

The Protection Ranger



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The Newsletter of the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police

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Nominations For Lodge Offices

To date, we have not received enough nominations to hold elections this coming February. In my view, the Lodge needs an infusion of new members and ideas on to the executive board. Please consider standing for Lodge office. The Ranger Lodge is only as strong as the participation of the members. Remember that Active Retired Members are eligible for Lodge office.

President's Message

Lodge President Greg Johnston is on emergency duty along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. He is too busy to write his customary President's Report but wants to relay the information that there was no loss of NPS life but much of the parks' infrastructure is in ruins.

Inside This Issue:

Priorities	2
News from the NPS-FLETC	3
Sholly Addresses Ranger Priorities	2
Making Claims for Damages	6
When Do You Need a Laywer ...	6

Letter To DOJ

August 28, 2005

U.S. Department of Justice
United States Parole Commission
5550 Friendship Boulevard
Chevy Chase, MD 20815-7201

Chairman Edward F. Reilly, Jr.,
Commissioner Cranston J. Mitchell,
Commissioner Deborah A. Spagnoli,
Commissioner Patricia K. Cushwa,
Commissioner Isaac Fulwood, Jr.,

I am writing in regards Federal prisoner Veronza Bowers (35316-136). As President of the U.S. Park Ranger Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police, I am requesting that the U.S. Parole Commission not allow Mr. Bowers released on parole. He still poses a danger on society and his overall prison record and activities show the true nature of Mr. Bowers. The evidence sufficient to stop the release Mr. Bowers is present and already in your possession. Additionally, he was convicted for Murder with a life sentence, and a life sentence is what he should serve.

Mr. Bowers' more recent attempts at good behavior are laudable, possibly worthy of additional privileges, but not the disregard of his prior atrocious crimes and criminal tendencies. A good prisoner does not qualify a good citizen in this society; a society that Bowers, when last free, participated in and even led others in the subversion of. Bowers has not denounced the politics of his past life, a life where he participated in and was a leader of a domestic terror organization. Bowers has

not accounted for his brutal murder of Park Ranger Kenneth Patrick. Bowers has not shown remorse for a crime that affected the lives of many. Bowers cannot atone for this felonious murder, the specific reason that the Federal Judge sentenced him to life in prison. His sentence was not one of rehabilitation; it was one of punishment.

I am confident that you will make the appropriate determination to deny the release of Mr. Bowers under the authority granted to you in 18 U.S.C. 4206 (d.). While considering the loss endured by victims in the case, the brutality of the crime, and Mr. Bowers overall conduct prior to and during incarceration; the evidence is sufficient to deny release. His escape attempt alone should suffice to meet one of the stand-alone disqualifying elements in regards to seriously violation institution rules and regulations. Escape or attempted escape is one of the most serious of prison violations.

(d) Any prisoner, serving a sentence of five years or longer, who is not earlier released under this section or any other applicable provision of law, shall be

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agencies.**

released on parole after having served two-thirds of each consecutive term or terms, or after serving thirty years of each consecutive term or terms of more than forty-five years including any life term, whichever is earlier: Provided, however, That the Commission shall not release such prisoner if it determines that he has seriously or frequently violated institution rules and regulations or that there is a reasonable probability that he will commit any Federal, State, or local crime.

In the earlier cases where Mr. Bowers was nearly released, I did not heard the conditions of his release on parole as required by 18 U.S.C. 4206 (d.):

(d) Any prisoner, serving a sentence of five years or longer, who is not earlier released under this section or any other applicable provision of law, shall be released on parole after having served two-thirds of each consecutive term or terms, or after serving thirty years of each consecutive term or terms of more than forty-five years including any life term, whichever is earlier: Provided, however, That the Commission shall not release such prisoner if it determines that he has seriously or frequently violated institution rules and regulations or that there is a reasonable probability that he will commit any Federal, State, or local crime.

I would ask, if in the unfortunate event that you determine to release Mr. Bowers, that careful consideration is given to the conditions of his parole in order to protect the victims in this case. From the beginning, that has been my primary concern. Mr. Bowers has previously attempted to contact the family members and this violation of his incarceration and apparent intimidation of Ranger Kenneth Patrick's family shows his interest in retaliation for his punishment.

Additionally, based on 18 United States Code Section 4210 (a) (text of this law below), if released I would request that Mr. Bowers remain in the legal custody and under the control of the Attorney General until the expiration of the maximum term for which he was

sentenced, in this case for the remainder of his life. This will be the only way to ensure that the victim's families and our society will be protected and safe from Mr. Bowers.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 7303(c)(1), (2) of Pub. L. 100-690 applicable with respect to persons whose probation, supervised release, or parole begins after Dec. 31, 1988, see section 7303(d) of Pub. L. 100-690, set out as a note under section 3563 of this title.

Sec. 4210. Jurisdiction of Commission

(a) A parolee shall remain in the legal custody and under the control of the Attorney General, until the expiration of the maximum term or terms for which such parolee was sentenced.

I appreciate your consideration of my letter and I hope that I have provided additional information to consider regarding the denial of release of Veronza Bowers Jr. I would ask that each of you remember U.S. National Park Ranger Kenneth Patrick while you are deliberating, a man on the front line who gave the ultimate sacrifice while doing his duty to protect our society as you do your duty to protect us from violent criminals like Veronza Bowers.

Sincerely,

Greg A. Johnston
President,
U.S. Park Rangers Lodge VA#60
Fraternal Order of Police

Priorities

The people who work in the WASO Ranger Activities Division were kind enough to ask the Lodge what our priorities are for the near future are and we responded with these items:

- [1] Get rangers' 6[c] coverage written into federal law
- [2] Do not allow any ranger to work in any park, or any portion of a park,

without reliable radio communications with a park dispatcher or equivalent. As an interim, supply rangers in these situations with Global Positioning Devices, satellite phones, etc, to ensure communications

[3] Immediately begin hiring commissioned park rangers to bring the total of field personnel up to 2000 officers. This is needed to ensure proper backup and safety on patrol and was the #1 priority of the Hon Earl Devaney.

[4] Create a professional chain of command for park rangers like the USPP has and 99% of other local, state and federal agencies have.

[5] Create a separate budget for law enforcement.

Our thoughts behind these are as follows:

[1] DOI in the guise of FLERT is picking off our 6[c] coverage one by one. This is creating situations where rangers doing the exact same job working in the same park are finding some covered and some not.

This is both morale busting and nonsensical. The NPS commissioned rangers are nearly alone in having 6[c] coverage [sort of] but not having it guaranteed by federal law. The list of horror stories to our members grows daily.

We find, for example, rangers who met the original September 30, 1989, deadline having to wait until 2004 to hear from FLERT and then have his/her entire career denied. We have a case where a ranger worked his entire career in the same park and in 1994 went into a covered position and then have had FLERT deny his whole career. We are hearing of more than one case where a ranger at Lake Mead is denied coverage for that period of his career. The list goes on and each and every one is an outrage. Fortunately, most NPS managers that deal with ranger issues are supportive but the director won't answer our recent letter and has not endorsed putting our 6[c] into

law.

[2] Too many rangers have to work in parks or areas of parks, without reliable radio communications. This is not tolerable. We know that infrastructure like this takes time but we absolutely need a start to be made now. As a stop gap rangers in these situations need to be provided with satellite phones and global positioning devices and/or whatever else it takes to be able to communicate with a professional dispatcher. Look at the recent ranger deaths and you'll see that several occurred in areas with poor radio communications. This is a basic safety issue that should cause diversion of funds from other NPS programs to immediately address.

[3] The Hon Earl Devaney, Inspector General of the Department of Interior said, both in his written report and his testimony before Congress, that his most immediate priority for the National Park Service was to have the agency hire more commissioned park rangers to ensure the safety of those already on the job.

Mr Devaney basically called for a crash hiring program because too many rangers were, and are, without adequate backup on a routine basis.

No other large law enforcement agency would tolerate this unsafe condition for its officers.

Yet, after three years we find that in most cases, rangers are still doing solo patrols without the potential for timely backup. A few parks that got a lot of press coverage are better staffed; many parks who did not make the evening news or a paper with national clout have had their staff numbers cut. Valley Forge, for only one example, has seen its staff cut almost in half in recent years.

Where is the large scale hiring? Where is the NPS plan aimed at retaining those commissioned rangers in the prime years of their careers? Which are the parks that have backup available within minutes twenty four hours a day for three hundred

sixty five days per year? It sure is not in the parks that have sidelined commissioned rangers on nights, Sundays, and holidays to save a pittance while leaving these parks without any commissioned personnel on duty. Is this a professional law enforcement program? I, for one, say No it is not and the Ranger Lodge is joined by several very professional studies that say the same thing. Or maybe they don't say that because heretofore no superintendent was ignorant enough to deliberately leave his or her park totally unprotected for periods of twenty four hours and more.

Mr Devaney deserves to be taken seriously and heeded; and, the study done by Northern Arizona University needs to be taken seriously and heeded. Our lives are on the line in the best of circumstances but solo patrols, little timely backup, and intermittently functioning radios are intolerable.

[4] This is a non-negotiable item for the Lodge. It's anti-professional to have non law enforcement managers present in the chain of command. The IG says so, the other studies say so and 99% of local, state and federal agencies adopt a law-enforcement-only staffing structure.

As Mr Devaney says the two week FLETC law enforcement course for managers just doesn't cut it: You either are a career law enforcement professional or you're not and if you're not, you don't have any business running a LE division.

We have quite a few superintendents who have been promoted into their jobs and that's what we support. We've never said that all superintendents should follow this career path but if the agency does not adopt the standard world wide model, then perhaps we should.

The lives of rangers and the protection of the park resources are at stake: It's not a game, it's serious business. We want pros, not amateurs!

Having a separate budget for law enforcement is so logical that it's difficult to see any good administrative reason for

not having it. There are good siphoning off reasons however and I think that's why we don't yet have our own budget. When regional directors and superintendents can get their lunch hooks on money intended for law enforcement and use it for all manner of non-LE purposes, then they are going to resist the change. And, that appears to be the only reason why we don't have a LE budget line.

This issue goes hand in hand with a professional staffing structure and is a protection issue just like proper training and equipment and supervision is.

News from the NPS-FLETC

The National Park Service Law Enforcement Training Center (NPS-FLETC) is located within the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Georgia. Superintendent Don Usher is the National Park Service (NPS) representative to the FLETC, and acts on behalf of the NPS for all law enforcement matters that involve training at the FLETC and in the field. The NPS-FLETC is a division within the office of the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection (VRP), WASO.

The staff at the NPS-FLETC is comprised of three program managers: Basic Program and Seasonal Academies, Advanced Programs and the Field Training and Evaluation Program. There is also an Administrative Officer, Contracting Officer, Office Automation Technician and SCEP Office Assistant. The NPS-FLETC is also responsible for providing detailed instructional staff to the FLETC, and there are currently eight detailed instructor positions being occupied or funded within the FLETC training divisions. Finally, there are two employees of the Chief, Law Enforcement and Emergency Services, WASO, who are detailed to the NPS-FLETC and support the National Firearms and Law Enforcement Credential Programs.

The primary mission of the NPS-FLETC

is to coordinate the basic training of law enforcement Rangers and Criminal Investigators. Each of these disciplines mandate specific FLETC basic programs as a foundation of the law enforcement competencies.

The order of selection for basic ranger training is outlined in a memo from the deputy director, and is based on Entry Onto Duty date. The NPS-FLETC has recently begun posting a full-year roster for the upcoming basic academy on its website to aid in planning future attendance for the LMPT, follow-on classes and eleven weeks of field training that follows the basic program.

Several significant changes have occurred with the NPS basic ranger academy at FLETC.

The NPS, until recently, had an integrated training program -- meaning that NPS courses were integrated with FLETC courses in a custom-designed program for the agency. Beginning in September 2005, NPS rangers will train in the Land Management Police Training Program (LMPT), which is a FLETC consolidated basic training program. NPS rangers will train with law enforcement employees from the Bureau of Land Management, U. S. Forest Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Park Police, National Marine Fisheries Service, Tennessee Valley Authority and Department of Defense.

The new LMPT is 18 weeks long, which will be followed by a two week NPS-specific training program that will prepare rangers for the next phase of their law enforcement training...the Field Training and Evaluation Program..

The highly touted eleven week field training program continues to receive high marks from rangers and managers alike, and the term "turn-key rangers" is often used to describe the graduates of the program. The program also involves a significant amount of training for managers and training rangers in the units supporting the program, keeping the

program fluid and up-to-date with activities in the field.

The NPS-FLETC also coordinates advanced law enforcement training and provides support to the field. The advanced programs continue to expand from what was once a FLETC-oriented training activity into a larger, more nationally-oriented training mission. Extensive use of distance learning training has resulted in the NPS-FLETC assisting the field with refresher training modules that once required the travel of instructors to meet that same need. The training that will update existing Physical Fitness Coordinators to the departmental fitness standards will also originate from the NPS-FLETC, in conjunction with the Fitness Program Manager in the Risk Management Division of VRP.

In summation, the NPS-FLETC is a service-oriented unit committed to providing the most up-to-date and realistic law enforcement training possible for NPS law enforcement employees. In addition to the approximately 450 students who will receive annual training at the FLETC, the NPS-FLETC also reaches out to many more law enforcement employees through direct and indirect support of unit training activities. The NPS-FLETC will continue to look outside the box, seeking new technology and methodology to assist the field in carrying out its law enforcement mission. Located at the hub of Federal law enforcement training, the NPS-FLETC is uniquely situated to do just that.

The NPS-FLETC also selects members of the NPS Honor Guard, provides their uniforms, equipment and training, and coordinates the team's responses to special events and ceremonies.

Cam Sholly Addresses Ranger Priorities

The Lodge is very pleased to have Cam Sholly address the membership through the Protection Ranger. Mr. Sholly has a diverse law enforcement and public safety

background and we feel fortunate that he has accepted a position in WASO.

First off, thanks for the opportunity to address this core group of professionals. In my short amount of time here, I've already had some excellent conversations with Greg Johnston, Randall, and other members on contemporary issues that affect us all. While we may not always agree, I look forward to positive dialogue with all of you as we work towards common goals. When we disagree, I invite any of you give me your input directly.

In short, I'm a proponent of concentrating on clear direction, prioritizing work, holding ourselves accountable for doing what we say we're going to do, and not allowing ourselves to be constantly managed by

the moment (which is sometimes not preventable). Everyone knows that saying those things is easy; however, doing them successfully is the challenging part of our jobs. Anyone can talk about what needs to be done, but actually making a serious contribution to getting things done, is more important. In order to be successful, we will need as much input and collaboration as possible, at every level, both internally and externally.

While I wish I could report that every problem will be fixed immediately, that simply isn't possible. My hope is that I can contribute to the organization by assisting in any way possible with setting and achieving our goals.

Over the next few months, Karen Taylor-Goodrich has directed the associate-ship to undergo an extensive management review process and Core Operations Analysis. These processes will undoubtedly provide a much better framework for us to reset priorities and adequately shift the resources needed for us to accomplish those priorities. As everyone knows, long-term goals mean nothing if we don't have the short-term goals identified to get us where we need to be. We shouldn't be (and won't be) setting unachievable goals because they're

a waste of time. As we progress, we will be communicating much more extensively with the field and regions in an effort to tap as much expertise and talent as possible. Our priorities will be transparent and available for anyone to look at, and comment on, at anytime.

I recently asked the Lodge for a list of top their priorities. Aside from wanting to be familiar with the FOP priorities myself, the basis of that request was to illustrate that many of our priorities are (and should be) the same.

I'll give you a brief synopsis of my views on those priorities (in order):

6c- Clearly this is a subject that is dramatically affecting the morale of the rangers within the agency, retention levels, and is detrimental to our abilities in attracting good talent. This is the number one priority of the association and we need to do whatever it takes, using every resource we possibly can, to get this core issue solved. I'm confident it will happen. The question is how long it will take and what is the most expeditious route to get it where it needs to be. There are a lot of people that have done enormous amounts of research and work on this subject already. We'll need to consolidate those efforts, agree on how we're going to proceed, and move forward.

Improving Radio Communications/GPS Devices- I think everyone will agree that there has been significant progress in the area of communications and it's continuing to improve. That does not mean there is not a lot of work to do. This is a top priority for the NPS and the Department of the Interior.

Relative to rangers being issued GPS devices, this is an option that any chief ranger or manager can employ right now if they choose. On a side note, many agencies around the country have begun installing GPS technology in their police vehicles to allow supervisors and dispatchers to track the locations of officers. Most officers refer to this as

"sergeant in the trunk," (since that is where the GPS is located) and many of them truly can't stand to be monitored at all times. As we improve and expand our communication capabilities, we should all be looking at incorporating this type of technology if we all agree it's feasible. It's a good thing to look at more in-depth and we'll be happy to discuss the best way we can support this effort.

In the short-term, parks unable to issue GPS devices to backcountry rangers can and should employ immediate measures such as making those rangers call in with their location and direction on a more regular basis. If parks have GPS available for backcountry rangers, lat/long can be called in to be more specific. Some parks do this already and clearly, this can be a very valuable, immediate, and cost effective way for us to ensure we know the locations of our rangers.

Staffing Levels- Improved staffing levels are foremost on everyone's mind. With that said, we have not done a good job actually articulating our needs. Most people reading this at this point are probably asking "what the hell are you talking about." There was an enormous amount of work done in both the IACP and Thomas Reports and there is nothing I'm saying here that degrades any of the work performed in those reports. In fact, we need to take another close at what those reports recommend and take any actions that we can. In addition to those types of reports, parks and regions have also done a lot of good work on various needs assessments.

However, relative to numbers, we need to look closely at how we've been articulating our specific staffing needs. This may be a little pain for us to deal with, but we have a constant tendency to say "trust us, we need more positions." We've been relying on VRAP to sell this point for over a decade now and I'm not positive that VRAP is working for us as a reliable staffing methodology. Looking at VRAP, we input park data (much of which is subjective), a calculation takes place (which almost no one can actually explain),

and it spits out the number of full time equivalents a program should have. The problem is when questioned, we're unable to accurately explain how that calculation got us to the output. Many of these reports and needs assessments are based on the VRAP data. If it's indeed accurate, we better know how to explain the numbers. If it's not accurate, we need to revisit the methodologies we use in determining staffing levels. That means a lot of work on our part. We need to know what we're talking about, we need consistency, and the solid ability to market ourselves appropriately so we can compete effectively for additional resources. I'll leave the No Net Loss discussion for a future date.

NPS Integrated Course at FLETC- While consolidating our training curriculum at FLETC may have been a hard pill to swallow, we still have a phenomenal 20-week training program and a highly successful FTEP. While at some point, we may have the opportunity to re-look at this issue, right now, we need to move on from the subject and make sure that the existing curriculum gives our rangers a solid base to operate from. Don and his staff have done an excellent job of working closely with FLETC to ensure that happens.

Separate budgets for Law Enforcement/Create Separate Chain of Command- While I won't address these FOP priorities specifically at this point, I will tell you that right now, neither of these priorities are on my radar. That may irritate some of you reading this; however, it goes back to our priorities and goals actually being achievable. I can tell you that I'm happy to listen to any of your ideas relative to making our programs more effective. I just don't consider this something that's realistic or necessarily the solution to our problems at this time. I will not be putting a lot of time and effort into this from a prioritization standpoint. We've got enough work to do as it is just getting some basic priorities squared away.

In closing, I'll hope that this has given

you a broad overview of my perspective on a few of these items. As I stated above, I'll look forward to future discussions and transparent communications with the Lodge members and everyone. Once again, I encourage anyone to engage me directly on any issues they feel are pertinent or need attention-
202/513-7080.
Cam Sholly

Making Claims For Damaged Property

This applies to all employees. For instance, if you ruin a new pair of Class A trousers arresting a suspect, you can get either another pair or a reimbursement. However, this is very relevant today for our Brothers and Sisters along the Gulf coast who live in required occupancy and suffered losses from the hurricane:

How do I file an Employee Claim?

Employee claims are submitted under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employee's Claims Act of 1964 for damage to, or loss of personal property incident to service. Claims submitted for consideration must be over \$10.00 and cannot exceed \$40,000. Claims must be filed within 2 years of loss.

What the employee should do

Submit an AD-382, Employee Claim for Loss or Damage to Personal Property, to APHIS, MRPBS, FMD, Billings & Collections Team; 100 N. 6th St.; Butler Square, 5th Floor; Minneapolis, MN 55403.

When there is a possibility of recovery against a carrier, insurer, warehouseman, or other contractor, claims arising from such relationships must be pursued before filing an employee claim.

In support of the dollar amount claimed, provide substantiation in the form of canceled checks, receipts, or signed estimates of replacement or repair. A letter from the supervisor indicating

whether the possession of the property was reasonable, proper, or useful under the circumstances at the time of loss. Copies of internal reports, witness statements, police reports, etc., should be included with the claim, if applicable.

What Billings & Collections Team (BCT) will do:

Review the claim for completeness. If the claim is incomplete, BCT will send the employee a letter indicating the issues that need to be corrected, clarified, or substantiated. Adjudicate once the claim is "whole". If the claim is allowed, BCT will issue a payment. BCT will contact the employee's program for the accounting code chargeable.

How long it will take

Once the claim is "whole", BCT has up to six months to make a determination on the claim.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

At year's end many of the members are called upon to renew their memberships. The Lodge sends out a renewal notice and a stamped return envelope. It would save the Lodge money if you would check the due dates on your mailing label and send your dues in without being reminded. Dues are \$60 for active members and the dues are not going to change in the foreseeable future. Seasonals and retirees pay \$40. Thanks!

When Do You Need A Lawyer?

A PERSONAL OPINION

by Randall Kendrick,
Lodge Secretary

Throughout your 20 to 30+ career, there will probably be a time, or times, when you encounter a situation where you don't know the answer to a question; you feel you have a situation beyond your control confronting you; you are threatened with discipline; or, an incident arising from your work as a law enforcement officer has gone wrong. Do you need a lawyer? Or, when in the unfolding series of events is it time to "lawyer-up"?

I think these are some of the situation[s] where you should seriously consider consulting with an attorney:

- [1] You have been notified that you are being investigated for misconduct or such an investigation is forthcoming.
- [2] You have been to provide a statement about an incident that could lead to discipline or other actions against you.
- [3] You have good reason to believe that those that supervise you are taking, or about to take, action that could result in your losing your LE commission.
- [4] You receive a formal notice that management is proposing to take disciplinary action against you
- [5] You strongly feel that you are being discriminated against in assignments, training, scheduling, leave, reporting station, overtime or all of the above
- [6] You strongly feel that you are being retaliated against for being a whistleblower or your union work or your organizing work or your membership in an organization that is looked upon unfavorably by management.

In other words, when you have a good reason, or at least a very strong feeling that something has happened to you, is happening to you, or is about to happen to you that either violates your rights as a

federal employee or is career [or worse] threatening. Then you should strongly consider consulting a lawyer well versed in federal labor law.

I strongly believe that you need to hire an attorney whose practice is in federal labor law. Otherwise you will be paying a lawyer to learn on the job. You need an expert in the area that is exposing you to jeopardy. I have known of cases where a ranger has hired an eminent local lawyer, well respected in both the legal community and community at large, and has not gotten the type of advice and representation he/she needed and deserved.

The federal administrative legal arena is a whole 'nother ball game and you need someone familiar with the ins and outs of it. Do otherwise and you may well be cheating yourself. A specialist in your field can advise you of your rights while you are under investigation and in many venues, can represent you in person. In some cases encountered by rangers, there are options in the complaint process that present themselves to you and your attorney can advise you which one presents the best path. An experienced lawyer, or law firm, even knows the habits and biases of administrative law judges of the MSPB and can tailor your defense, or complaint, or appeal, to suit that particular ALJ. And don't overlook the fact that some complaints and grievances are just not worth pursuing: an experienced lawyer can help you make the proper decision here also.

In addition to being your advocate and source of legal advice, a lawyer will also be able to look at your situation in an objective manner and perhaps provide you with a perspective or option that you had not considered. Remember, when you're in it up to your neck, you are not going to be able to objectively look at your situation in a cool and reasoned manner and provide a set of options.

Selecting the right attorney or law firm may be the most important decision you make in your career. You're perhaps

suffering discrimination that is ruining your career; or, you're facing a possible career-ending action against you, or some other equally unpleasant set of circumstances.

You owe it to yourself to hire a specialist in the field. Not any lawyer will do; you need one who has devoted her/his career to helping federal employees and is well versed in federal employment law. Are you going to rely on the personnel officer for the information you need? I remember one case where a member was bluntly told by the personnel chief of a large park, "I will help you but you have to remember, I'm management." You need someone on your side with the knowledge, skills and experience to be an effective advocate, not a surrogate for those trying to put the screws to you or a lawyer who has specialized in corporate law. It's your life and career.

Practical stuff: The FOP Legal Defense Plan is really good and is cost effective but it has one big hole in it: It does not pay for a lawyer until you are charged with something. To my way of thinking, you want to avoid being charged with something. Your Ranger Lodge has pretty well plugged this hole by providing any member with a free consultation with an attorney of our law firm, Passman & Kaplan, when that member has convinced the executive committee that the answer is not among the collective knowledge of the Lodge and that we have not already paid for a legal opinion in an identical matter. The consultation is strictly along attorney/client lines and no one in the Lodge will know what transpires between you and the consulting lawyer. Confidentiality is assured.

To re-emphasize a point: Hire a skilled practitioner in the legal area where your fight is. There are many legal areas to specialize in and one is federal employment law.

There is no substitute for experience in the area where you have to make your stand. As I said in the title: the above is my opinion; I am not a lawyer and this is not

legal advice. It is intended to help you prepare for an incident which we hope does not happen but is happening all too commonly these days.

Exec Set to Leave Office

Lodge Executive Director Randall Kendrick Set to Leave Office.

I want to thank all of you who have supported the Ranger Lodge over the years and for all the help and encouragement you have given to me personally. I will always remember and appreciate it. Since 1990, I have had the honor to serve either as president of the original Eastern Rangers Lodge, the combined Ranger Lodge or serve as the Business Manager/Executive Director. I hope that I have helped make a positive difference for rangers as a unit as well as individual members on a one to one basis.

After ten years of retirement, I find it more difficult to keep up with the day to day activities of the NPS and do not want this situation to become a handicap for the Ranger Lodge. Therefore, I think that it is very important for someone new to step into this, or these, positions. The job of business manager can be separated from that of Executive Director without trouble. It is a paid position in our Lodge. It would be best if the business manager were the Lodge Secretary for internal Grand Lodge reasons. I will be available to speak with any and all members who wish to learn about the day to day running of these positions and will be available after leaving office to consult with the new incumbent[s].

We are striving to have the transition go as smoothly as possible so that our members will scarcely know that there's been a change in faces. Once again, thanks for all the help and the expressions of appreciation shown to me over the years; I remember and appreciate each one.

Randall

Lodge Website

Brother Duane Buck has built and maintains the Lodge website. We keep it updated with notices and links to other sites that we think are interesting and/or helpful to resource based law enforcement officers. Visit it often between issues of the Protection Ranger to keep current on things that affect you and your job. The address is www.rangerfop.com

Application for Membership

I, the undersigned, a full-time regularly employed law enforcement officer, do hereby make application for active membership in the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, FOP. If my membership should be revoked or discontinued for any cause other than retirement while in good standing, I do hereby agree to return to the lodge my membership card and other material bearing the FOP emblem.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

DOB: _____

Permanent Rangers: \$60/year

Seasonals and Retired Active Members: \$40/year

Associate (non-Commissioned) Membership (Newsletter only): \$40/year

Renewals: You do not need to send in this form to renew. Enclose a copy of your Commission (new members only).

Agency and Work Unit: _____

Mail to: FOP Lodge, POB 151, Fancy Gap, VA 24328

Phone: 1-800-407-8295 10am-10pm Eastern Time or email randallfop@ls.net



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