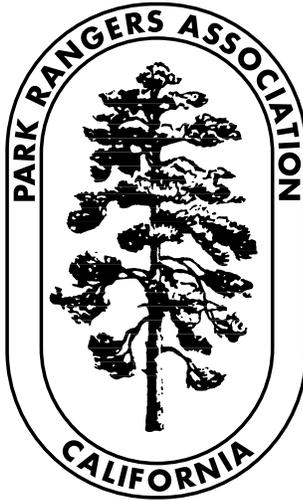


The Signpost

November - December, 2008



Ranger Cookies

by Marie D. Fong

(Along with Washoe County Ranger's: Rochelle Pope, John Keese, Loring Larsen, Jerry Buzzard, and Bryan Harrower)

With the holidays upon us, now is the time to start baking. How better to impress other rangers, especially those you owe favors to, than with a plateful of Ranger Cookies. While this historic cookie recipe has no formal links to Park Rangers, you will know these are truly Ranger cookies if, as you hand these delicious treats over you are compelled by your inner Ranger to:

- Demonstrate how you used the park's historic butter churner to create the butter from the milk you got from those cows that are grazing over on the BLM's range.
- Brag about how you harvested the oatmeal from the back forty of your historic farm using only hand tools from the 1800's, while wearing appropriate costuming you wove and sewed yourself during a program.
- Enlighten them as to how you baked these cookies in multiple batches: on a fire line, in a solar oven, on the trucks engine while patrolling, and in that salvaged dump site oven you also use occasionally to sterilize owl pellets.
- Tell them that thanks to your last "mandatory" training you have written an evaluation of the impact and consequences of your cooking performance and actions resulting in a final product to present at next supervisors meeting for final commission approval, even though you have no idea what this means.
- Explain how you harvested the eggs from a recently abandoned nest.
- Prove to them that through recent massive budget cuts you have so finely honed your begging skills, that you were able to secure over half the items as donations from your local grocer.
- Talk for at least 15 minutes about the history of wheat and flour processing in the United States starting with the first Native American tribes, through the Mayflower landing, into the Great Depression, through today, with some side notes on organic farming and the downfalls of GMO's.
- Talk about the social (and fiscal) implications of using Hershey's chocolate chips and Macadamia nuts versus refined rabbit droppings and acorns from a squirrel's cache.
- Proclaim humbly that you rounded up enough volunteers to bake 30 dozen cookies, using their own supplies and tools, at their own homes.

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 cups rolled oats
- 2 cups crisp rice cereal
- 1 cup flaked coconut

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (190 degrees C). Cream butter, add sugar gradually. Add eggs and vanilla; beat until light and fluffy. Sift flour, baking soda, salt, and baking powder together and mix with the first mixture. Add oatmeal, rice cereal, and coconut, and then mix well. Drop by tablespoons on slightly greased cookie sheet and bake for 12 minutes.

These are also great with chocolate chips, but be prepared to lecture extensively on the many ways chocolate is in integral part of the history of your area, as well doubling as a survival tool for the greatest naturalists around.

Hurricane Tour 2008

by Jeff Ohlfs (Joshua Tree National Park)

Three strikes you're out were not in the cards for the first National Park Service (NPS) Hurricane Chaser Armada.

In 2007, Congress amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act in response to Hurricane Katrina. The Act charged the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with coordinating Federal interagency support for a Federal response to a local request for assistance upon Federal Declarations of Emergencies. To implement this, FEMA created 15 Emergency Support Function (ESF) roles and responsibilities to group the most frequently requested areas of support. The U.S. Department of the Interior (NPS) is tasked as a Primary Agency for ESF #9 (Search and Rescue) and a Support Agency for ESF #13 (Public Safety and Security). The NPS developed procedures to implement future FEMA requests. In addition, a "Grey Card" system was established similar to fire's "Red Card" system to provide a ready database of All-Risk ICS trained positions.

In September 2008, FEMA issued its first ever request to DOI for assembling a SAR small boat strike team under ESF-9; the USGS, FWS, and NPS mobilized response personnel in Texas. Ultimately, the response culminated in 57 NPS employees from 21 NPS units being sent on "Hurricane Tour 2008" to ten states with 33 vehicles traveling 5,300 miles pulling 23 boat trailers over 21 days. I was dispatched as the team's Safety Officer and would also be tasked as the team's Finance and Logistics Officer.

The team assembled in Texas with boats traveling from Fire Island (New York), Voyageurs (Minnesota), Grand Canyon (Arizona), and parks everywhere in between. The team's first task was to pick up and make ready an additional dozen flat bottom boats FEMA had purchased after Hurricane Katrina and stored them at Caswell Air Force Base, Texas. These boats were now the property of the NPS. The team first staged in Texarkana, Texas, as Hurricane Gustav pounded the region. With no requests from local authorities, FEMA moved the team to Columbia, South Carolina, via Arkansas and Tennessee to stage for Hurricane Hanna.

In route, the team was diverted to stage in Atlanta, Georgia. While waiting for Hanna, Chattahoochee National Recreation Area hosted the Armada for a water training day. This was a valuable day for employees and boats that had never worked together to practice and make sure all our equipment was working. The park also asked the team to search for an exotic invasive water plant recently discovered. Our training day attracted many locals who came out to inquire how the park had so many new boats and "rangers", even attracting a news helicopter. As Hanna passed up the East Coast, Josephine and Ike were brewing out in the Atlantic.

FEMA decided to move the team (now supporting three Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) Teams from California and Ohio) to Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama. Here, the Army Corps of Engineers' "Cooters Pond" hosted another training day for the USAR teams to bring their members and search dogs aboard our boats and coordinate operational efficiency. As Ike approached, the Texas Gulf Coast appeared to be where landfall would be made. So after chasing hurricanes Gustav and Hanna and a potential for Josephine, the "Armada" finally met Ike. The last time there were four named systems present on the same day was on August 24, 1999.

We arrived in Houston, Texas, to be staged at the Reliant Center (formerly the Astrodome). All equipment was to be sheltered in place inside the massive Convention Center. Two by two, like Noah's Ark, FEMA semi-trailers with emergency provisions, USAR team transports, NPS boats, emergency communication vehicles, fire department equipment, ambulances, and National Guard units were herded inside the facility. Our team was divided into four squads. The first squad slept/rode out the hurricane with their boats in the Center ready for immediate response. The remainder of the team was quartered at the Holiday Inn next door. As Ike walloped a punch to Galveston and coastal Texas, the team spent a blacked out night while 110 MPH winds rocked their accommodations sending some people to sleep in the corridors.

As morning broke, the "Armada's" four squads were assigned to massive task force convoys with USAR teams, ambulances, and National Guard units which headed for Louisiana, Galveston, Beaumont, and Port Arthur. The team participated in SAR operations, force protection missions, and a special mission to assess damage at Big Thicket National Preserve. Team members experienced the devastation and destruction from Ike first hand. Logistics of support and supplies left many forward deployed team members feeling like they were evacuees themselves. Hazards included contaminated surge waters, downed power lines, moccasin snakes, and alligators. The "Armada" was touted in USA Today On-line rescuing a boat (which happened to be the reporters) as "handpicked" (yeah, those that raised their hands were picked) members of the NPS!

After four days of deployment in the field, the team's final mission was to winterize the "Armada" at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Texas, in an old Army bunker ready for next year's adventure. For all this, the team's safety record was exceptional, no accidents and only a minor heat exposure. FEMA and the Washington Office were pleased with our mobilizations, travels, and accomplishments. As the first group of NPS employees called to support ESF #9, agency history was made and hopefully some proud precedents were set for future activations.

PRAC's Newest Resource: The Program Library

by Marie D. Fong

In an ongoing effort to better serve our members and provide valuable resources, PRAC is currently creating a program library that will be available to all members to access via the website. We are currently in the process of gathering these programs from our members and other interpreters willing to share their greatest tips and hints.

We are looking for programs of all styles, long and short, hikes and slideshows, ages 0-whatever. If you are interested in adding your program to the library, please e-mail, fax, mail, or call Marie D. Fong or Brian Christensen at region6@calranger.org or region2@calranger.org.

District Park Rangers Have Peace Officer Powers of Arrest Statewide as to Any Public Offense Where there is Immediate Danger to Person or Property

by Matt Cerkel

I recent found this article on park ranger authority in Liebert Cassidy Whitmore's August 2008 "Client Update." I believe this AG opinion was from a case involving the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District wanting to clarify park ranger peace officer authority. This is an important ruling with statewide implications.

"A regional open space district is a local government agency that operates parks and open space preserves for public use and recreation. These districts employ police forces to protect and control its properties. The park rangers perform duties such as patrolling and protecting the peace within park areas, investigating violations of laws and enforcing laws within park areas; and assisting in parking enforcement, lifeguard services, and emergency medical responses within park areas as needed. One of these districts asked the Attorney General for an opinion as to whether a park ranger has authority to exercise peace officer powers for purposes of violations of law that occur outside the jurisdictional boundaries of the district. The Attorney General opined that park rangers who are regularly employed and paid in that capacity as part of the district's police force have peace officer powers anywhere in the state, either for the purpose of performing his or her primary duty or when making an arrest as to any public offense with respect to which there is immediate danger to person or property, or of the escape of the perpetrator of that offense."

Penal Code section 830.31(b) extends statewide peace officer authority to park rangers for specified purposes. Public Resources Code section 5561 gives a district's offi-

cers peace officer powers within the district for which they are appointed or employed. In reconciling the two statutes, the Attorney General found that the statutes create a class of peace officers whose primary duty is law enforcement in and around regional parks and open spaces, but who nevertheless possess authority to enforce the law statewide. But the park rangers' statewide authority is only for the purpose of performing their primary duty or when making an arrest as to any public offense with respect to which there is immediate danger to person or property, or of the escape of the perpetrator of that offense.

The statewide authority is not limited to felonies. It includes misdemeanors or infractions that pose an immediate danger to persons or property, such as traffic offenses. Likewise, with respect to preventing the escape of a perpetrator of an offense that presents an immediate danger to person or property, because of their mobile and fleeting nature, traffic offenses are a familiar occasion for exercising such authority.

In addition, a park ranger also has citation powers. Thus, a park ranger has authority to issue a citation for a violation of state law or local ordinance occurring outside the district, either for the purpose of performing the park ranger's primary duty, or when the offense presents an immediate danger to person or property, or of the escape of the perpetrator of that offense."

Attorney General Opinion No. 07-302, __

Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. __; 2008 WL 2589171 (June 26, 2008).

Save the City Of Oakland Park Rangers

by Matt Cerkel

Once again, another agency is undermining their rangers. This time the Oakland Police Department and the mayor of Oakland are trying to eliminate the OPD's Park Ranger Unit. They claim eliminating Rangers will not have a negative effect on the parks and the OPD seems to think they will be able to handle calls for service, but has stated it will not do a majority of "Ranger" duties! Rangers are far more effective park law enforcement then traditional law enforcement officers. An Oakland ranger stated on the PLEA discussion board recently "We have more crime in our parks than most small suburban cities."

The OPD's Park Rangers all are graduates of the OPD Academy. According to the OPD's own webpage, "the mission of the Oakland Park Rangers is to improve the quality and safety of the parks in Oakland for the enjoyment of the community and to serve as a resource for park patrons. The Rangers accomplish their mission by providing professional, courteous, and competent service and by employing creative and ethical crime-prevention and problem-solving practices. Oakland's ten Park Rangers are responsible for patrolling 174 parks and recreation centers. They use vehicles, bicycles, and dual-purpose motorcycles to accomplish their duties. The Rangers play a large role in maintaining a safe environment for children to enjoy the parks. Children are able to walk safely on trails,

swim, and learn about the environment from the many volunteers who assist in these programs...The Rangers exemplify what Community Policing is all about, working with volunteers together on a variety of issues to promote a safe environment in Oakland's recreation centers and to maintain the sanctity and tranquility of Oakland's parks." The Oakland Ranger program is over 60 years old, with all the crime problems in Oakland, it should view it's rangers as an asset and expand the program, not eliminate it.

According to the OPRA, "The City of Oakland is again attempting to eliminate the Park Ranger Unit. They are planning to replace the Ranger Unit, which is funded by the general fund with Problem Solving Officers who are funded by Measure Y funds or other Police Officers with other duties. Replacing Rangers with Police Officers will reduce the availability of the Police Department to reduce crime in other areas.

Police Officers will not perform the all duties of the Rangers. Rangers perform many functions that Police Officers do not do Police Officers will just respond to calls in the park, many times hours after the calls are received.

For more information, the Oakland Park Rangers Association (OPRA) has set up a webpage at <http://www.savetherangers.org>

Park Service seeks to reach changing population

Monday July 7, 8:38 am ET , The Associated Press

by Vicki Smith, Associated Press Writer

HARPERS FERRY, W.Va. (AP)—She'd spent a lifetime less than an hour's drive away, but it had never crossed Joquetta Johnson's mind to visit Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. What, she wondered when a friend suggested it, could a park in rural, lily-white West Virginia hold for a black teacher from Baltimore?

More than she could have imagined.

She found herself enthralled by the place where white abolitionist John Brown tried to start a slave uprising, the place where the Niagara Movement, forerunner of the NAACP, first met on U.S. soil. It is the home of Storer College, which began educating newly freed slaves in 1865, the 40-year-old library media specialist at Milford Mill Academy learned.

Yet Johnson, like many people of color, hadn't gotten the message that the National Park Service admits it's struggling to deliver.

"We do not reflect the changing face of America," said David Barna, a park service spokesman in Washington. "The national parks are still a middle-class Caucasian visit, primarily."

The agency has been working for years to change that, an effort that is taking on a sense of urgency with the browning of America.

From Florida to California, the Park Service has brought minority children from cities to places they've never seen, hoping they will return with their parents. To make its staff more reflective, it has begun recruiting high school students for summer jobs that can be the springboard to a career.

And it looks for ways to make historical exhibits like those at Gettysburg National Military Park more relevant, refocusing on the role of slavery in the Civil War rather than battle strategy.

"We need to get beyond the 'Field of Dreams' notion, 'OK, we've built it and they will come.' They may come and they may not," said Harpers Ferry spokeswoman Marsha Wassel. "But we know for certain that when people have an understanding of something, they can reach a greater degree of caring. They can become stewards. They can help fight for us."

Surveys have found Hispanics and blacks are far less likely to visit the parks and far more likely to describe them as uncomfortable places. It's a problem of relevancy that, if left uncorrected, may lead to a day when taxpayers will decide they no longer value and are unwilling to fund preservation of the nation's historical and natural treasures, Barna says.

That's a real fear for an agency with a \$100 million wish-list for land purchases in fiscal 2009 alone, an agency that once saw a park-closure bill floated in Congress.

While there are sites that reflect the stories of black and Native Americans, the Park Service has done what Barna calls "an appalling job" of celebrating Hispanic Americans. Nor does it offer much to Asian Americans.

There is Manzanar, a Japanese internment camp in California. There is Utah's Golden Spike, a symbol of Chinese laborers, many of whom died building the nation's railroads. Neither is much to celebrate.

Last fall, the Park Service dedicated New York's African Burial Ground, a site in lower Manhattan where free blacks and slaves were buried more than two centuries ago. The project cost more than \$50 million.

The Park Service is prohibited from buying advertising, forcing it to rely on word of mouth, media coverage, outreach through schools and advertising done by concessionaires within or near the parks.

Even with such marketing roadblocks, breaking down cultural and psychological barriers is a tougher challenge, said James Gramman, chief social scientist for the Park Service and part-time professor at Texas A&M.

"If your parents don't go to parks, you're not going to go to parks," he said. "I grew up in Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest, and my family took me. But if you live in the inner city and you're surprised to see grass, a national park can be a very foreign thing."

When rangers at Cuyahoga Valley National Park near Akron, Ohio, visit schoolchildren, they get questions about lions, tigers and bears.

"Some people are startled by butterflies," Gramman said. "It's not like that can't be overcome, but if you don't do something, it will persist and it won't be overcome for generations."

At Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve in Jacksonville, Fla., Brian Loadholtz and staff also had to overcome long-standing skepticism of the federal government and its offers of aid in minority communities. With help, they were able to convince parents to let children tour a former plantation with slave quarters, then learn to kayak within sight of an ocean they seldom visit.

Loadholtz, chief of resource education, worked with leaders of a subsidized housing community to arrange permission and transportation for last year's pilot project. Afterward, he offered vouchers so the kids could return with their families for free.

"Disappointingly," he said, "none of them were claimed."

At Santa Monica Mountain National Recreation Area in California, where some 200 languages are spoken within 50 miles, educational programs reach 12,000 children a year, some so popular they have a two-year waiting list, spokesman Charles Taylor says.

(Story continues on page 5.)

Member Password Access PRACnet and Website Issues

by Jeff Price, PRACnet Moderator and PRAC Webmaster

Many members have become aware of the superb membership discount offer with PRAC by signing up for multi-year membership dues on renewal. According to our Executive Manager, Betsy Anderson, 47 members have paid beyond the standard 1-year membership.

Currently, PRAC membership features a selection between 1-year for \$50, 3-years for \$110 and a 5-year membership for \$175. At this time we have PRAC members who are already paid through 2012!

Our "Members Only" website password management feature has not taken this option into consideration. Currently, we update the password only once per year, but we always allow a big overlap, due to the time it takes to send in renewal checks, print and mail out new cards. The passwords are printed right on your membership renewal card. If you are reading this and have not received the 2008 access password for PRAC's Members Only area or been subscribed to PRACnet, drop a note to us at webmaster@calranger.org, and we'll get you in the system.

We are currently looking at establishing multi-year passwords for paid members with various terms, one through five years ahead, so that you stay connected. We will also ask the Board to consider authorizing an online membership renewal, which is currently possible with our Internet Service Provider. If any of you would be interested in the convenience of paying online with a credit card (via a PayPal account), rather than mailing a check, contact your Regional Director <http://www.calranger.org> and let them know your opinions.

Personally, as a retired member, I will encourage my Regional Director to examine the entire membership dues structure, and maybe consider giving retirees the same multi-year break as regular members who renew longer than 1-year. Currently 5-year regular renewals pay exactly the same \$35 as regular retired members. Hey, there has to be some advantage to getting older other than 50-cent coffee at McDonalds!

Your PRAC Board wants members to have uninterrupted access to the special, exclusive, members-only information, professional training and career opportunity posted on the PRAC website. So, do not hesitate to write or call your Regional Director if you have opinions, questions or concerns regarding membership issues.



Park Service seeks to reach changing population

(Story continues from page 4.)

Santa Monica also targets teens, particularly Hispanics, for summer jobs that show there are environmental science careers beyond farming.

That program changed the life of 25-year-old Fernando Villalba, who was considering a law career until the environmental science club at Wilson High School in East Los Angeles traveled to Yellowstone National Park.

"Up until then, my entire life experience had been in the city," said Villalba, now a biologist at Fire Island National Seashore in New York. "I had never seen anything green but little lawns in tiny parks."

That summer, he spent six weeks pulling weeds and studying reptiles at Santa Monica. By fall, he was at college studying wildlife biology, his family laughingly comparing

him to crocodile hunter Steve Irwin. On summer breaks, he worked at Utah's Zion National Park.

This fall, Villalba will enroll at the University of California-Davis to study ethno-ecology, or how different cultures perceive themselves in the environment, and transfer to a job at Point Reyes National Seashore.

"Just give it a try," he urges those wary of the open spaces. "Go to Yellowstone or Yosemite and experience the power of nature, not just in a physical sense, but a spiritual sense ... see why we need to protect and preserve."

And if Yellowstone's a bit daunting, start with a local park.

"Just get out there and go for a walk."

~Submitted by Marie D. Fong

"The sun, with all those planets revolving around it and dependent on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the universe to do."

Galileo galilei, physicist, mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher

**Park Rangers Association of California
Board Officers 2008**

President

DAVE Updike
(310) 858-7272 EXT. 123
FAX: (310) 858-7212
E-Mail: president@CalRanger.org

Region 1 Director

MATT CERKEL
(415) 609-3863
FAX: (415) 945-1171
E-Mail: region1@CalRanger.org

Region 2 Director

BRIAN CHRISTIANSEN
Cell: (408) 307-7533
E-Mail: region2@CalRanger.org

Region 3 Director

DAVID MOSKAT
(916) 875-6672
Cell: (916) 342-0105
E-Mail: region3@CalRanger.org

Region 4 Director

DAVE STERLING
(562) 570-1765
FAX: (562) 570-1134
E-Mail: region4@CalRanger.org

Region 5 Director

SARA GIRARD
(949) 923-2252
FAX: (949) 509-6685
E-Mail: region5@CalRanger.org

Region 6 Director

MARIE D. FONG
Cell: (775) 813-3629
FAX: (775) 828-6614
E-Mail: region6@CalRanger.org

Past President

LEE HICKINBOTHAM JR
(408) 483-0174
FAX: (408) 354-8623
E-Mail: pastpresident@CalRanger.org

The Signpost Editor

DAVID BROOKS
(831) 336-2948
FAX: (831) 335-1178
E-Mail: newsletter@CalRanger.org

Scholarship

BILL HENDRICKS
(805) 756-1246
FAX: (805) 756-1402

Executive Manager

BETSY ANDERSON
(707) 884-3949
FAX: (707) 884-1945
E-Mail: office@CalRanger.org

WebMaster

JEFF PRICE
(805) 278-9201
E-Mail: webmaster@CalRanger.org

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STUDENT.....\$20 _____
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Park Rangers Association of California
P.O. Box 153, STEWARTS POINT, CA 95480

Park Rangers Association of California
P. O. Box 153
STEWARTS POINT, CA 95480-0153

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