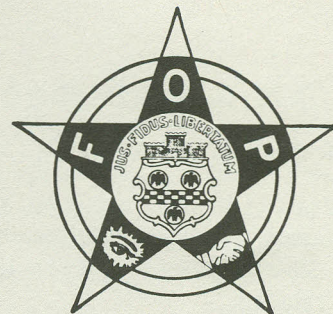


The Protection Ranger



The Newsletter of National Park Rangers Lodges, Fraternal Order of Police April / May 1991

FOP Works To Save Body Armor, Autoloaders

Funding for body armor and semi-automatic sidearms for NPS rangers is in jeopardy in the Interior Appropriations Committee chaired by Congressman Yates of Illinois. A former employee of the Park Service who is now a staffer for another member of the Interior Committee has raised objections to the funding.

Our lodge has received major assistance from the FOP National Legislative Committee in responding to this potential loss of critical safety equipment.

National FOP President Dewey Stokes has sent a letter to Yates supporting the need for body armor and semi-automatics. Members of the National Legislative Committee have contacted Appropriations Committee members personally to voice our concerns.

The Washington Office of the Park Service fully supports the semi-auto and body armor issue.

According to WASO ranger activities, they hope to have field testing of semi-autos completed and the final report submitted for approval by the end of June.

National President's Letter On Mandatory Fitness

February 26, 1991

Dear Secretary Lujan:

I would like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention a matter which has the potential of adversely affecting approximately 500 fellow members of the Fraternal Order of Police. These same members also happen to be employees of the National Park Service (NPS). Our members and your employees are the subject of a draft document called NPS-57, Health and Fitness Guidelines.

It is my belief that these employees, most of whom are National Park Rangers, will not be treated in a fair and equitable manner if this "draft" is approved. It is also my belief that this proposed program will negatively impact both the retention and recruitment of women within the ranger ranks (this group is already underrepresented).

First, the program is referred to, and is in fact, a "mandatory program." That is to say these guidelines establish mandatory

(Continued On Page 2)

Did NPS Efforts Stop USFS Retirement Bid?

Commentary: Greg Jackson, Western Lodge President Elect

Rumor among U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement Officers is that the denial of their enhanced retirement coverage is a result of lobbying by National Park Service officials, concerned that any ruling in favor of USFS LEO's would strongly favor the retirement claims by NPS rangers.

Neither USFS or NPS officials have made public any statements about the decision. However, documentation exists that shows NPS pressure to influence the employee benefit programs of another land management agency.

BLM documents obtained by the Lodge under the Freedom of Information Act say that the Park Service expressed "concern" over that agency's efforts to obtain grade enhancement for field-level rangers.

Law Enforcement in a Decentralized Multiple Use Agency, the BLM's blueprint for modernizing its law enforcement program, states that "the National Park Service ...(has) expressed concern that the BLM's classification and grade levels for rangers may already be higher than theirs, and will be interested in any action BLM may take on this issue."

Meanwhile, at an employees meeting at the Grand Canyon, Chief of Ranger Activities Walt Dabney announced that the NPS Director supported enhanced retirement for NPS rangers.

Former Director Dickenson has stated that elements in the NPS worked to stop him from enacting enhanced retirement.

Are such "behind the scenes" efforts continuing today?

FOP in Death Valley

Lodge members in Death Valley N.M. have joined to form the Death Valley Chapter of Lodge 23, and along with the Grand Canyon chapter, will have a delegate to FOP's national conference this August in Pittsburgh.

Eric Inman has been elected Death Valley chapter president. According to Inman, the Death Valley chapter was established to work on resolving local issues in Death Valley, and to support the Western Lodge on national issues.

Because the Western Lodge could send five delegates to the National Conference, but only three were funded, it was decided to offer delegate slots to the chapters, if they wanted to fund them. Delegates will meet in Pittsburgh to discuss national concerns.

If you are in the Western Lodge and wish to form a chapter of Lodge 23 in your park, call the lodge at 209/372-9216.

President's Message

By JR Tomasovic, Western Lodge

The past two months have been extremely busy. Greg Jackson and I attended the California State Board meeting in LA. As part of the State meeting, we provided security at the National Easter Seals Telethon.

I will be in Washington D.C. the week of May 13 to attend National Police Week ceremonies. I will be meeting with various Congressmen and hopefully with Interior officials to plead our issues.

I will also be escorting Linda McGhee to the May 15 memorial service for those law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in 1990. Through the efforts of the two lodges, we were able to assist Mrs. McGhee with her travel expenses. Each of you share the credit for her attending this ceremony.

I have written the Director inviting him to the memorial service. I also requested that the service fly the flags at half staff for the eleven rangers who have lost their lives while performing law enforcement duties for the National Park Service.

There is currently a bill pending in the House (HR-1142) by Congressman Gallego of California that would require the death penalty for anyone killing a federal officer. This was an issue in the McGhee shooting. The bill specifically mentions Park Rangers. I encourage you to write your congressman and request that he or she supports this bill.

I just returned from the Western States FOP meeting in New Mexico. I also met with the National President and Vice President and I was able to get the Western States and the National President to support several federal officer issues, the first being HR-1142. I also received support on the OPM request for information and input on revising the pay and classification systems for federal law enforcement officers. The National President indicated that this was a significant issue for many members, and that considerable effort would be placed on it by the National Lodge.

The National Conference will be held this summer in Pittsburgh. The Western Lodge will have five delegates attending the conference. I assume the Eastern Lodge will have the same number also. This is a tremendous improvement from two years ago when I was the sole delegate.

Raise? What Raise?

Winner of the 1990 "Get a Grip" award is this item from the October 1990 Courier:

"Chief Personnel Officer Mario R. Fraire received the Department of the Interior's Meritorious Service Award at ceremonies in August. He was recognized for successfully instituting new programs and initiatives that have strengthened grade structure and increased pay for lower-graded employees. His work has also led to an innovative workforce analysis and forecasting program."

The article did not mention NPS's actions to delay retirement package processing, its creation of the only mandatory fitness program in the government that does not include enhanced retirement, the institution of an intake program that ignores seasonals and cuts opportunities for almost all employees, etc.

testing standards for any and all NPS employees involved in law enforcement, wildland fire, search and rescue and other related emergency services. If the employee cannot pass the test, he or she is threatened with "termination" from the NPS.

I have a problem revolving around fairness and equal treatment regarding these "mandatory" standards and the threat for "termination." This concern stems from the fact that the affected employees are not offered any form of enhanced (early) retirement. There are only seven other federal law enforcement organizations which have "mandatory" fitness standards. All seven of these organizations also offer their affected employees enhanced retirement. It is our belief that the concepts and philosophy surrounding both mandatory fitness standards and enhanced retirement are one and the same.

We believe that the two concepts are interwoven and inseparable. An organization that wants and expects its 55 year old employees to meet the same fitness standards as its 21 year old employees has acknowledged the the work performed by these employees is "young people's work." It is for this reason that the director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has established the position that BLM rangers will not be held to mandatory fitness standards until they receive enhanced retirement benefits. It is for the same reason that the draft fitness standards for the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) will only affect those employees who receive enhanced retirement. It would seem that these two organizations understand that these two concepts go hand in hand.

My second area of concern regarding this program stems from its obvious impact on women. At the federal level, there are two basic types of fitness programs recognized. They are referred to as either "Non Adverse Impact" or "Adverse Impact" programs. Non Adverse Impact programs are concerned about overall health. Adverse Impact programs are concerned about fitness levels needed to perform a given "job task" as opposed to overall health of the employee.

Non Adverse programs establish standards which are age and gender adjusted. It is a recognized fact that Adverse Impact plans are gender biased. There are 30+ federal agencies with some sort of documented fitness program, with only 7 having mandatory fitness standards. Of these 30 agencies, only 1 (the U.S. Border Patrol) has established Adverse Impact standards.

If the proposed NPS program is implemented in its current form, it will be the second Adverse Impact program in the federal system. It is, and will be recognized as, age and gender biased.

It is our belief that a significant number of female park rangers will not be able to pass the strength test required of them under this Adverse Impact program and thus will be faced with "termination." Not only will this affect the retention of those women already working in law

enforcement for the NPS, but also in future recruitment. This will occur due to the fact that none of the federal agencies which compete with the NPS for individuals wanting to perform the work of rangers has a mandatory fitness program, let alone one that is biased against women.

As stated earlier, the USFS is in the process of establishing mandatory standards for its emergency service personnel. Their draft standards are both age and gender adjusted and thus their program is not an Adverse Impact program. I submit, there is little difference in the work performed between USFS and NPS emergency service personnel.

This NPS proposal is still in draft. Hopefully, it can be changed to eliminate both the unequal treatment it will subject park rangers to and remove a testing system which will adversely affect gender and age. We believe the proposed program is both arbitrary and capricious and will lead to numerous Equal Opportunity suits and grievances. I would respectfully request that you look into this matter and if we can be of any assistance or provide further input, please contact me.

Dewey Stokes, National President FOP

cc: Leigh Ann Metzger, Special Assistant to the President,
Public Liason



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Park Rangers Going Public

By Brian Sorby, Sequoia & Kings Canyon

Working as a seasonal ranger this last summer showed me what a truly sorry state the National Park Service is in. Pay is low, housing is terrible, administrative support is overloaded, and there is no money to do anything. National Park Rangers need to go public.

What I mean by going public is simply this: start getting the public involved with *your* park. Your local newspaper has an editorial section—USE IT! Don't feel that by being an employee of the government your rights as a citizen to express yourself have been taken away. Although you are a government employee, you do count as a person, and if you feel you have been getting ripped off, let the public know about it!

The editorial section of any newspaper loves to print the thoughts of government employees. Most reporters know that getting a government employee to talk openly is something very difficult to do. As government employees, you may feel that there is a policy against telling people the truth, well there is no such thing!

The only government policy I can think of is the First Amendment, and there is no government policy higher than that.

Don't be afraid to get involved. The F.O.P./Alliance is an organization prepared to fight for your rights as an employee. Use the newsletter to let other park personnel know what is going on with you and your park. You may be surprised by what others feel about things going on in their parks too.

Even the National Park Service has gone public to some degree. Closing parks last summer caused the public to get involved and write letters to their representatives. This helped to enlarge the budget for operations for next fiscal year. The battle for better wages and proper living conditions is far from being over.

This is a prime time for you to get involved by putting pressure on your elected representatives to change the current conditions permanently. You can do this by keeping your local media up to date on the conditions in your park. Writing letters to the editor will also keep the local citizen informed.

You may feel powerless and ignored when dealing with your administration internally, but when external forces get involved (i.e. the American taxpayer), that is something that even the most stubborn administrator can't turn their back on.

Editor's Note: The lodges have been active in drawing attention to issues affecting Park Rangers. We have talked with crews of CBS's 48 hours.

The syndicated show "The West" taped a segment in Yosemite that really raised the blood pressure of some administrators who prefer that the public not see rangers performing the law enforcement duties they've been doing since the Park Service was founded. Even the TV tabloid Inside Edition has been in Yosemite talking to the Lodge. In addition, we've placed articles in Audubon, National Park Magazine, and the San Francisco Chronicle, and letters to the editor in Newsweek and The Washington Monthly.

Of course, we would prefer to have meaningful dialogue with WASO rather than with the press as an effective means of achieving our goals. But if Washington won't talk, we'll talk to the press, to Congress and to anyone who will listen to achieve the goals our members have set for us. (Greg Jackson)

The Specter of Unionism

by George Durkee

Attentive readers of this journal will remember that in our last issue, we raised the possibility of forming a union. A number of us here at FOP Central think it's time to look at this prospect more seriously. In the three years since the FOP and Alliance began, we've had a number of encouraging successes. From a handful of rangers meeting in Yosemite and Sequoia Kings, we have grown, with the recent FOP/Alliance merger, to over 700 members. Through our efforts, a number of parks now routinely give heptavax shots, hearing tests, and body armor to their rangers. Unpaid on-call and unpaid call outs are becoming a practice of the past (though we still get reports a few parks still illegally do this). Recently, qualifying rangers in Sequoia Kings and Yosemite were granted pay differentials between 15% and 25% for Administratively Uncontrollable Overtime for necessary work performed outside of their regular shifts. Several of our members joined an ACLU lawsuit to successfully stop (only temporarily, alas) random drug testing of rangers. We have helped individual rangers in several parks with grievances and personnel problems and have monitored and intervened on behalf of fellow rangers in what we felt might have been mishandled shooting review panels.

Last week as part of Police Week in Washington, DC, Past President Tomasovic presented the FOP Supreme Sacrifice award to the widow of Bob McGhee, tragically killed in the line of duty last year at Gulf Islands. Our Lodges have been instrumental in ensuring that families of rangers who die in the line of duty receive the \$100,000 grant called for by the Police Survivorship Bill (originally sponsored by the National FOP). On Capitol Hill several weeks ago, FOP National President Dewey Stokes spoke on behalf of Park Rangers to save an NPS appropriation for auto-loaders and body armor that the Service finally (under Lodge pressure) requested for next year. We believe President Stokes' actions saved this item on the budget.

On the down side, progress with Law Enforcement retirement has been slow, as well as gains in grade restructuring. As Eastern Lodge President Randall Kendrick wrote: "We are confronting the major issues facing us but progress is slow. It could hardly be otherwise since we're up against entrenched and powerful forces resistant to change. We are coming together through the FOP to become better acquainted with one another, to share experiences and to organize." Or, as The Great Helmsman himself noted: "How wondrous this. How mysterious! We raise consciousness. We kick ass!" (or something like that . . .)

Progress, then, has been encouraging but generally successful only at the local level, thanks most often to the efforts of members organized in individual parks as well as recognition by local park administrators that they need to move rapidly to improve working conditions and benefits before the Service is irretrievably damaged. To deal more effectively at the national level, it may be time to up the ante.

The FOP offers two options for its members. At present we are organized as a professional organization. Park Administrators and WASO have no obligation to listen to our views or consult us on matters of policy or change. That they do at all (again, mostly at the local level) is a credit to our persistence and preparedness in researching issues. When a ranger files a grievance, we can monitor the situation and write letters on their behalf, but again, the NPS and OPM have no obligation to listen or respond to us.

The second option is to join the FOP as part of their Labor Council. Once we do that, we become a union and, under the Federal Labor-Management Relations Statute (Title VII of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978), are bound by very clear rules proscribing rights and obligations between rangers, park

administrators, WASO and OPM. Rangers would then be represented by the FOP Labor Council in all negotiations on working conditions. Negotiations between the FOP and WASO would be supervised by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) and include specific rights of appeal and third party arbitration in the event serious disagreements arise between rangers and administrators. We would also retain a law firm to represent rangers in any grievances or adverse actions they might be involved in (again, under special statutory provisions available only to unions). We would also have a voice on the Federal Employees Pay Council, made up of union representatives which makes salary recommendations to the President's agent.

In the next issue, we'll look at the specific process we would have to follow if we decide to unionize as well as our specific rights and responsibilities as union members; who can be a member, and possible costs. Stay tuned.

Yosemite Arrest Rate More Than Twice That Of Las Vegas

Let's compare the per-capita arrest rates of two major tourist centers, Las Vegas Nevada, the mecca of gambling, drinking, drugs and prostitution, and Yosemite National Park, one of nature's wonderlands that remains over 90 percent wilderness.

The fixed population of Yosemite is around 2,000, but for this comparison, we'll include 18,000 people in neighboring communities.

Yosemite National Park

Fixed Population: 20,000. 1990 Arrests: 766 Total: .0383 arrests per capita.

Las Vegas

Fixed Population: 638,000. 1989 Arrests: 9708 Total: .015 arrests per capita.

The fixed population rate does not count tourists, just the people who live in the community. If it did count tourists, of which Las Vegas gets about 12 million a year, Yosemite well over 3 million, the ratio would go much, much higher in Yosemite's favor.

Dallas police had 34.6 arrests per officer in 1989. Yosemite Valley rangers had an average of 29.16 in 1990. Dallas has no winter "slow season."

The National Park Service has failed to support Rangers in Yosemite or other National Parks in their bids for law enforcement retirement coverage, and the federal law enforcement pay benefits that come with it. Rangers in many parks have no body armor, and use less-than-state-of-the-art firearms.

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The Protection Ranger

Published bi-monthly by the National Park Rangers Lodges of the Fraternal Order Of Police, P.O. Box 944, Yosemite, CA 95389. For Parks West of the Mississippi: National Park Rangers Lodge 23, President — JR Tomasovic. For Parks East of the Mississippi: Eastern Rangers Lodge President — Randall Kendrick. Our Lodges are committed to improving the Ranger profession by joining Rangers together in a spirit of camaraderie to seek a cooperative relationship with management, with the goal a safe working environment, with fair and competitive pay and benefits. FOP is a non-profit organization.

Application For Membership

I, the undersigned, a full-time regularly employed law enforcement officer, do hereby make application for active membership in the National 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(required): _____

Alliance membership (non commissioned) ☐

Please enclose a check for one year membership.
(Western lodge Permanent - \$27, Seasonal - \$18)

(Eastern Lodge \$20 all members.)

Enclose a copy of your commission.

____ I'm employed East of the Mississippi

____ I'm employed West of the Mississippi

NPS Area: _____

Mail to:

Fraternal Order Of Police
P.O. Box 944, Yosemite, CA 95389
or

Eastern Fraternal Order Of Police
P.O. Box 151, Fancy Gap, Va 34338

5

Member Sounds Off On Intake

By An Eastern Lodge Member

Dear President:

I am writing this letter to express my concerns and to possibly get some questions answered about the new ranger intake program.

First of all, I cannot identify myself because I have been asked if I belong to "that right wing ranger organization," and because heaven help the careers of those who question (any EO program).

Those of us in the already bottlenecked GS-7 025 series might have looked at the intake program as a possibility to further our career and advance to a GS-9 position, but a closer look shows that fifty percent (six of twelve yearly) of these positions are to be used to "recruit externally for affirmative action needs," as stated in memo P3215(255) from the Director. The memo states that there are 100 vacancies annually at the GS-9 level and that with implementation of this program that "90% of these vacancies will be available through merit promotion." What the memo does not say is that there are 6-700 GS-7 rangers who are quite possibly applying for these 90 jobs. I guess if you're a GS-7 looking to advance to a GS-9, you have three years before the current slight chance becomes even more bleak. Once again the National Park Service is failing to recognize those within, with years of training and expertise.

Asked why the service is losing experienced top-notch rangers to other agencies: advancement=salary, and because these other agencies offer recognition for various training, education and expertise, and offer advancement opportunities to those who possess these skills.

Does the possibility exist that experienced rangers will be working for a product of the intake program with only three years of service? (You bet your life -- literally. ed.)

How many of the six positions designated for hiring within the service will be delegated to EO?

What ever happened to the "best person for the job?"
(Letter edited for space)

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Commissioned Members Beni's

National Lodge Programs below are available through the National Lodge. Call 800/FOP-4321 for more information.

National Legal Defense Program Pays for legal defense in Criminal, Civil and administrative cases, starting at \$50.50 per year for criminal-only coverage.

National Discount Prescription Drug Program For \$1 per year per member and family. You get instant credit for buying prescriptions, with a 15 day billing period, or receive a 15-25% cash discount. Get your prescriptions through the mail! Rangers who are far from cities can really benefit. You can order through an 800 number with same-day shipping. In addition, the 800 number can be used to answer any questions about your medications.

National Vision Care Program Includes discount on eye exams, frames lenses, contacts and extras, for only \$10 per year.

National Disability Program Benefit Trust Life's RTD Disability Income Insurance Plan helps you protect yourself and your family against loss of earnings due to covered sickness or accident while you are working and before age 65. These benefits are payable in addition to any other insurance you carry, including employer-provided disability or compensation.

National Retirement Programs The law says you have to make urgent financial decisions within 60 days after you retire, or you may be taxed on the money you'll receive. Call FOP and ask for information on retirement programs. FOP has plans for increasing cash values to supplement your retirement benefits and provide an emergency fund, a tax free benefit, estate for your children, and cost of living adjustments.

National Cancer Care Program Members and their spouses and children may participate. \$100 per day for hospitalization for 90 days, then actual hospital charges up to \$5,000 per month with a \$250,000 lifetime maximum. Pays for the actual charges of radiation and chemotherapy to \$2,000. Limited medicine and drugs, nursing services, surgery, anesthesia, blood and plasma, ambulances, and more.

National Accidental Death And Dismemberment Program A sound, affordable program, for example, \$100,000 for \$56 per year.

Lodge 23 Programs are sponsored by the California State Lodge and are available to Western Lodge members. For information, call the lodge or John Cipolla Insurance Consultants at 800/733-5131.

State Life Benefit FREE. Once the lodge has registered you, the \$2,000 life benefit increases by \$200 per year until a \$3,000 maximum is reached. At age 65, it reverts to \$2,000. This is paid no matter how death occurs. (yes, even suicide). If you die in an accident, it pays an additional \$2,000. If you are killed in the line of duty, an additional \$2,000 is paid.

SPECS Vision Care Program Available through December 1991 FREE, the SPECS card can save you 50 percent off frames at SEARS, Montgomery Wards and other stores. Order contacts by mail and save money, with disposable lenses from \$21 per 6-pack, etc.

Police Benefitter Death and Dismemberment Program Starting at only \$15 a year for \$25,000 in benefits, this plan provides 24-hour coverage with "line of duty" and family supplements at very affordable prices.

Member Benefitter A term life policy offering complete coverage. You can purchase up to \$100,000 on yourself and your spouse. Sample cost for \$10,000 coverage, age 25-29 is \$5.25 a quarter.

Legal Defense And Liability Insurance Not FOP sponsored, Wright & Co. offers a legal defense plan that also pays judgments at a cost of less than \$4 a pay period for \$500,000 coverage, \$7 for \$1 million coverage. This is the same company that offers the National Legal Defense plan, but this is not an FOP plan. For information, call them at 800/424-9801.

6. Western Lodge Minutes

Membership Meeting, March 1991 (held April 4 due to bad weather)

Presiding: Tomasovic

President's Report:

Retirement: Spoke with OPM on retirement. OPM says NPS is dragging their feet.

Pay: Jailers received enhanced retirement. Will receive pay increases on May 1 to GS/ 5-10 level, including seasonals.

Body Armor & Guns: FOP on the hill trying to save both.

USFS retirement: Appeal filed on standard PD's, they expect to win

Fitness SOP: Yosemite Rangers should talk to supervisor to get free physicals, as plan has been approved.

CW Permits: Letter from AG's office gives grounds for new SOP, to come into effect soon.

Vice President's Report

Fire: The following are out of date in Yosemite's structural fire program: Fire needs assessment, Structural Fire SOP, Pre-plans for every building, training according to pre-plans, CPR and advanced 1st aid for all firefighters, Individual training records.

Motion: Cruz/Martinez/Unanimous to forward VP's recommendation to Safety/Fire

Hazard Communications program being reviewed.

Secretary's Report:

Raffle: Tickets for S&W 10mm to benefit Western States Lodge given to Weinstock. Call 209/ 372-0245.

Newsletter: Contacted Callam Publications to have them publish newsletter, fund raiser and less time involved.

Death Valley Chapter: Accepted into lodge Jackson/?/Unanimous

Treasurer's Report:

Retirement Legislation: WASO's "draft legislation" for EMS/LE/Fire retirement is actually a memo with USPP retirement package.

Grand Canyon: New officers Brian Smith, Dan Kirschner

Shooting Review: Committee report sent to WASO

Motion Cruz/Martinez/Unanimous to give \$200 to Linda McGhee for travel to the Supreme Sacrifice Award presentation in May.

Old Business:

Fund Raiser: Motion Jackson/Casalegno passed to set up fund raiser for little league team at christening of new ambulances, Roth to coordinate, \$100 from ranger association.

Adopt-A-Highway: Motion Jackson/Tomasovic to adopt 2 miles on Highways 120 and 140.

Awards: Motion Cruz/Roth passed to accept committee's plan for awards. Martinez /Roth/Unanimous to present valor/achievement awards.

Child Care: Motion Cruz/Christiansen for a project day in May.

New Business:

Officer Nominations: Jackson, president; Cruz, VP; B. Bandy, Treas.; Brennan, Secy; R. Bandy, Seas; Roth, Valley; Hendrick, Wawona; Casalegno, Mather. Ballots out in 5 days.

Delegates: Motion Jackson/Martinez/unanimous to spend up to \$200 each for 2 delegates to national meeting in Pittsburgh.

Davis: Motion Casalegno/Tomasovic/Unanimous to make Elliot Davis an honorary member.

Adjournment

Next Meeting: May TBA

Traffic Radar And You

By Mike LaLone, Vice President, Western Lodge

Anyone growing up in America in the 1950's will remember the benevolent and friendly genie, the atom. School science class films showed how the atomic age would not only make life easier and more prosperous but would probably cure the common cold along with any ailment or problem of the day.

The darker side of the atomic genie was rarely hinted at. Traffic radar also holds its rarely hinted at hazards. Problems commonly related to traffic radar are fuzz busters, differing views by the courts on proper operation, and incomplete training.

These hazards are rarely life threatening, however much they may bruise the ego in court. Research in the last few years has shown a far more serious hazard from traffic radar may exist.

It is accepted in today's world that exposure to microwaves in certain settings is detrimental to human health. ANSI has industry standards for both exposure levels and protective equipment. These standards are occasionally confusing and at times appear to be ill defined. The standard for allowable microwave energy is 5MW per square centimeter for any six minute period of exposure.

The ANSI standard is somewhat vague in that there appears to be no explanation of what the six minutes mean. Are six minutes per hour appropriate, or should this time exposure be taken in terms of hours, days, etc. Checking the spec sheet for Speedgun eight shows the transmitted beam to be 5MW minimum, and 25MW maximum. I suppose as long as we are only exposed to the minimum transmitted beam per (your guess) we are safe?

While still on the spec sheet, you may notice the frequency transmitted is 10.525 GHz plus or minus 25 Mhz. What does this set of numbers mean to us? Experiments performed by exposing beetle pupae to the same frequency provided 25 percent pupae fatalities, and 51 percent grossly deformed beetles. In terms of humans and exposure to this frequency via traffic radar, what has been termed a significant number of eye cancer cases has surfaced among traffic control officers.

Even closer to home, several U.S. Park Police/Park Rangers have contracted major eye/skin cancer. One of the primary duties of these officers has been traffic control utilizing traffic radar. It is important to note that while most literature and studies agree that there are no documented adverse effects on humans from exposure to microwaves, it does not appear to have sufficiently been investigated.

What does all that mean to us? I have no desire to become a statistic in a researcher's study in years to come. Yet, I still have my job as a traffic control officer to perform. In Yosemite, many of our radar mounts are internal, generally resting on the dashboard. By using the intermittent mode as much as possible, and emitting microwaves only at specifically targeted potential

violators, I do not have a constant exposure to potentially harmful radiation. Take the antenna off the dashboard and hold it outside the vehicle while operating it. In this mode, there is far less chance of microwaves reflecting back toward me from the windshield. I visually check the radar unit for any cracks in the antenna housing or case that microwaves may leak through.

These are all quick fixes. Ideally, these units will be replaced with externally mounted antennas that keep radar away from the user. Advise your supervisor of your concerns, and document any unsafe radar use you are exposed to.

Let's keep the radar genie a helpful tool and be able to return it to the bottle without harm to us.

Four Ways To More Pay

By now most rangers know that enhanced retirement coverage would create an immediate pay raise. For example, a GS-5 ranger would go from a base salary of \$16,973 a year to \$22,067, that of a GS-5 step 10. But for most of us, enhanced retirement coverage is at least a year off.

In the mean time, what can field rangers do to increase their pay? Here are a few suggestions:

1. Don't work for free. Because many park areas are understaffed, there is a temptation for staff members to donate personal time to government projects, because they "have to get done." This creates problems in two ways. First, by eliminating the symptoms of understaffing (i.e. critical projects not getting done) there is no way for management to know there is a problem, and you may end up understaffed permanently.

More importantly, doing work without getting paid is illegal: a violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Your employer is required to pay you for work. In fact, if you are working without getting paid, your employer is required to stop you from working, or pay you. If you've been donating time, you have a right to put in for payment (think of the overtime check).

Are you required to be "on call." If you are required to be at home ready to respond for callout, you are required to be paid at least minimum wage/standby pay.

Contact the lodge if you are being put "on call" and are not being paid.

2. Look to upgrade your position

Are you doing multi-day investigations? That's GS-7 work, so you'd better be getting GS-7 pay. Compare your PD's with those in other parks, and those in other agencies (USFS, BLM) with similar duties. WASO has taken credit for upgrading people. Credit really belongs to those in the field who are looking to upgrade.

3. Look at AUO

Administratively Uncontrolled Overtime has given some rangers in Sequoia/Kings Canyon and Yosemite 15-20 percent pay increases. Interest in this plan is spreading across the country, it may be for you.

4. Work for enhanced retirement.

Write Congress and support the FOP.

Most Alliance Memberships Expiring -- Renew Before June 1

Most Alliance memberships expire on June 1, and need to be renewed before that date.

Check your mailing label or records to show the expiration date of your membership and renew promptly.

Alliance members with commissions should use this opportunity to convert to full lodge membership by including a copy of their commission with their renewal. The application is on page 5.

By doing so, you receive \$1,000 in free life insurance and can participate in a free vision care program (Western Lodge), and are eligible to participate in other programs offered by the State and National Lodges. In addition, you can participate in the upcoming lodge election. See the benefit list on page six.

In addition, commissioned members can vote in lodge elections and assume lodge office.

THE ALLIANCE IS STILL AT WORK

The Alliance is still working hard for non-commissioned members.

In the past year, we have achieved pay increases through the AUO program for non-commissioned NPS employees, and have information available if you are interested in AUO.

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The Alliance has worked to oppose the NPS intake program that ignores the valuable resources that exist within the NPS seasonal ranks, expressing these views to Congress and to the Director.

We have worked to oppose the "professionalization" program set up by WASO. When asked what influence this program will have on the career path of employees, Ranger Activities publicly stated "We don't know." We believe that the career paths of dedicated employees should come first, and gimmicky plans second, and will continue our opposition in Congress and through correspondence with Washington.

The Alliance has worked for pay increases for all rangers, and has continued a public information campaign designed to inform Congress and the public of the poor pay and housing that NPS employees are subject to.

We have worked on safety issues, such as hepatitis vaccinations that employees from a variety of disciplines, including maintenance and EMT's have received.

The Chairman of the Alliance is now a member of the Board of Directors of the lodge, and Alliance concerns are discussed at every meeting.

The Alliance has received new strength as part of its association with the FOP. But the real strength of the Alliance is in the determination of its members to see the job through.

Please renew your membership.

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Next Meeting:

Monday, May 20, 1991
1900 Hours, Girls Club, Yosemite
Installation Of Officers
Guest: CA State President Carl Olson