On August 21, PRAC hosted yet another Region Two bar-b-que. Fifteen people enjoyed food, friends, and flexible hours. Just kidding about the hours. The weather was great and so was the location in San Jose's Alum Rock Park. Jim O'Conner from Santa Clara County Parks shared the preliminary results of his training survey with us. Steve Thompson won the award for the farthest distance travelled as he came from Lake San Antonio in Monterey County. The kids hit the playground and the only complaint was that the swings were squeaky. You can't please everybody all of the time. I had some good discussions with people of what to expect when children reach the age of three. The challenges are just starting. Everyone talked so much that the volleyball game never began. I had a great time and hope that everyone else did too. Hope to see you next year.
The Natural Resources Communication Workshop will be held at California State University, Chico from January 6-10, 1997. The week-long workshop is designed to help natural resource workers more effectively communicate with the general public through personal presentations using food visual aid—especially 35mm slides. Since many of the problems in natural resources management are people-oriented, more effective communication can significantly improve many management programs.

The hands-on workshop is practical-oriented and enhances participants’ communication skills in planning, preparing, presenting, and evaluating presentations. A variety of topics are covered including selecting communication strategies for specific audiences, creating graphics, and handling equipment problems. A special session entitled “Verbal Victories” provides hints for handling difficult, or even hostile, audiences.

The workshop has been sponsored by the Western Section of the Wildlife Society for the past 26 years. The deadline for applications is November 1, 1996; the course fee is $495. For more information, contact Dr. Jon K. Hooper, Dept. Recreation and Parks Management, Calif. State University, Chico, CA 95929-0560 or call (916) 898-5811.

Just Your Usual Friday the 13th
by Ken Miller

In September we had a Friday the 13th. How did your day go? For the two late rangers at my office they had a rather memorable call.

The sun had just set when they were enroute on a rural road to check some of our property in our south area. A woman flagged them down and reported that her 13 year old son had run away on his skateboard. Not our jurisdiction but you can’t ignore the call for assistance.

The Sheriff was requested and the rangers spoke with the woman as they waited. She was upset and went to her car and listened to her music which was loud heavy metal. The woman asked the rangers what type of music they listened to and they said country. She said that was devil music. How did she know? Because she was a witch. She showed them her book of spells, but wouldn’t let them touch the book. The rangers and woman were parked at one of the borders to Almaden Quicksilver County Park.

At the turn of the century mercury was mined in the area and the tailings have contaminated the surrounding lakes and streams. The woman told the rangers that she was working on a spell to clean up all of the mercury contamination in the area. All of the mitigation money has just been a waste I guess.

The woman finally got agitated, complained that nothing was being done and drove off. The Sheriff then showed up and cleared. You can’t find a 13 year old who doesn’t want to be found at night in a park. The rangers took off and checked our property. On the way back who do they see but the 13 year old with the skateboard. They called the sheriff once again to come pick up the teen.

It was an interesting night that proved that no call is ever routine. Some are just more bizarre than others. You’ve got to love the job.
1996 PRAC Scholarship Winners

Statement of Interest
by Jennifer Menk

Being a park ranger had always been my ideal career of choice but I did not have the education or the experience. I moved to California in 1983 and became an administrative associate at Stanford University because I did have a secretarial background. I stayed there twelve and a half years. I learned of the Park Management Program at West Valley College in 1995, and started the classes that were offered in the evenings. I wanted to be a full-time student, so I instigated a layoff at Stanford and with the severance pay was able to complete two full semesters at West Valley College.

This summer I am employed as a Student Professional at Mt. Madonna County Park and plan to do everything I can to get more park related experience. I now feel that I am well on the way to becoming a ranger! I plan to complete the Park Management Program at West Valley College and complete the general education required to transfer to a California State University. My goal is to obtain a degree in wildlife biology management and support myself by working as a ranger. This major life change has been an academic and financial challenge.

With the endowment, I will buy school books. Besides providing financial support, the PRAC scholarship will also give me the opportunity to meet other park rangers in California and establish myself as a possible future employee. I have always dreamed of being a ranger and the PRAC scholarship will help obtain my dream. Thank you.

Statement of Interest
by Rebekah J. Haglund

I have been attending college since I graduated from high school in June, 1990. Even though I am still in college, I have accomplished many goals since I began six years ago. I graduated from West Valley College with an Associate of Science in Park Management, an Associate of Arts with Honors in Liberal Arts, received a speech Communications Certificate, and maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.53.

I decided to attend Sonoma State University because I wanted to continue and expand my education. I also realized the importance of having a four year degree in today's world. In the fall, I will begin my second semester at Sonoma State. My major is Environmental Studies with an emphasis in Environmental Education. I am also going to obtain a minor in Biology. After graduation, I plan on obtaining my multiple subject teaching credential as well.

One of my goals is just to finish college. Once I walk across the stage on graduation day, I will become the first in my family to receive a degree from a four year university.

After completing school, I would like to work in the outdoor field in some capacity. Basically, my career will depend on the availability of jobs. I may work as an interpretive ranger, a full-time outdoor education teacher, or in elementary schools during the school year and as a ranger during the summer. As evident from my education, I have tried to keep my options open. My primary goals are; to teach people about nature, then help them understand their environment, and to give them a feeling of connection to the natural world.

The obvious reason I am interested in the PRAC scholarship is the money. Two hundred and fifty dollars, while it may not sound like much to some people, is one month's rent for me, one-fifth of tuition, or will pay for my school textbooks and supplies. If I am to finish school in two years, I must take at least sixteen units a semester. I am working this summer as a Ranger at Anderson Lake County Park and will be working next year on campus at Sonoma State Recycling Center. I have learned that every dollar counts. This two hundred and fifty dollar scholarship will definitely help out.

As a graduate of West Valley College's Park Management Program and a member of PRAC. I have enjoyed a sense of connection with other members and graduates I would not have had otherwise. I would like to thank PRAC for forging a connection between rangers and students all over California!

Trails Workshop
by Ken Miller

The trails workshop has been postponed until the spring. Fall is not the time of year to do trail construction due to dry soil conditions. My District has some new trail projects scheduled for the spring and hopefully a workshop can be scheduled around the projects. Look forward to the workshop next spring.
Diary of a 
Rangerman 
by Matt Reynolds 
Seasonal Park Ranger, City of Fremont

Last fall, my wife and I moved to the Bay Area from Los Angeles. My wife had landed a solid job and we felt living in L.A. 26 years was long enough. Since college I had been a touring musician and traveled the world. Now that I was not touring for a while and had only a few music contacts here, I had to look for a supplementary income beside music. In my late teens-early twenties, I had worked for a parks department in the L.A. area and enjoyed working outdoors. I am also an avid mountain biker, hiker, and camper. The solution was to find a job that encompassed these interests..ranger? I was at the right place at the right time when I applied with the City of Fremont Park Rangers. They took a chance with me because I did not meet all the requiremets upon my hiring. Luckily though, a willingness to learn and personal drive can often outweigh experience. After six months with this agency, I have been exposed to numerous ranger tasks and have gained an abundance of experience in this field. To my surprise, I am surrounded by people who are excited about their career: It's contagious! I have grown to really appreciate wildlife, especially waterfowl. The rangers are constantly quizzing and teaching me about the waterfowl and other wildlife, making it fun to absorb this information.

After showing interest in learning more about wildlife, one of the full-time staff, Ranger Ferriera, let me assist her with the Canada goose and tree swallow projects. We monitored 30 goose nests and 14 tree swallow nest boxes. I assisted in counting nest occupancy, eggs and fledglings. I really felt some ownership with this project. Also, Ranger Ferriera has been researching wood ducks for the past year with the experts in the field. She has embarked on a wood duck project in a riparian lake park in Fremont where numerous "woodies" have been spotted. She has made me a vital member of this project. We had members of the community cut out the wool duck boxes to CWA specifications and children from our Junior Ranger program construct them. Ranger Ferriera and I mounted the eight boxes and changed the nests by row boat. We use a long aluminum ladder to access the boxes. We have spotted a few wood ducks in the nest box areas. In a few months, the hens and drakes will start pairing up and we will start notating all nest activity for CWA research. I hope the next six months will be as educational and satisfying as the previous six months. This experience has been much more rewarding than I thought it would be.

The Signpost

The Power of Self-Promotion 
by Russ Hauck

My agency recently had a run of positive media attention including a 70 minute feature on the local cable television station, a fifteen minute interview on local radio, and a full-page, color photo story in the local newspaper. The best part about it is the timing! We don't really need it right now. We're not in the position where we need to offset negative exposure. It has been some time since we had a serious crime; there are no controversial issues on the table; recent letters to the Editor have targeted other operations in the City. That makes the timing perfect because as we all know, the good times won't last forever.

Self-promotion is an activity in which we must constantly involve ourselves. Much like a politician at re-election time. If you wait until the last minute to promote yourself, it's too late. The big issue is not always "spin control" where you find yourself responding to some negative incident or situation. More often, the argument for self-promotion comes in a time of need.

The time will cone when you are facing budget cuts, or requesting additional personnel, or attempting to upgrade your status, or applying for a grant, or seeking public support of a bond measure, etc. That is when you need to call in your favors, and cash in on the self-promotion that you have been practicing.

Get to know your user groups: Little League and AYSO board members and coaches, adult sports leagues, Sierra Club members, corporation that hold annual picnics, civic organization that hold annual festivals, park support groups, teachers and principals who have used your interpretive services, etc.

One final source to remember is the public that we contact everyday. Presenting a professional image is paramount to long-term success.

We are all familiar with the term "PR" referring to public relations, but I prefer to view it as Promoting Relentlessly!
Championing the Human Spirit: A Tribute to Eddie Lamb
by Russ Hauck

Every other month, the deadline for a Signpost article arrives. Knowing that it is coming, I am always looking for ideas. I try to share things that are informational, educational, and inspirational. Sometimes an article is easy to write. The other article I submitted for this edition was written in about five minutes and has been sitting on my desk for three weeks. While the article meets by burden (directors are required to submit an article for each edition of the Signpost), I felt the need to offer something a little more substantial. This may not be the right forum for a personal issue such as this, but I am using it to express feelings that I don't otherwise know how to express. Hopefully, you will get some inspiration from the message. I guess I have some “latent newspaper columnist tendencies” hiding back there somewhere.

Homo sapiens are the highest life form on the planet today. I realize that statement at times screams for an argument, but for the sake of this article, we’ll run with that idea. People make thousands of decisions each day; what clothes to wear, what to order from the menu, what route to take to work, what television program to watch, what time to go to bed, etc. We have so many things to think about. Animals only think about three things: eat, avoid being eaten, and make baby animals so the species can continue. For them, survival is purely that simple. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is considerably more flat in the rest of the animal kingdom.

Correspondingly, we formulate plans for our long-term existence. Census figures, population projections, carrying capacity, air quality in the year 2010, water quality in the year 2020, and so on. We analyze trends, configure graphs, speculate, conject, and predict. Individually speaking, we get caught up in acquiring things, and investing, and saving for retirement, and “building for the future.” Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all we had to think about was eat, avoid being eaten and make babies. Instead, we treat life as if it were a “destination.”

A couple of days ago, I attend the funeral of my neighbor, Eddie Lamb. What a wonderful, wonderful man! Eddie was a retired elementary school teacher, a friend of the environment, a “more than abundantly half-full glass” kind of person, one of the world’s nicest guys, a lover of life, and truly a champion of the human spirit. As I reflect on Eddie’s passing, I wonder why such a vibrant, positive attitude, kind-word-for everyone person was taken from us at the young age of 57 years. I can only conclude that as a retired teacher, he wants us to continue to learn. If I learned one thing from Eddie, it is that life is not a destination; life is a journey. We shouldn’t go so caught up in “looking down the road” that we forget to look at the road.

Take a moment out of your day—every day—to appreciate what you have. Say “Hi” to a stranger. Take your dog for a walk. Rough-house with your kids in the living room. Smile.

Vaya con Dios, Eddie. I envy the Great Park Ranger in the Sky, for He can look forward to an eternity filled with stimulating conversation, laughter, and joy. We shall all learn from your teachings as we continue life’s “journey” without you.

1997 Parks Conference
(Continued from page 1)

Park Foundation. Their Executive Director Susan Smart has agreed to fund several components of the program, as well as host a social the first evening.

The 1997 Parks Conference Silent Auction will feature one or two large corporate-sponsor items (one of which is rumored to be a trip to Hawaii) as well as many locally generated bid items. Please begin gathering donated items from around your District that can be used in next year’s auction. For example, you might know and be able to contact a park-friendly local business, vendor, concession, cooperating association, corporation or other source, for donated auction items. Past year’s auction items have included boat trips, train rides, cases of a bottled beverage, member-created crafts and art work, clothing, recreational equipment, travel opportunities. You get the idea! When you get an item confirmed, please let Joe Mette, our Silent Auctioneer, know about it (he’s at State Capital/Gold Rush District).

Make a calendar note: 1997 Parks Conference will be held Thursday, March 13, 1997 through Sunday, March 16, 1997 at the Sheraton Concord Hotel and Conference Hotel and Conference Center on John Glenn Drive in Concord, California. The conference room rates are $70.00 single and $80.00 double.

The planning team is ably chaired by Larry Ferri (Diablo), with assistance from Dave Nelson (Delta), Sandy Ferreira (Fremont), Carol Nelson (Bay Area), and Jeff Price (Marin). Please feel free to contact any of those listed or Larry at Mt Diablo State Park, (510) 673-2891 with ideas, suggestions and offers to help. Your help, participation and personal attendance are needed and will be valued greatly. Give a little back. Get involved in your profession!

Remember to submit that Out-Service Training Request today, to receive 50% state time and 50% of your conference registration costs. See you in Concord—March 1997.
Hazardous and Diseased Tree Identification:
A Field Risk Ament November 13, 1996
This course will provide the field ranger and maintenance worker the basic skills to assess whether standing trees pose a hazard to the public. Participants will learn basic assessment techniques, including what constitutes a hazardous tree, and identification of some common tree diseases.
Cost: $75.00

Mountain Lions, Pigs, Depredation Permits, & Grazing December 6, 1996
Co-hosted with the Park Rangers' Association of California, this 6-hour afternoon session is intended to answer questions on selected resource topics of local concern. Among these will be mountain lions, options on dealing with pigs, obtaining depredation permits from California Department of Fish and Game (DF&G), grazing issues as they pertain to California codes and regulations, and a question/answer session with California DG&G.
Cost: $35.00 PRAC members, $40.00 non-PRAC members

Park Managers In-Service Training March 18-20, 1997
Intended for Unit Managers and above, this 3-day course covers topics of contemporary importance including: communication skills, time management, worker's compensation issues (the law and fraud), OSHA for managers, team building, managing chance, progressive discipline, negligent retention, and management strategies.
Cost: $240.00

Inter-Agency Park Ranger In-Service Training April 19-21, 1997
A modular 24-hour refreshers in-service training is for field personnel with enforcement responsibilities. Topics include a 4-hour legal update, a 4-hour section on required topics, 6-hours on patrol procedures, tactics and strategies, and 6 hours of filed scenarios.
Cost: Day 1 or Day 2 only $75.00
Day 1 & 2 $100.00
Day 3 only $100.00
All 3 days $200.00

Mountain Medicine April 18-19, 1997
This Friday evening/all-day Saturday course (about 16 hours) is a review of common injuries and maladies encountered in wilderness and outdoor settings where outside medical aid is not immediately available. Emphasis on patient assessment, scene management, field stabilization, and use of improvised materials.
Cost: $13.00 current WVC students, $30.00 non-WVC students

4-Wheel Drive Training Program June 3-4, 1997
(See description above.)

Mountain Medicine June 6-7, 1997
(See description above.)

32-hour Basic Wildland Firefighting Training June 16-20, 1997
This course satisfies the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's Firefighting Type 2 requirements (S-110, S-130, S-190, Standards for Survival) to meet requirements for the National Interagency "red card." Topics include fire behavior, ignition and fire spread, methods of fire prevention and suppression, use of suppression equipment, fire control organization and prescribed burning.
Cost: $39.00 current WVC students, $65.00 non-WVC students

For more information and registration forms, contact:
Kim Aufhauser
Voice Mail: (408) 741-2403
FAX: (408)741-2145
E-mail: 73517.1456@compuserve.com

EBRPD Safety Fair
by Sandy Ferreira, Region 1 Director

PRAC recently attended the East Bay Regional Park District's Safety Fair at Castle Rock Park in Walnut Creek. A special thanks to Patty Walker who arranged for PRAC, and members to staff the event. Thanks to Doug Bryce who set up the display materials, Terri Licalsi, EBMUD Senior Ranger/Naturalist, Ken Miller Director Region 2, and Dave Sloan Director Region 3, all who volunteered their time staffing this event. Lunch was provided by the Park District. There were a number of activities and display materials set up as well as games, EBRPD's helicopter to check out and plenty of networking. We even had some new members sign up!
I have two books that I have read that I wanted to tell you about. I am kind of torn about which one to report on this time. Nice to be one book ahead of you people. I have been reading allot lately, have you? Remember, it is part of your job to keep abreast of what is new and exciting. Speaking of that, I have a new computer to play with. It is a HP Pavilion, with all the bells and whistles. This spell checker I have now lets me know right away! It also corrects it as I go. It is like having your old English teacher right at your elbow (Cherish the thought....may she rest in peace). Since I received this great gift (and it was a gift...from my son-in-law!), I have been able to "surf" the web and discover incredible material that is available to all of us on the web. My students at State are getting the full treatment of printouts of news releases, management philosophy, and current trends, from a variety of agencies; local, state, and federal. When I get time, I will try to compile a listing of web sites of interest to us. That might take too many sheets-of paper! It is really a great resource.

I have decided (flipped a coin) to report on a book about California's threatened environment. The title, believe it or not, is California's Threatened Environment, Restoring the Dream. The vogue, now days it seems, is to edit and not author. This one is edited by Tim Palmer, a former landscape architect who worked for several years on environmental and land use problems. The chapters, each authored by a California expert, were specifically written for this volume. The chapters include; population growth, air quality, transportation and energy, water quality and supply, coastal waters, land use, agriculture and pesticides, forests and wildlife, solid waste, toxic and hazardous wastes, and parks and recreation. The last chapter is an action agenda for the future.

Of course, I was really interested in the fact that there is a chapter in this book about parks and recreation. The chapter, entitled, "Parks and Recreation: Vital to a Way of Life," was written by Pete Dangermond, former Director of California State Parks. Mr. Dangermond is now a consultant with Dangermond and Associates, in Sacramento. The chapter covers the results of an outdoor recreation survey done in California completed in 1987, and digs into the factors that will influence the future of our profession. These factors include increasing population, the fiscal crisis, rising expectations of the public, and the increasing social ills. Pete also suggests what has to be done to meet these threats. I will leave these suggestions for you to find when you read this chapter. After all, you have to have something to look forward to.

The entire volume is very easy reading, and most all the contents are usable for interpretive programs and professional growth and awareness. I forget (I can say that because I am old) what I paid for it, but it wasn’t much as books go now days. I can say it was worth it.


Congratulations to seasonal park ranger Matt Ritchie from the City of Fremont. The conference committee unanimously chose Matt to design the logo for the California State Parks Conference which will be held in Concord, March 1997. The logo will be used on T-shirts, coffee mugs and the artwork for the conference materials. Other applications for the design have not been decided at this time. Matt submitted several designs which illustrates his talent.

In addition to designing logos and other artwork, Matt has designed two park signs for our agency as well as a brochure for our Central Park Visitor Service Center. Matt graduated form California State University Hayward with a Fine Arts Degree. In his free time. Matt enjoys artwork, music surfing the waves with his friends. In the summer when Matt is not working as a ranger, he works as the Head Lifeguard at the Swim Lagoon in Central Park where he supervises the lifeguard staff.

Again, congratulations, Matt! We are looking forward to your winning design.
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