1985, \$230,000; and growing to \$240,000 by 1987. That \$240,000 was just a bit more than half of the original request from the Region. It's hard to get a park area off the ground with such paltry financial resources.

I urge readers of *Ranger* to get this book and learn how Hart and her successors overcame these obstacles so that Women's Rights National Historical Park could take its rightful place in the National Park System. Perhaps John Reynolds, in his back-jacket blurb, said it best: "The story of a woman who changed the National Park Service's tradition-bound, male-oriented views of what and who are nationally significant. Hart shocked the National Park Service into equalizing women's parks and women's roles in running them."

Rick Smith worked in six parks, two regional offices and WASO, and ended his career as the acting superintendent of Yellowstone National Park.



"A National Park for Women's Rights: The Campaign that Made it Happen," by Judy Hart. 2023. Cornell University Press

Donor Recognition list

(Updated 12/8/2023)

Denali Peak \$1,000+

- National Parks Conservation Assn.

Half Dome \$500-749

- Rick Mossman
- John Townsend
- Bill Wade

Cliff Palace \$250-499

- Coalition to Protect America's NPs
- William Reynolds
- Rebecca Harriett

Devil's Tower \$100-249

- Paul Anderson
- Bill Carroll
- Ellen Centa
- Colleen Derber
- Tori Edwards (Fairbanks)
- Gregg Fauth
- Emily Johnson
- Wendy Lauritzen
- Dayna & Craig McClure
- Ed Rizzotto
- Bill Sanders

Appalachian Trail \$50-99

- Warren Bielenberg
- John Garder
- Stephen Hurd
- Tom Lorig
- Rick Mossman
- Mike Pflaum
- David Roberts
- Linda Spangler
- Demmy Vigil

Little Rock Central High \$25-49

- Candy Hart

Liberty Bell Up to \$25

- Heather Boothe
- Melissa DeVaughn
- Fred & Debbie Koegler
- John Laws
- Jan Lemons
- Louann Oravec
- Howard Selmer
- Kurt Topham

Old Faithful (monthly donations/ \$25+)

- Wendy Lauritzen
- Meg Weesner

ADMINISTRATION

Training is good for you – and can be fun, too

Common to all of our experiences in the NPS is the need for training. Have you wished for more or less training? Have you had the opportunity to go beyond the must-haves for your job and learn about other disciplines or interests? Have training opportunities been beneficial in your daily duties and working toward your career goals?

Of course, I should differentiate between the required training and the optional, nice-to-have/spread-my-wings kind of training. Every year there seems to be more required training to address concerns like employee relations, equal employee opportunity, harassment, and privacy. These are all important, and I, like others, might moan and groan a little when these roll around, but they are a good reminder that we have responsibilities that go beyond the budget, the resources, or the visitors. We have a responsibility to be good to each other and to protect one another.

Then there's the other kind of training that can set a newer employee on a career path they weren't originally intending, or can rejuvenate someone mid-career. Some folks eagerly seek out this training, while others may not care to for the travel involved. Or maybe they're uncomfortable in groups of strangers, or (hopefully not) they don't feel supported by their supervisor and so don't even ask.

One good thing the pandemic brought us was a new way to deliver and receive training. The advent of online training first through Zoom and now primarily through Microsoft Teams has been a great equalizer and a boon when it comes to park budgets.

And talk about variety! A recent review of training on InsideNPS (the employee intranet site) showed more than 20 educational opportunities. One such opportunity are the DOITalent listings. DOITalent is a great employee resource for training. So many options have no tuition or registration costs, are offered online, and generally are just a few hours long or are broken up into sessions over multiple days. Additionally, many offerings have multiple dates and times to choose from, which makes getting training while still keeping up with one's work a possibility.

I wrote in the last edition of *Ranger* magazine about participating on a panel during the Midwest Region's annual Administrative Officer (AO) training. It was a great experience for me to listen to the questions and concerns coming from folks in another region. From the looks of their planned agenda for the week, those in attendance were going to get training in all sorts of administrative, leadership, and communications topics.

My park units are in the Intermountain Region, which recently held its own AO training. Having last met in person in 2019 due to the pandemic, it was wonderful to be learning and reflecting in the same space again, seeing old friends, and making new ones! The agenda was top notch; even this seasoned AO learned a great deal.

Ryan Isaac is the AO for the Southern Arizona Group (Montezuma Castle, Tuzigoot, and Tonto national monuments) along with the Southern Arizona Office. He started with the NPS as a SCA intern at MOCA in 2010 and has worked in various capacities for SOAZ/ SOAR ever since. Ryan is also the chair for the IMR Admin Council



Administrative Officer Ryan Isaac, Southern Arizona Group, and chair for the IMR Admin Council. Courtesy: Ryan Isaac

and played a huge role in the success of our recent training.

I asked Ryan for his thoughts on the training. He noted that it was a culmination of effort and collaboration between the IMR Admin Council and the associate regional director for Business & Technology, along with assistance from field and regional staff. The planning team was adamant from the beginning that this training would be in-person. They recognized that modern technology creates excellent opportunities for technical training, but they wanted to emphasize topics around organizational culture or strategic business practices and allow space for deeper conversations among peers. It is Ryan's hope that participants left the training with a stronger sense of belonging within a community of Admin professionals.

Ryan said the best part for him as an Admin professional is seeing his team members develop and grow in their roles. He said he feels pride seeing where his former colleagues are in their careers today and feels lucky to have spent some time with each of them along the way.

He sees "all the moving parts" as a challenge in this profession. Tracking deadlines, data calls, and policy memos along with daily operations is a lot. Collaboration between subject matter experts at the regional office and park-based employees is key to success, he added.

Ryan's advice to anyone seeking a long-term career in the NPS is to be your own advocate. Talk to your supervisor about your interests and seek opportunities to get experience. Don't leave your career progression up to anyone else.

That's why training is so very important in career development and fulfillment. Whether it's required or optional, make the most of what's out there. Try all the formats – in person, online, interactive, straight up lectures, "office hours" (question-and-answer sessions with the experts) – to see what works best for you. And be your own advocate! Watch for training that will help you hone skills you either use now or intend to use someday. Look, too, for training that hits on interests that might not necessarily show up in your position description. Why shouldn't an admin employee participate in training on paleontology or regarding tribal liaison work?! Your interest plus the opportunity to learn can only make you a more well-rounded NPS employee.

(Shout-out to my dad, Dave Karraker, one of the finest NPS trainers ever. He is the only person to serve as superintendent at both Mather Training Center and Albright Training Center)

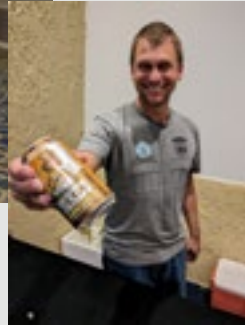
— Marin Karraker, Administrative Officer, SEAZ Group

Scenes from Ranger Rendezvous 46



2023 Supernaugh Scholars Greta Ketchner, Morgan Schmidt, and Rhys Joaquin. Photo: Troy Hunt

Tim Moore (and Nancy Ward) are your Hospitality Suite hosts. Photo: Jonathan Shafer



Keynote speaker Audrey Peterman, above, brings inspiration and enthusiasm to Ranger Rendezvous 46. At left, participants enjoy a field trip to Castillo de San Marcos National Monument. Photos: Jonathan Shafer



An ode to Jimmy Buffett: Clair Roberts, Mike Pflaum, Rick Mossman, and Jeff Ohlfs. Photo: Jeff Ohlfs



Gary Bremen performs "songs and Stories of Our National Parks," with Gary Livingston. Photo: Melissa DeV Vaughn

Congratulations to ANPR's newly elected board members

ELECTION RESULTS FOR ANPR'S OPEN BOARD POSITIONS were announced Nov. 27, 2023. Congratulations to all who were voted in, and many thanks to all candidates who volunteered to serve. ANPR counts on member involvement to be successful, and everyone matters! Additional thank-yous to our outgoing board members, who have served ANPR well:

Treasurer: Rick Harwell (incoming), Meg Weesner (outgoing)

Board Member for Education and Training: Rae Emerson (incoming), Tom Banks (outgoing)

Board Member for Strategic Planning: Lauren DeGennaro (incoming), Jonathan Shafer (outgoing)

Board Member for Internal Communications: Greta Ketchner (incoming), Elsa Hansen (outgoing)

ANPR always welcomes, and is currently seeking additional volunteers to serve on committees and advisory panels. Please email Bill Wade at bwade@anpr.org if you'd like to help.



Kudos List



These people have either given someone a gift membership to ANPR or recruited a new member. Thanks for your help and support! (updated 12/8/2023)

- Ed Rizzotto
- Greta Ketchner

Welcome to the ANPR family



Here are the newest members of the Association of National Park Rangers (updated 12/8/2023)

Tessa Carter	Morgan Hill, CA
Matthew Giambartolomei	Merrimack, NH
Kaitlyn Gilligan	Lowell, MA
Elliott Grossman	Henderson, NV
Candy Hart	Cincinnati, OH
Judy Hart	Richmond, VA
Marvin Heinze	Coronado, CA
Joshua Hughes	Berlin, PA
Rhys Joaquin	St. Paul, MN
Broderick Johanson	Minneapolis, MN
Stephanie Lamar	Death Valley, CA
John Laws	San Jose, CA
Linda Mazzu	Boise, ID
Morgan Schmidt	Bartlesville, OK
Maia Tsignadze	Ithaca, NY
Donna Villaobos	Whittier, CA
Cutter Wheeler	Espanola, NM
Jacob Zinkan	Indianapolis, IN

PROTECTION

Let's fix the NPS' out-of-control span of control

AS A WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER CREW BOSS, I HAVE A MANTRA: *To be an awesome crew boss, I have only four critical needs: three awesome squad bosses and an awesome sawyer. Everything else, we can work out together.*

That right there captures the essence of a concept known as “span of control.”

According to the curriculum for the Incident Command System (ICS) course, I-100: Introduction to ICS:

“Span of control pertains to the number of individuals or resources that one supervisor can manage effectively on emergency response incidents. Maintaining an effective span of control is particularly important on incidents where safety and accountability are a top priority.”

I’m citing ICS materials early in this article for two reasons:

- I believe ICS is brilliantly conceived and provides one of the best models of organizational structure available to us in the NPS – its brilliance lying in its ability to grow and shrink as needed based on such pertinent factors as complexity of the incident and number of personnel assigned to it; and
- Supervision under ICS is quite applicable to supervision in NPS rangers in that both involve supervising emergency responders – a key point that has a direct correlation to complexity of work and that gets overlooked too often when “the powers that be” allow the spans of control of supervisory rangers to get out of control.

The clever folks who developed ICS built the system in such a way that it allows the addition or subtraction of personnel, including supervisors, to best meet the operational demands of the incident. ICS understands that as the number of direct reports increases, so too should the number of supervisors.

The classic example of this is illustrated by my opening crew boss mantra: A firefighting hand crew is a party of 15 firefighters and a sawyer led not by one crew boss acting alone, but rather by three squad bosses who report directly to one crew boss. In this arrangement, the crew boss does not directly supervise 15 firefighters (which would be an out-of-control span of control), but instead supervises only one sawyer plus three squad bosses, who in turn supervise five firefighters each. As I said, brilliant. And beautifully simple, too.

The idea of an effective span of control has been around a lot longer than has ICS, though. Take, for example, the military. Army, Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and our Space Force all subscribe to the idea of starting with small, functional units as foundational building blocks that culminate in much larger units. I’ll use an infantry unit in the U.S. Army as a condensed example here, since that’s where my personal experience lies:

The first unit size is a “team,” most often made up of three soldiers, and a noncommissioned officer to lead from within. Next is a “squad,” comprised of two teams who divide duties, and often led by a staff sergeant. From there is the “platoon,” consisting of a few squads and up to a few dozen soldiers. They’re generally run by a lieutenant,



A crew boss maintains control of his crew with the help of some solid squad bosses while fighting the Royal Orchard Wildfire at Shenandoah National Park, November 2023. Photo: Kevin Moses

often with a noncommissioned officer as a second in command.

I can think of several other groups I’ve belonged to over the years that illustrate similar structures, including sports teams (head, first-base, and third-base coaches coaching 18 to 20 players) and my Boy Scout Troop, which had a scoutmaster and assistant scoutmaster as adult leaders and youth serving in leadership positions such as senior patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, and several patrol leaders.

Each of these examples share a commonality: In each case, supervisors have a span of control of seven or fewer – a very manageable number – to control. In other words, a span of control that is not likely to grow out of control.

Here’s another excerpt from the I-100 curriculum:

“Maintaining adequate span of control throughout the ICS organization is very important. Effective span of control on incidents may vary from three to seven, and a ratio of one supervisor to five reporting elements is recommended. If the number of reporting elements falls outside of these ranges, expansion or consolidation of the

organization may be necessary. There may be exceptions, usually in lower-risk assignments or where resources work in close proximity to each other.”

Why, then, does the National Park Service consistently veer off course regarding this simple, but utterly vital, supervisory guideline? And to be sure, it does veer off course in this regard more often than can be cited. In my own journey through serving as a district ranger/supervisory ranger, I’ve been dealt spans-of-control that number in the teens, and I have colleagues who report the same situation all across the NPS.

My intent here is not to be overly critical; rather it is to shed light on a recurring problem that needs attention. Solid supervisors can adapt to and control a crew of more than seven for short periods, but even the best will eventually begin to wither under the weight of carrying such a supervisory load for extended periods of time. Yet, the NPS asks supervisory rangers to control teams in the teens all the time, especially once seasonal rangers onboard.

It’s been brought to my attention by more than one bureaucrat that OPM says first-line supervisors can handle spans of control upwards of 13 or more. My problem with that ideology is that I don’t believe OPM is giving enough consideration to the complexity of ranger work. Remember the words of the I-100 curriculum: “Maintaining an effective span of control is particularly important on incidents where safety and accountability are a top priority.” And, “There may be exceptions, usually in lower-risk assignments or where resources work in close proximity to each other.”

Ranger work involves conducting law-enforcement operations where Fourth Amendment and other Constitutional rights of citizens must not be violated, yet use-of-force, high-speed pursuits, and split-second decisions must be made frequently by rangers typically *not* working in close proximity to each other; responding to EMS and SAR emergencies, often in austere environments; fighting wildland and structural fires where values – including human life – might be at risk; low-level-flight, special mission aviation operations; and so on. None of that qualifies as “lower-risk assignments,” and all of it requires “safety and accountability as top priorities.”

A friend of mine who’s a maintenance supervisor once poked at me, “Quit your complaining, I supervise 17 guys.” His crew mostly mowed lawns around park facilities. I replied to my buddy, “First of all, it’s not OK that the NPS asks you to supervise 17 employees – that in and of itself is just plain wrong. Beyond that, though, there is a significant difference between supervising a crew of emergency-response professionals and supervising a crew of lawn mowers.” That is not to say that mowing lawns is unimportant or doesn’t have its challenges; it’s simply comparing apples to oranges regarding the complexity of work.

Here’s the problem with out-of-control spans of control: When supervisors are spread too thinly, nobody wins. Instead, everybody suffers because their needs end up not being met.

People are needy. That’s not an insult, it’s just a fact. The field rangers we supervise need things from us. They need bullets, ropes,

chainsaws, motorboats, horse tack, helicopter helmets, tire chains, and innumerable other pieces of equipment; they need reports approved in IMARS; they need their QuickTime approved; they need schedule requests accommodated; they need quality EPAPs written; they need to be nominated for awards; they need counseling from time to time; they need their training nominations approved; they need their Concur Travel authorized; they need, they need, they need.

And guess what takes more time and effort on the part of supervisors when their span of control is out of control? Everything I just listed above, as well as everything else bosses do for their crews. To be clear, we as bosses are happy to serve. We work for our direct reports, not the other way around. But we only have so many minutes per shift with which to serve our troops.

Divide those minutes by seven or less, and we can maintain control. Divide that finite number of minutes by numbers higher than seven, and we begin to lose control at an exponentially increasing rate – in other words: Everybody suffers. The troops don’t get the time and attention they need and deserve from their supervisors,

and the supervisors head into work every single day stressed out because they are acutely aware that, despite their valiant efforts, they’re failing to meet the needs of their too-large-of-a-crew.

Higher management is setting up mid-level supervisors for failure when they assign us spans of control that are out of control, and that is not OK. This needs to be remedied.

I do not profess to have all the solutions – I believe fixing this conundrum will require a collaborative effort between supervisory rangers and those in positions of higher pay grades – but I do have a few ideas. For starters, the NPS must stop lapsing supervisory positions for lengthy periods

of time. Whenever a supervisor retires or transfers, the NPS needs to fill that vacancy within two months. Lapsing supervisory positions must stop – right now.

Secondly, the NPS should reflect back to the ICS, military, Little League, and Boy Scouts models and identify a first-line supervisor position that is below that of a district ranger – one that aligns with the squad boss, team leader, first-base coach or patrol leader. I don’t care what we call that position, but how about “sergeant,” to honor our U.S. Army roots.

Then, any time a district ranger’s span of control climbs to a point higher than seven, we hire a sergeant. This would be a perfect solution to the seasonal increase in numbers that occurs every spring. The DR could supervise the permanent field rangers, one of whom is a sergeant, and that sergeant could supervise three to seven seasonal rangers. Using this model, we could maintain a manageable span of control, and everybody wins.

Those of us who are supervisory rangers desperately want to be awesome leaders, and we can be. But we need a few awesome sergeants to help us with that leading. Let’s fix this together ... let’s get to a point where everybody wins.

— Kevin Moses

Supervisory Ranger, Shenandoah National Park

Here’s the problem with out-of-control spans of control: When supervisors are spread too thinly, nobody wins. Instead, everybody suffers because their needs end up not being met.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

We took their blues; let's not take their civil rights

"You've taken my blues and gone..."

— Langston Hughes, "Note on Commercial Theater," 1940

NATIONAL PARKS MAKE GREAT ECONOMIC NEIGHBORS. For every federal dollar invested in a national park they generate \$10 in return on that investment.

This is true. And preservation advocates like me have cited this statistic often to demonstrate to our partners the mighty role that national parks can play in strengthening local economies. The questions that park people like me routinely fail to ask, however, is just who benefits from the economic boon parks generate, who gets to tell the stories that are being interpreted and thus generating the income, and what is the responsibility of an advocacy organization or a federal agency to ensure that people – the descendant and affiliated communities – are the first to profit from the preservation of their patrimony?

In the 1990s, the State of Mississippi began investing in the promotion of its blues heritage. Every town in Mississippi is the "Birthplace of the Blues!" and every lonely crossroads in the Magnolia State, on some dark night generations ago, was the site where Robert Johnson or some other guitarist, piano player, or singer sold their soul to the devil to achieve an other-worldly musical ability.

Preservationists did the research, plans were drafted, books and interpretive brochures written. Markers were erected and a Blues Heritage industry established. In sum, a brilliant campaign was developed and implemented that allowed the state to interpret, manage, and preserve an important legacy in close affiliation, it was intended, with the bluesmen and women that had created the art form.

The plan worked – mostly. A resurgence of interest in blues music both drove and benefited the work in Mississippi. The United States Senate declared 2003 the "Year of the Blues." The following year, a Blues Heritage Commission was formed and centralized the work of preserving the state's blues legacy.

Heritage tourism tied to the art form exploded and is currently supported and sustained by the B.B. King Museum (Indianola), the Delta Blues Museum (Clarksdale), countless clubs like Ground Zero (Clarksdale), and more than 200 historic markers on the Mississippi Blues Heritage Trail.

Challenges degrade the power of this success. First, the way Mississippi has chosen to commemorate its blues heritage often decouples the art form from what Stephen King, author of "I'm Feeling the Blues Right Now: Blues Tourism and the Mississippi Delta," describes as the state's historic record of racial injustice. The blues was born from and played in response to racialized oppression, and



The Emmett Till Interpretive Center in Sumner, Miss., shows the NPS arrowheads adorning the façade of the center, which now serves as the NPS administrative headquarters for the Emmett & Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument. Photo: Alan Spears

decentering that from the narrative is like telling the story of the Titanic without mentioning the iceberg.

The second challenge is that the promised economic revitalization tied to heritage tourism and the blues has largely failed to positively impact black folks in the region. White entrepreneurs – often from outside the state – got ownership of the hotels, restaurants, and clubs that catered to blues heritage tourism. Black folks (generally) picked up gig work at those establishments cleaning rooms, backing bars, and on occasion performing for audiences. While there's nothing wrong with being an entrepreneur of any race or ethnicity and a job is a job, there is something coldly ironic about black people, in Mississippi, being exploited by an art form they created. And something more than a little cruel that the predominantly African American cradle of the blues, the Mississippi Delta, remains one of the poorest regions in the nation.

On July 25, 2023, President Joe Biden designated the Emmett Till & Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument, with anchor sites in Chicago at Roberts Temple Church of God in Christ and in the Mississippi Delta at Sumner and Graball Landing near the town of Glendora. Establishment of the Till site demonstrates that Mississippi stands ready to preserve and interpret (confront) its civil rights history. And once again black folks have been promised by people like me that the heritage tourism generated by the new park will provide economic benefits and political empowerment.

Now it's up to all of us to ensure that the preservation of civil rights history in Mississippi doesn't hit the same bum notes that the blues heritage effort has. That interpretation of the fight for human rights is led by local people and provides the first and biggest benefits to the communities who marched, bled, and won the victories we rightly strive to preserve. Let's not take anyone's blues (or their civil rights history) and "go" without them ever again.

— Alan Spears

National Parks Conservation Association

The blues was born from and played in response to racialized oppression, and decentering that from the narrative is like telling the story of the Titanic without mentioning the iceberg.

100 Life Century Club

Life members who contribute \$125 to ANPR are recognized in the Second Century Club. Once you are a Second Century Club member, each additional \$250 donation will increase your life level by one century. If you are a life member, please consider raising your contribution to the next level.

2nd Century Club

- Dick Anderson
- Paul Anderson
- Lawrence Belli
- Tony Bonanno
- George Bowen
- Ramon Brende
- Paul Broyles
- Rod Broyles
- Robert Butterfield
- Michael Caldwell
- William Carroll
- Bruce Collins
- Sue Consolo-Murphy
- Roberta D'Amico
- Frank Dean
- Lisa Eckert
- Joe Evans
- Bill Fink
- Mitch Fong
- Diane Garcia
- Erv Gasser
- Barbara Goodman
- Hal Grovert
- Fred Harmon
- Cheryl Hess
- James Hummel
- Marty Huseman
- Scott Isaacson
- Craig Johnson
- Margaret Johnston
- Dick Knowlen

- Ron Konklin
- Mary Kimmitt Laxton
- Tomie Patrick Lee
- Bob Love
- Joni Mae Makuaane-Jarrell
- John Mangimeli
- Colleen Mastrangelo
- Larry May
- Jeff Mow
- Aniceto Olais
- Olav Olsen
- Tim Oliverius
- Cindy Ott-Jones
- Jon Paynter
- Bundy Phillips
- Bill Pierce
- Cindy Purcell
- Tom Richter
- Bruce Rodgers
- Ed Rothfuss
- Cordell Roy
- Bill Sanders
- Elizabeth Schaaf
- Tim Setnicka
- Margaret Steigerwald
- Dave Stransky
- Bryan Swift
- Mark Tanaka-Sanders
- Dale & Judy Thompson
- Victor Vieira

- Karen Wade
- Ben Walsh
- Philip Ward
- Janice Wobbenhorst
- Tom Workman

3rd Century Club

- Jim Brady
- Erin Broadbent
- David Buccello
- Patricia Buccello
- Carl Christensen
- Kathleen Clossin
- Bruce Edmonston
- Maureen Finnerty
- Carol Hegeman
- Larry Henderson
- Steve Holder
- Keith Hoofnagle
- Stephen M. Hurd
- Lisa Klinger
- Bob Krumenaker
- Dave Lattimore
- Sean McGuinness
- Dan Moses
- Melinda Moses
- Mike Murray
- Alden Nash
- Jim Northup
- Martin O'Toole
- Mike Pflaum
- Ron Sprinkle
- Kathy Williams

4th Century Club

- Cliff Chetwin
- Mark & Phyllis Harvey
- Deborah Liggett
- Jay Liggett
- Scot McElveen
- Jack Morehead
- William Quinn
- Jean Rodeck
- Teresa Shirakawa
- Rick Smith
- Barry Sullivan
- Nancy Wizner
- Phil Young

5th Century Club

- Warren Bielenberg
- Linda Rae Emerson
- Dr. Russell Clay Harvey
- Robert Huggins
- Mary Jeff Karraker
- Michael Lynch
- Don Steiner

6th Century Club

- Vaughn Baker

7th Century Club

- Dennis Burnett & Ginny Rousseau
- Butch Farabee
- Karen Gatewood

- Rebecca Harriett
- Gary Hartley
- Jonathan Lewis
- Bruce & Georjean McKeeman

9th Century Club

- David Roberts

10th Century Club

- Stacy Allen
- Rick Erisman
- Warren Hill
- Rick Mossman
- Gilbert Soper
- Gary Warshefski

11th Century Club

- Deanne Adams & Tony Sisto
- Edward Rizzotto

12th Century Club

- Dick Martin
- Scott Pfeninger

14th Century Club

- John Townsend

15th Century Club

- Don Chase

24th Century Club

- Wendy Lauritzen

25th Century Club

- Bill Wade



Custom Printed Junior Ranger Badge Stickers for Kids

Our custom printed badge stickers will bring a smile to a child's face. Our junior park ranger badge stickers are ideal for community events, school classroom visits or when children visit your battlefield, national park, heritage corridor, historic site, lakeshore, national monument, recreation area, scenic riverway, scenic trail or seashore. Badge stickers are printed on either shiny gold or silver foil. Customized for your location at no extra charge. Fast and reliable delivery.

Visit Our Website: www.policestickers.com
 a website owned by Creative Services of New England
 1199 Main Street - P.O. Box 417 - Leicester, MA 01524-0417
Telephone: 508-892-1555



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL PARK RANGERS

12675 N. Sunrise Shadow Drive | Marana, AZ 85658

Directory of ANPR Board Members, Task Group Leaders & Staff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Rick Mossman, Retired
rmossman@anpr.org

Secretary

Demmy Vigil, Retired
dvigil@anpr.org

Treasurer

Rick Harwell, VIP
rharwell@anpr.org

Education and Training

Rae Emerson, Retired
remerson@anpr.org

Fundraising Activities

Wendy Lauritzen, Retired
wlauritzen@anpr.org

Internal Communications

Greta Ketchner, Upper Delaware
Scenic & Recreational River
gketchner@anpr.org

Membership Services

Shannon Wilson, Retired
swilson@anpr.org

Professional Issues

Emily Johnson, Alaska Region
ejohnson@anpr.org

Seasonal Perspectives

Troy Hunt, Education
thunt@anpr.org

Government Affairs

Mike Pflaum, Retired
mpflaum@anpr.org

Strategic Planning

Lauren DeGennaro, Zion National Park
ldgennaro@anpr.org

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Executive Director

Bill Wade, Retired
bwade@anpr.org

Business Manager / Ranger Editor/Publisher

Melissa DeVaughn
mdevaughn@anpr.org

Give
the gift of
membership

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
VISIT ANPR.ORG**



100% Recycled Content
100% Post Consumer Waste