

# The Signpost

May - June  
1991 ©

## From the Presidents Desk

### The New PRAC

By Christopher W. George

In the months since the Yosemite Conference I have been working to get ready for a new beginning. The new beginning I speak of is the creation of a new Park Rangers Association of California. PRAC has been around for fifteen years. During this time we have never really attempted to put down what policies we should incorporate or the direction we should shoot for.

As of the first week of May we have a new Executive Board for PRAC. This new board will consist of familiar faces as well as a few new ones. The major difference for the association is that for the first time we will have two Vice Presidents. The Vice Presidents will serve in both Northern and Southern California. They will have increased responsibilities in these areas. We will also have new Regional Directors to assist the vice presidents in helping to increase support to our members in their regions.

PRAC was created by park rangers for park rangers. Now for the first time there will be regular meetings in both the north and the south where members will have the opportunity to assist and participate first hand in helping to direct PRAC into the future.

As we settle into our new roles I would like to see additional opportunities for those members who would like to serve on committees. Agendas for these committees would be interpretation, law enforcement, resource management, training workshops and the annual conferences. We hope to have something for everyone who wants to take an active role in the association.

Recently I was approached by one of our members who questioned if PRAC was really the association to be involved with since his agency was law enforcement oriented. His concern was that he and his park rangers felt out of place when associating with other agencies at workshop gatherings. I stressed to him that there were additional agencies throughout California that were similar in structure to his program, and that his feelings were not isolate only to him. In the past I have heard of similar problems with agencies who felt awkward because of their role mission. They too felt that maybe they were not the standard image of a park ranger program and they too felt out of place. *PRAC is for everyone who wears a park ranger uniform.* PRAC wants to be there for all agencies to offer them increased support, training opportunities and most of all friendship. PRAC can offer something for everyone no matter what their job role is. Now with the new direction we are about to embark on I feel we can do that. We can have committees who can work on the law enforcement issue, or to plan and work together to solve resource management issues. The possibilities are endless. All it takes is being involved.

In closing, I would like to thank all those who ran in the past election. Their support in our association shows their desire to be involved at this exciting time. I want all of the nominees who were not selected for the board to know that they are not losers but winners, and that my appreciation goes out to each one of them. I hope that their enthusiasm will last for years to come.

## PRAC Board Meeting Highlights

held in Sacramento on  
June 1, 1991

**1991 Yosemite Conference:** It was the best attended PRAC function yet.

**1992 Conference in Anaheim w/CSPRA:** Will be held at the Inn at The Park (next to Disneyland) on March 16-19, 1992.

**Dues Increase:** PRAC dues will increase to \$35.00 for Regular memberships and Agency memberships will be increased by \$10.00 per category.

**Future Park Ranger Associations:** The Long Beach Rangers are developing their own statewide ranger organization to better serve their needs. It will be called the California Park Rangers Association. Dues have been proposed to be \$22.00 per month.

**World Ranger Conference:** There is a world Ranger Conference planned for 1993 in Poland. Anyone care to go?

**Next Meeting:** The next Executive Committee meeting will be held at the camp-out in Lake Tahoe between Sept. 19 and Sept. 21, 1991.

## Park Foundation is Formed

As the members know, a "Park stewardship foundation" was proposed at Yosemite, and was passed upon by the members of the Board. An ad hoc committee met on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December at Doug Bryce's home to ascertain purpose and needs of such a foundation. Our basic need (PRAC) was to provide a tax break for those who might want to give to the scholarship fund. Our present tax base did not provide an avenue to get a "break" for giving. CSPRA had like needs. At Yosemite, Dave Lydick and myself were appointed to the first "Board of Directors" by PRAC.

If you have any ideas about what our long-range or short-range goals should be you should contact either myself or Dave Lydick. If you think of other people that you feel could serve us well on the Board of Directors, we need to fill out those positions as well. Know any lawyers who would like to donate time to an environmental foundation? If you have any questions about the foundation, don't hesitate to give us a call.

*Smitty*  
Thomas Smith

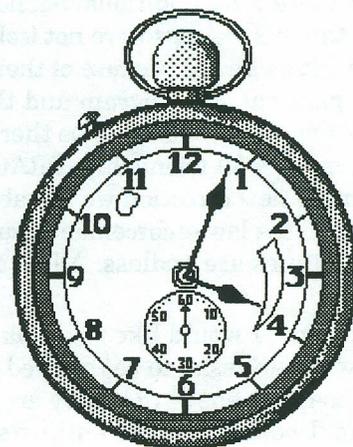
## On-Call Court Policy

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District is conducting a survey concerning on-call court policies of other park agencies. Information regarding how rangers called into court are paid is being requested.

1. Are rangers paid 2 hour stand-by time?
2. Is pay based on the amount of time spent at court?
3. Are court appearances are during regular work hours?
4. There is no policy.
5. Your current policy regarding court time.

Please send responses to:  
Rancho Simi Recreation  
& Park District  
1692 Sycamore Dr.  
Simi Valley, CA 93065

Thanks for your cooperation  
Donald Watstein  
Senior Park Ranger



# Collecting Insignia

by Bill Hedges  
Senior Reserve Park Ranger  
County of Orange

Those of you who attended the PRAC conference in Yosemite probably noted that on Monday night the hospitality room was invaded by a group of ranger patches and badges. Collecting insignia has been around for a number of years and like many hobbies offers an interesting and relaxing pastime.

The insignia worn by an organization often reflects the historical and cultural background of the agency or the area served by the agency. Thus Orange County's Harbors, Beaches and Parks (OCHBP) patch depicts an orange as it's focal point. Your agency's patch more than likely reflects something similar that is representative of your agency.

Many ranger uniforms are a reflection of the National Park Service's influence; while others are copied from local law enforcement

agencies or other park departments.

This is probably reflected more so in the badge we wear. Often it is copied from local law enforcement agencies. Or it may reflect an evolution from the time when rangers received special commissions from these agencies and wore the same uniform and insignia.

I have been collecting law enforcement insignia since I graduated from the police academy in 1966. During my career as a police officer my collection grew to over 2,500 breast badges and probably twice as many patches. Over the years my fascination stayed with breast badges and I traded off or gave away most of my patch collection. When I retired I remained an active collector of breast badges. In 1989 when I became a reserve park ranger for Orange County and the patch collecting bug hit me again.

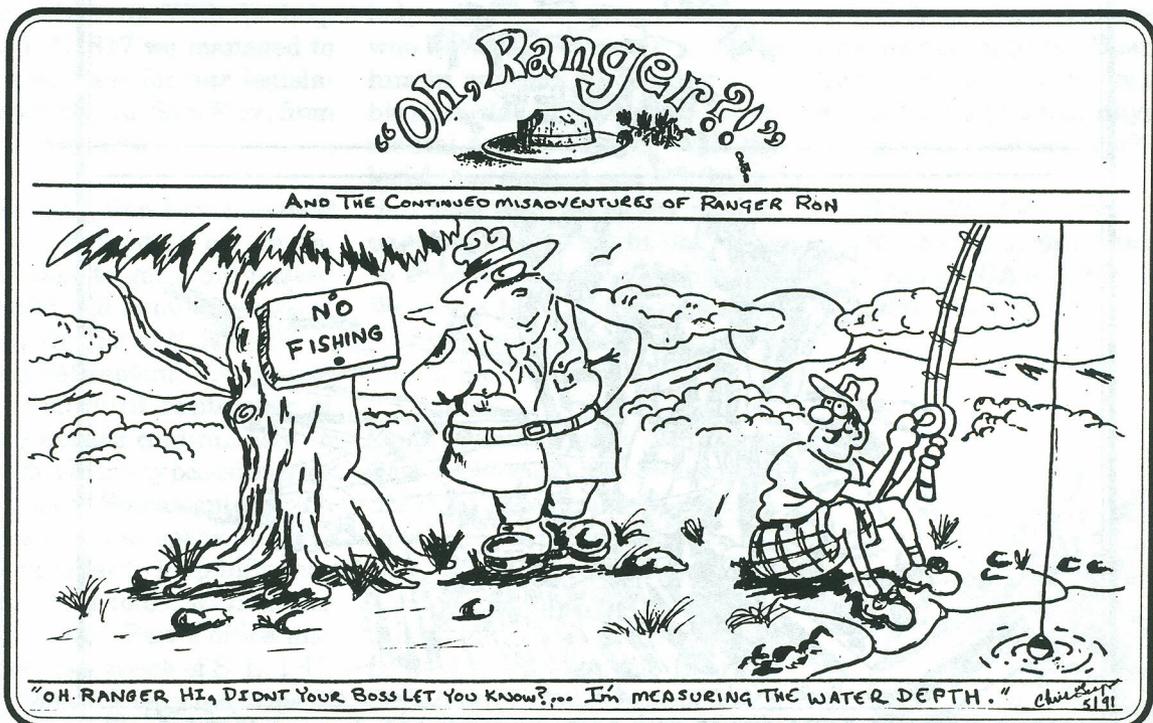
To date I have assembled a display of nearly 200 park ranger patches from across the United States. The patch display was part of the award winning booth that OCHBP spon-

sored at the 1990 Orange County Fair. I have found that the patch display is quite a crowd pleaser and is particularly fascinating to children. A patch display also makes a handsome and colorful addition to an office lobby.

When I first started collecting local collectors networked with each other and occasionally came across a visiting collector from out of town. In the past ten years the hobby has really blossomed with many regional swap meets and an annual national show. There is even a monthly newspaper, PCNEWS, which carries many fascinating stories about the hobby and a calendar of upcoming events.

I would be happy to hear from any of you who might be interested in this hobby and help you get started; also anyone who might want to send a patch for inclusion in the park ranger display or exchange patches. You can contact me by writing to:

Bill Hedges,  
P.O. Box 6983  
Buena Park, CA 90622.



# A. B. 4305 Monterey County Parks Eligible For Safety Retirement

by Kevin W. Buchanan

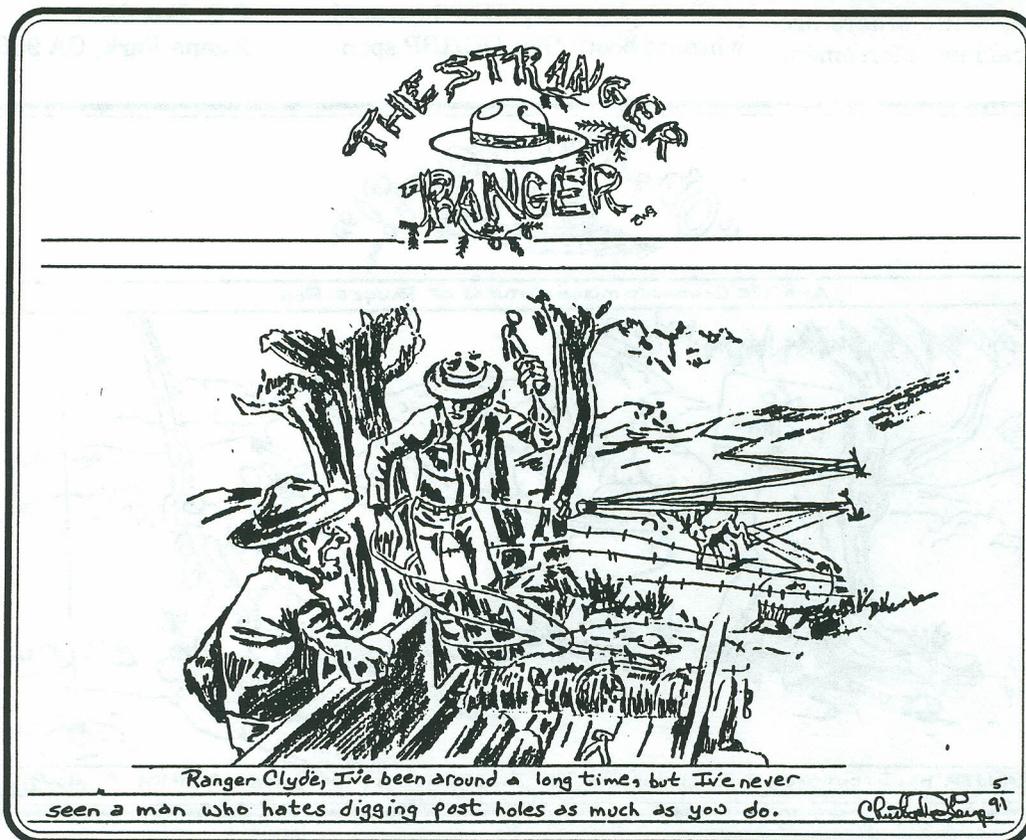
It finally happened this year, that Monterey County Parks Department Rangers became eligible for safety retirement. To some this may seem insignificant. To those involved it was a long hard struggle. It all started in the break rooms four years ago and lead the Monterey County Park Rangers through the State Assembly, the State Senate and finally to the Governors Office. The ordeal is still far from being over, since the rangers must now negotiate with county to reap the benefits of this hard won legislation. The following will give the how and why this happened.

The idea of getting Safety Retirement in Monterey County Parks had been talked about for many years by the rangers. This of course was due to the fact that the rangers here are park ranger-peace officers for the county, falling under Penal Code Sections 832 and 830.31 (b). In addition to being peace officers, we are EMS First responders and also are equipped with fire units for fires that occur at our facilities. Each of these responsibilities bring with it it's own set of training, procedures and problems. What brought the combination of these duties and safety retirement together was the heavy use at our facilities making public safety the primary job function superseding all others performed by the rangers.

In some areas like Lake San Antonio 500,000 visitors come annually to the facility which is located 45 miles from the nearest town. One of our sayings is that if it can

happen in town it can happen here: i.e. spousal abuse, drunk driving, theft, illegal firearms, fires and life threatening medical conditions. As it turns out everyone who responds to assist us on calls that require outside assistance has safety retirement. The people who work for these agencies kept telling us that we should have safety retirement and in the process recruited a lot of our good rangers. Some rangers would work at the lake for a couple of years and then take a job with State Parks who have safety retirement. This turnover and disparity in benefits between our rangers and local public safety agencies finally got the ball rolling to do something about the problem.

In 1988-89, with the help of the Service Employees International Union Local 817 (S. E. I. U. 817) we tried to take the steps that would bring us safety retirement tin our upcoming negotiations. In



the course of having an actuarial study done by the Public Employees Retirement System (P. E. R. S.) to determine our eligibility and the cost of the retirement, we found that we were not eligible due to the semantics of being called a park ranger. It was explained to us by sources within P. E. R. S., that the California Government Code sections on county safety retirement made no provisions for anyone called a park ranger no matter what the job duties were. It was further explained to us that it wasn't that we didn't do the job it was just that we were called the wrong thing under existing law. The only way to change that was to change our job title or to pass legislation that would include county park rangers.

During the course of negotiations with the county in 1989, the county told us that we could not negotiate for safety retirement because we were not eligible to receive it. It also became evident that a change in job title was not very likely to be forthcoming to make us eligible. This left the final option of changing the California Government Code to include us. With the help of S. E. I. U. 817 we managed to locate a sponsor for our legislation, Assemblyman Sam Farr, from the Monterey area.

Assemblyman Sam Farr told us it would be a difficult, if not an impossible task to get a bill passed that would add another group of people to the list of those eligible for safety retirement. From October of 1989 until September of 1990, we worked continuously on A. B. 4305. On many occasions this meant trips to Sacramento to talk to legislators and speak to committees in order to help influence the outcome of votes. Without the support of Sam Farr's office and the expert assistance of S. E. I. U. lobbyist Maura Kieley our trips to the state capital would not have been as effective.

The culmination of our efforts came in September of 1990, when we journeyed to the capital to lobby some key Senators who might not vote for A. B. 4305. The morning was spent doing the last minute explanation of the virtues of our bill and in the afternoon we would sit on the floor of the Senate as guests of Senator Mello (Santa Cruz), to see how the vote turned out. Our wait in the afternoon was a short one, the bill came up and was passed unanimously in the senate. We were advised by Senator Mello to remain on the floor and introduced Supervising Park Ranger Mike McMahon and myself to the senate.

The sense of victory was short lived once we left the floor of the senate. Our lobbyist Maura Kieley whisked us off to the Governors office. In route reminded us that the odds were that the Governor would veto our bill and we would be doing this again next year. Maura got us an appointment to meet with the Governor's Legislative Analyst, then told us that we would be on our own at this level. Maura also told us that it might help our chances to get someone who knows the Governor to talk to him in addition to meeting with his staff (this struck us as a monumental task). We met with the legislative analyst and left feeling that they were no longer against us but that they might not really be strongly in favor of A. B. 4305. We knew that Maura was right and that we needed someone to talk to the Governor.

Upon returning to Monterey County the main focus was to find the right person to talk with the Governor. As it turned out S. E. I. U. 817 field representative Gary Yoes found the connection. It turned out that our newly appointed member to the Board of Supervisors, Tom Perkins was a retired CDF District Ranger who had been in charge of the Mon-

terey-San Benito County Ranger Unit. Senator Ken Maddy had helped to get Tom his appointment to the Board of Supervisors. In turn we asked Tom to talk to the senator about urging the Governor to sign A. B. 4305. It worked, the key players that we needed supported us and the Governor signed the bill.

The picture painted here should be very self evident at this point. No one person would have been able to get this bill passed. It took a lot of hard work and many individuals playing important, but varied roles when it was necessary. The battle is far from over for us since this was only enabling legislation, leaving negotiations ahead in the Spring of 1991 to see if we can get what we worked so hard for.

We had intended for this legislation to be for all county park rangers, who might do what we do. Only when the bill reached the Senate for the final vote were we advised of it probably not passing if it included all county park rangers. This was due to the opposition of C. S. A. C. (the organization that represents county Board's of Supervisors). Sorry guys, we wanted it for you too. Anyone desiring assistance can reach me at:

Kevin W. Buchanan  
N. Shore Lk. San Antonio  
Bradley, CA 93426  
(805) 472-2834



# What is going on?

## PRAC Campout #2

The first PRAC campout was held a few years ago at Samuel P. Taylor State Park in Marin County. Campout #2 will be held in Lake Tahoe at Camp Schelly (Livermore Park District Campground). The dates will be Friday, September 20 thru Sunday, September 22 1991.

Camp Schelly, located in the Lake Tahoe area has, 26 campsites. Some will accommodate RV's up to 26-feet long. There are even hot showers!

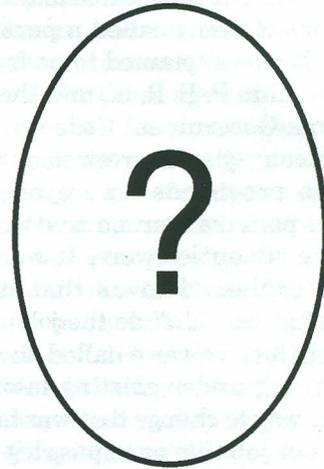
Activities will include a BBQ, ping pong, volleyball, horse-shoes, etc. The fee will be reasonable. Lots of other events at the campout are being planned so mark your calendars for Sept. 20 - Sept. 22, 1991. Further details will be coming in the next issue of

## "Park Rangers Protecting our Environment through Interpretation"

The San Jose Park Rangers Association along with the Park Rangers Association of California will be hosting an interpretation workshop on Thursday Sept. 26, 1991 at Prusch Park in San Jose.

The cost will be \$35.00 for PRAC members. This will include lunch and a wine social after the workshop.

Look for more information in the coming months.



## PRAC Logo Contest

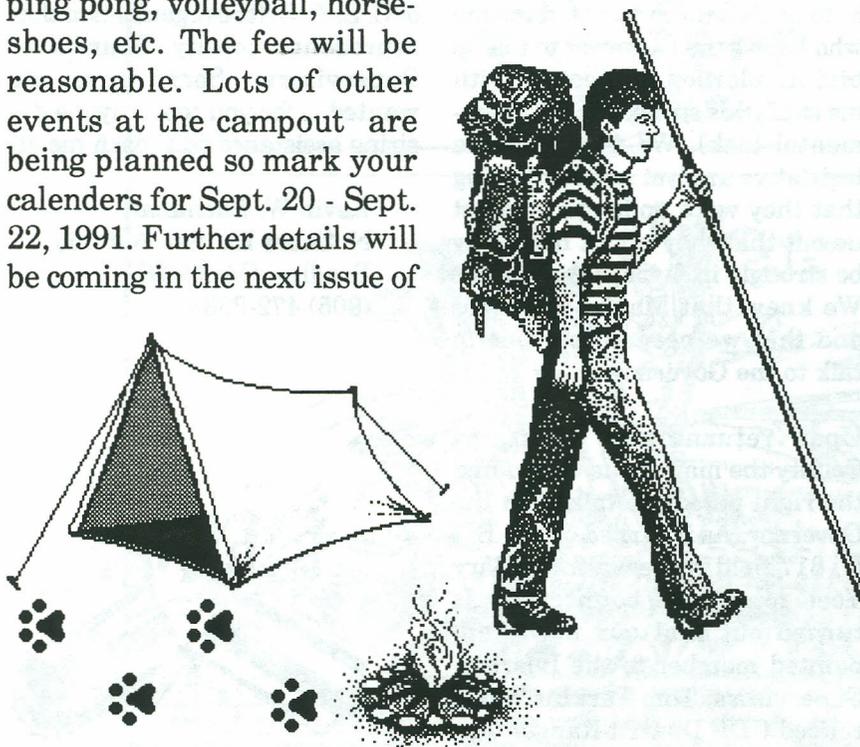
Attention all you graphic artists out there! PRAC is looking for a new logo to better represent our growing organization.

Any member may send in their design for the new logo. The winner will be able to go to the annual conference next March, 1992 in Anaheim for free. Plus they will receive two day passes to Disneyland.

So get our your sketch pad or sit down at your computer and come up with the next PRAC logo. Entries need to be sent by Sept. 1, 1991.

Send designs to:

Doug Bryce  
P. O. Box 28366  
Sacramento, CA 95828



## Get The Word Out!

The Signpost is a place to express your views on the various issues that affect parks. Many of you may wonder how to send in articles to the Signpost. First of all you need a subject to write about. Try an event, or an idea that could make life easier for rangers everywhere. After all, this newsletter is for you.

Two new columns will be started to help you get the word out. The first new feature called the Park Date Line. The idea is to let everyone know what is happening with rangers in other places. Tell about events and occurrences that are humorous, a news worthy event or something some one would rather forget. (All in good fun!) So here is your chance to publish something.

Job Action will be a column devoted to our members who are looking for work. Just send in a brief resume

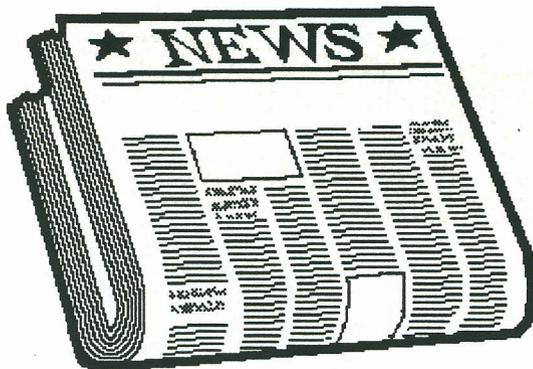
(5 lines or 100 words) outlining your skills and positions being sought. Who knows, someone out there may be looking for someone just like you.

For agencies with job openings, remember that PRAC will provide you with mailing labels. Just let Doug Bryce (PRAC Executive Manager) know and he will send them to you.

The Editor promises to publish any suitable material that is submitted. (Honest I will!) You don't have to be an officer or committee chair to see your work in print. Articles may be edited as space requires. The only requirement is that material is submitted by the dates listed on the back of this issue. *Mail directly to the Signpost Editor, not to PRAC in Sacramento. This will guarantee timely publication of your work.*

Send to:

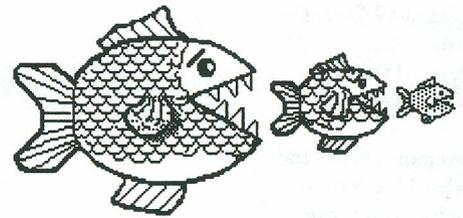
The Signpost  
c/o David Brooks  
560 Hillcrest Dr.  
Ben Lomond CA 95005



## The PRAC General Store

### Mugs & Caps

Mugs and caps are still available. These are high quality baseball caps (green or brown twill-type, \$7.00 each) and coffee mugs (blue and white glazed ceramic, \$5.00 each).



### PRAC Agency Directory

The new revised PRAC Ranger Directory is now available. It lists agencies with "ranger personnel" throughout California. The cost for this resource is \$5.00.

To purchase any of the above items, send a check, payable to: PRAC, P.O. Box 28366, Sacramento, CA, 95828-0366. Please indicate number of items requested, along with size and color if applicable.

**PARK RANGERS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA**

**Board Officers**

1991

**President**

Chris George  
Anaheim Parks & Community Services  
(717) 254-5226

**Vice President North**

Bruce Weidman  
Livermore Area Recreation & Parks  
(415) 373-5770

**Vice-President South**

Jeff Ohlfs  
Cottonwood Ranger Station  
(619) 367-3523

**Treasurer**

Paul Roberts  
Sacramento Parks & Recreation  
(916) 366-2072

**Region 1 Director**

Judy Morris  
City of Fremont  
(415) 791-4340

**Region 2 Director**

Carol Fredrickson  
City of San Jose  
(408) 277-4319

**Region 3 Director**

Cheryl Goss  
Sly Park  
(644) 644-2545

**Region 4 Director**

Donald Watstein  
Rancho Simi Recreation & Parks  
(815) 584-4440

**Region 5**

Brent Mason  
City of Poway  
(619)748-6600 x386

**Past President**

Bill Hendricks  
University of Utah  
(801) 467-4565

**CPRS Liaison**

Dave Lydick  
Sacramento County Parks & Recreation  
(916) 366-2072

**"The Signpost" & "Cal Ranger" Editor**

David Brooks  
City of Santa Cruz, Water Department  
(408) 336-2948

**Executive Manager & Secretary**

Doug Bryce  
(916) 383-2530

**The Signpost** is published by the Park Rangers Association of California (PRAC). The Association mailing address is P.O. Box 28366, Sacramento, CA, 95828. **The Signpost** editor is David Brooks. Articles of 1,000 words, or less are welcome. All submissions become property of PRAC, and may be edited without notice. Submissions should be mailed to David Brooks, 560 Hillcrest Dr., Ben Lomond, CA, 95005. Information can also be submitted by telephone at (408) 336-2948. Submission deadlines are the last day of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Park Rangers Association of California  
P. O. Box 28366  
Sacramento, CA 95828-0366

**BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NUMBER  
12  
Elk Grove, CA**

