Trails Workshop
by Ken Miller

The long awaited 1997 Trails Workshop has come and gone. Fifteen people from the Bay Area and beyond spent a day learning how the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District plans and builds trails. John Kowaleski, Pat Congden, Kerry Carlson, Mike Bankosh, Jim Teo, and myself instructed at four stations that included laying out and cutting trail, retaining wall construction, culvert and headwall construction, and building a safety fence.

Fifteen people was the perfect amount of participants and this definitely was a hands-on workshop. Our group was well mixed with people from East Bay Regional Parks District, City of San Jose, City of Palo Alto, Army Corp of Engineers, and Hayward Area Recreation District. I had a great time instructing and I enjoyed just talking with people about their other agencies. I learned a lot. To me this is what PRAC is all about. Thank you to everyone for making the workshop a success.

Lake Piru Ranger Attacked
by Chief Ranger Jack Withers

Ranger Tim Polk was locking the day use picnic area gates when he heard footsteps in the brush. Immediately after securing the gates, he felt something on his lower right leg and foot. Its was a raccoon grabbing his leg and trying to wrestle him to the ground!

Ranger Polk radioed for backup and drew his baton. He made several attempts to liberate the persistent 'coon from his leg but was unable to do so. He finally was forced to strike the attacker with his baton causing the raccoon to back away a safe distance.

When Ranger Chuy Rosales arrived on the scene to render assistance, he found both Ranger Polk (baton at the ready) and a very upset raccoon, glaring at each other. When the offending varmint noticed he was outnumbered, he turned tail and ran off in the direction of a nearby creekbed.

Upcoming Elections:
Officer Terms are up in 1998

Officer terms are up in 1998 for Pam Helmke President, Region 2 Director Ken Miller, and Region 5 Director Russ Hauk. A committee will be formed soon to solicit nominations but it is never too early to consider running for office.
From The President's Desk

May 11 through May 17 is Peace Officers Memorial Week, a time set aside to honor the men and women in law enforcement who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their communities. Across the nation law enforcement officers have held memorials, standing in remembrance of their fallen comrades. Uniformed officers and family members have gathered in front of monuments built to remind us of their service and sacrifice.

Although we don't speak of it often, we all recognize that we have chosen a dangerous profession. Park rangers—not much different than you or me—wearing their uniform with pride and sworn to protect our valued resources and the visitors we serve. Law enforcement contacts, wildfire, search and rescue, all hazards we face daily. As the guardians of our nation's most cherished public lands we knowingly accept these risks as part of our job. Over the years, dedicated rangers have died performing these duties. They have died as heroes, protecting and rescuing those in need.

I don't know of any monument built to honor these fallen guardians. Perhaps, some day, one will be built—a tribute to the courage of those who have gone before us. Until then I hope you will join me in a moment of silence to honor our fallen heroes. Spend some time in one of the natural cathedrals that can be found in our parks or open spaces. Remember them, honor them and continue to serve and protect in their memory.

in Remembrance

Ranger Ken Patrick, National Park Service, Pt. Reyes CA
Ranger Richard Schneur, California State Parks
Ranger Patricia Scully, California State Parks
Ranger George Kowatch III, California State Parks
Ranger Clayton Cutter, U.S. Forest Service, Mammoth Lakes CA
Ranger Robert L. McGhee Jr., National Park Service, Gulf Island, MS
Ranger Stanley Flynn Bucks Co. Dept. of Parks, PA
Ranger Robert Mahn, Jr., National Park Service, Yellowstone, WY
Ranger Ryan Welfman, National Park Service, Yellowstone, WY
Ranger Paul Pytel, San Antonio Parks, San Antonio, TX
Ranger Michael Beaulieu, National Park Service, Bryce Canyon, UT
Killed in the line of duty Aug. 5, 1973
Died in the line of duty Nov. 26, 1974
Died in the line of duty May 3, 1978
Died in the line of duty Nov. 2, 1987
Died in the line of duty Feb. 19, 1990
Killed in the line of duty May 26, 1990
Died in the line of duty June 9, 1993
Died in the line of duty Jan. 17, 1994
Died in the line of duty July 3, 1994
Died in the line of duty July 31, 1994
Died in the line of duty Aug. 26, 1996

Pam

San Jose Park Rangers Celebrate 25th Anniversary

by Ken Miller

The first San Jose Park Ranger, Max McClintock, was hired in 1972. Through the years the Ranger program has undergone many changes, but the one recurring theme has been people's dedication to their jobs. I was a San Jose Ranger before I started working for the Open Space District and was invited to celebrate the anniversary. The City Council recognized the Ranger Program's contributions to the City and issued certificates to all current and former Rangers for their contributions. Rick Pooler, the second San Jose Ranger, threw a bar-b-que for all of the past and present Rangers. I managed to get the time off and went to the BBQ. Boy did I have a good time. I got to meet people whom I'd only heard the legends about. I also got to see people whom I had worked with but hadn't seen in over five years. Yes, there was a PRAC connection as well. There was a slide show from the late 70's with the Rangers on a camping trip with their long sideburns and bell bottoms. There were a few PRAC t-shirts being worn in the pictures as well.

Reflecting on the whole thing I can't think of another line of work where you can throw an anniversary party and have people come from out of the wood work including out of state to attend. There is something special about our profession. We work long hours, in beautiful locations and with the ever challenging public.

Keep track of your Ranger Program's history and throw yourself an anniversary celebration. You deserve it and will have a great time!
Wood Duck Project A Success

By Sandy Ferreira

For the past few years, Niles Community Park in Fremont has sustained a small population of wood ducks. This park has an ideal riparian habitat with three large ponds, plenty of available food and an abundance of trees and cover for these birds. Last spring, a park visitor stopped by the Ranger station and wanted to do a volunteer project. Since he was a carpenter and an avid bird watcher, he wanted to build some kind of bird house that would benefit birds. Never one to miss an opportunity, we began our conversation about the benefits of wood duck nest boxes. He cheerfully agreed to provide the materials and labor for the nest boxes and our project was born. Our next step in the project evolved around our Junior Ranger Program. This week long environmental program is for kids 11-12 years old. As part of the bird program, I thought this would be great learning experience. The kids could assemble the nest boxes and they would learn about their nesting behavior, and know that the woodies would benefit by providing a home and protection for them. So the junior rangers built our first nest boxes. The third phase of the project was for staff to install the nest boxes in the right location. Ranger Matt Reynolds and I decided on which trees to use and installed eight nest boxes in late August of last year.

Normally, woodies will pair up by early spring and should start seeking out a suitable nest site. I must have walked around Niles Park a zillion times, but could not see any woodies and was wondering if we would ever get any to nest in our boxes. After doing several nest checks at the beginning of the season, I became a little discouraged. All that was using several of our nest boxes were tree squirrels. I had to remove the empty squirrels nests and recharge several of the boxes. Well, Early one April morning, I saw a Drake woodie resting at the end of the island very close to nest box number three. I figured if this Drake was hanging out here for several days there must be a hen close by. I called one of my regular park visitors who lives down the street from the park and told him about this Drake. I then asked him to keep a watchful eye.

After a few more days had passed he too confirmed my suspicions, the Drake was still there and it's time to do a box check. That week, I asked Ranger Matt Reynolds to inspect nest box number three. When he removed the lid, he was so surprised to see a hen sitting comfortably on a nest full of eggs. He did not want to disturb her, so he quickly took a few pictures but could not get an accurate count of how many eggs she had laid. He carefully replaced the lid and returned back to the Ranger station and called me. We agreed to check the box in a couple of days and collect our much needed data.

The following week we returned to inspect the nest and collect the data. When I removed the lid, I gently picked up the hen, I was so surprised to see the eggs had hatched and nine baby ducklings out often eggs were alive, some were beginning to cling to the sides of the nest box. It amazed me that they had so much strength and were only a few hours old! We took a few more pictures and I returned the hen back to her nest box. I knew that she would be leaving the nest box, within 24 hours with her babies and I began to calculate when that might be. The next morning during my out of park rounds, I returned with camera in hand to photograph this exciting event.

Just as I was arriving in the park, my friend ran to greet me. He told me I was too late! I missed the grand exodus but he was able to get some pictures.

What makes this project so rewarding is that all parties involved benefit and it's a win-win situation. The community benefits because they have provided a suitable nest site for the wood ducks and other wildlife who use these boxes. But more importantly, I can see the community taking a keen interest and developing a stewardship for their park. They want to preserve and protect the wildlife and their natural resources and it's our job to help them do so. Lastly, the benefits to wildlife. Nothing more is so beautiful and rewarding than to see the miracle of nature.
Ranger Questionnaire

At the International Ranger Federation (IRF) Ranger World Congress in Poland in 1995, we found that the backgrounds, activities and work conditions of rangers throughout the world are very different, making it difficult to define our profession.

I am doing an evaluation of ranger work at the world level in order to make conclusions and send them to the next congress in Costa Rica.

For this study, a ranger is defined as anyone who works in a private, state or national natural protected area, who lives in the protected area or very close to it, and who is in charge of watching and protecting the area (but also may have other functions).

I hope that the results will be useful for all guardians of nature. In a very special form, the results will be useful for me, as one of only three rangers in Uruguay. We hope to increase our numbers and undertake work similar to that of our colleagues working in national parks in other countries.

You have been selected as either a ranger or someone who has contact with a ranger in your county. If you are not a ranger or park guardian or park professional, please pass this questionnaire (see next page) on to one of them or, even better, make copies and pass them on to others.

Please send your responses to:

Juan Carlos Gambarotta
Guardaparque. Post Restante
Castillos, 27.200, Uruguay
Ranger Questionnaire

Name of Country ____________________________________________

Name of Protected Area _______________________________________

Name of Ranger (optional) ___________________________________

1. Please list the different functions you do at work:
   a) Do you think any function should not be done by a ranger? Which one(s)?
   b) Would you like to dedicate more time to any function? Which one(s)?

2. Do rangers in your country rotate periodically from one park to another?
   a) If so, do you think that rotation is good?

3. Do you patrol alone or in company?

4. Do you think that you risk your life in your job?

5. Do you use a gun?
   a) If so, does your employer provide you with one?

6. If you do not have a gun, would you feel more protected with one?

7. If you wound or kill someone in the course of your work, would you receive good support from the law?

8. Does your employer or state provide you with life insurance?

9. Do you have authority to do inspections and take guns from poachers without the help of police?

10. Do you think you make a good salary?

11. Are there clear regulations on what activities are permitted and what are prohibited in your protected area?

12. Do you think that you have received enough training?

13. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to add?

For more information about this survey or the International Ranger Federation, contact
M. G. "Mike" Lynch P.O. Box 3212 Auburn, CA 95604-3212
Phone: 916-885-9420 Fax: 916-885-9428 e-mail: lynch@psyber.com Work: 916-885-4527

Please send your responses to:
Juan Carlos Gambarotta, Guardapaque. Post Restante, Castillos, 27.200, Uruguay
The Color of the Uniform Doesn't Matter
by Russ Hauck

I remember my emotions four years ago when I heard that a ranger had been shot in Yosemite National Park. I didn't know Kim Aufhauser at the time, and consequently my emotions were not personal, but professional. I was angry—angry that my bosses didn't believe me when I said that a ranger faced the same risks as a police officer. My cries of “See, I told you so” continued to fall on deaf ears.

I remember my emotions last fall when I heard that a ranger had been shot in Sacramento County. I knew John Havicon and my emotions of shock and personal concern were quickly eased when I read that his vest had saved him and he only suffered “blunt trauma injuries.”

I shall never forget my emotions when I heard that a Glendale (the city I work for) Police Officer had been shot. I had to ask later about the details because when I heard the name, my thought process stopped functioning and I didn't hear another word. My anguish was immediate, my grief all-consuming, my sorrow overwhelming. Officer Charles Lazzaretto had been shot and killed.

I knew Chuck. I had attended a two day training with him, I talked with him on the phone about cases he was investigating for us, we exchanged pleasantries when we passed in the hall. Granted, I didn't know him as well as the men and women who worked with him every day, but I knew him and I liked him as did everyone who knew him. The news of his death hurt, and it hurt deeply. It still does.

I chose the title of this article, “The Color of the Uniform Doesn't Matter,” for two reasons. We often hear that “you're only a park ranger” and “you're not a real cop.” I'm here to tell you that “the color of the uniform doesn't matter” when something like this occurs. Grief knows no bounds. Just because I wear green instead of blue doesn't mean that I am not affected by a police officer being killed. Like it or not, we are all part of the law enforcement community and while it may not be “one of our own,” splitting hairs about job titles and jurisdictional boundaries just doesn't seem to matter.

The second reason I chose the title is because, as I alluded to in the opening two paragraphs, “the color of the uniform doesn't matter” when we are working in the field. Bullets are colorblind. Bad guys definitely don't care about job titles and jurisdictional boundaries. While our bosses may not agree (or more accurately probably aren't willing to admit it), we face the same dangers as every other law enforcement officer!!! Always, always, always think officer safety.

Sometimes though, that is not enough. Chuck did everything right. I have to wonder why his number was called. I wouldn't wish this kind of thing on my worst enemy, so please don’t misconstrue my remarks but, of all the jerks in the police department, why did it have to happen to such a nice guy? Chuck walked right out of a Norman Rockwell painting. It just goes to show you that some things are beyond our control and we have to believe that the Great Peace Officer in the sky had a more important assignment for Chuck.

Take pride in what you do and in the uniform that you wear. We are in a unique position to promote proper behavior through teaching and encouragement and still be able to act when improper behavior is displayed. By all means, be careful, stay safe, and go home at the end of each and every shift.

San Jose Rangers
Seek Information on
Automatic External Defibrillators

San Jose Park Rangers are currently researching the possibility of training their staff in the use of Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's) and placing the units in the service at our larger regional parks and aquatic facilities. We would be interested in hearing from any park agency that is currently using AED’s or is considering implementing a similar program.

Please send any information or comments to:

Pam Helmke, Park Ranger
Alum Rock Park
18240 Alum Rock Ave.
San Jose, CA 95127
FAX (408) 277-3241
Voice (408) 277-4539
I am getting ready for an exciting time. At least, I think it will be. Paul Romero, the Director of Santa Clara County Department of Parks and Recreation, and I, are going to team-teach a course this next fall at San Jose State. Not only that, but it is a course that sounds very exciting to teach. The title of the course is: "Recreation, Ecotourism in a Sustained Future." It is a course on the impacts of recreation and ecotourism on the environment. Wow! We both think that we can really sink our teeth into this one, as we both are heavy into resource management and environmental impact. I also look forward to working with Paul. It should be a great fall semester.

Because of this course, we have been looking for texts. Well, I have been looking for a text. Paul is very busy being Director. Smitty is retired... Well, sort of, anyway. Turning to my, now favorite method if discovery, the WWW, I found what looked to be the text we were looking for. A quick phone call and Airborne Express brought the book to my door in very short order. It is titled, *Tourism, Ecotourism, and Protected Areas*. The author is Hector Ceballos-Lascurian. Hector is a consultant to IUCN-World Conservation Union. The book is a series of publications issued by ICUN, following the IV World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas held in Caracas Venezuela, in February, 1992, and is basically some of the papers presented in two tourism workshops there. The book is planned as both a practical handbook and as a reference source for a variety of readers.

After a short introduction, the book attacks tourism and the environment and the values of ecotourism to the economy. The third chapter deals with the negative impacts of tourism and ecotourism including geology, water, vegetation, wildlife, sanitation systems, and even cultural environment. It suggests a several methods of creating a tourism management strategy, including key elements of a management plan.

A further chapter deals with carrying capacity, environmental impact assessments, and limits of acceptable change. In fact, the book attempts to become objective when figuring carrying capacity for a protected area. In the back of the book is an actual formula for figuring an areas carrying capacity. I haven't tried it yet, but believe me I will. It might not be a bad book to have on your shelf. At thirty dollars, the price is almost right.


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Many of our parks and open space include wetlands, streams, ponds and lakes. As night falls, these areas skies are taken over by mosquitoes. Although pests to us, mosquitoes are a very important part of the natural life cycle. The mosquitoes bite is generally an irritation to most of us, but it is important to know that some mosquitoes can harbor very serious viruses such as Encephalitis and Malaria.

Encephalitis, also called sleeping sickness, is a virus that can cause inflammation of the brain. Generally the symptoms are flu-like lasting 5 to 10 days, but in some cases, the virus can lead to more serious ailments of mental retardation, motor impairments and even death. Most cases involve either infants or the elderly. Mosquitoes become infected by feeding on small birds, (the House Finch and House Sparrow), that harbor the virus.

Malaria is not as prevalent in California as encephalitis. Malaria is a single celled parasite that attacks red blood cells. Malaria also has flu-like symptoms which reoccurs every 2 to 3 days. This parasite can cause liver and kidney damage or death. The host for malaria is infected humans which is passed on by the mosquito to others.

There are forty-nine known species of mosquitoes in California. Four of these are known carriers for Encephalitis and Malaria, the Encephalitis mosquito, the Western Malaria mosquito, the Wetlands mosquito, and the Woodland Malaria mosquito. I have never bothered to try and identified any of them as they are pretty much unidentifiable after I have met with them.

Protection from mosquito bites
Prevention is always the best way to protect yourselves. In our job, it would be impossible to avoid the areas where the mosquitoes inhabit. Some of the things that we can do is:

- Try to avoid the areas during the peak feeding periods, (1 to 2 hours after dark)
- Wear long pants and sleeves
- Apply insect repellent

For heavily infested areas, your local mosquito abatement agency may be able to help in reducing the population using biological and chemical controls.

This information was provided by the California Vector control. If you would like any additional information or brochures please contact me (John Havicon) at 916-875-6672.
# PARK RANGERS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

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## Membership Application

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Phone  
Home | Work

Employer or School  

Job Classification or Major  

**Voting Membership**
Regular $35

**Non-voting Membership**
Agency:  
(1-25 persons—6 mailings) $75  
(>25 persons—12 mailings) $100

Student $15

Associate $35

Supporting $100

The *Signpost* is published by the Park Rangers Association of California (PRAC). The Association mailing address is P.O. Box 292010, Sacramento, CA, 95829. 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.

**Contact Information:**  
DavidB8480@aol.com

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