



## INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

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### **First World Ranger Congress**

At 6:30 on the evening of Sunday, May 21, 1995, Gordon Miller, chairman of the International Ranger Federation, officially opened the First World Ranger Congress with the raising of IRF's flag - the green, blue and white ying-yang symbol, representing the balance of the world's waters, lands and mountains - outside the Kasprowy Hotel in Zakopane, Poland, to the thunderous applause of 135 delegates from ranger organizations from 35 nations around the world.

That triumphant moment symbolized both an end and a beginning - the end of the three intense years of planning and organizing that followed the signing of the original IRF charter in July, 1992; the beginning of a true world community of park and protected area rangers. It was a watershed moment in the history of the ranger profession.

The flag raising was followed by an evening "potlach" - a traditional friendship meal - that set the tone for the week. Food and drink which delegates had brought from their home countries was spread out over several long tables and shared among all. The sharing was accompanied by conversation, as people got to know each other and began talking about their homes, their jobs, their problems and successes.

A hallmark of the congress would be these many small gatherings with constantly changing mixes of delegates from different nations - each unique in the ideas and anecdotes discussed, the lessons learned, the friendships made. Although there were occasional language problems, delegates were almost always able to figure out a way to communicate - generally in English, sometimes in Spanish or French or another language, occasionally through gestures and illustrations.

Several things were quickly apparent - that rangers will always find a way to communicate, that ranger work is so similar worldwide that much is readily understandable despite language problems, and that Linnaeus' use of Latin to describe plants and animals makes a great deal of sense in field trips with multi-lingual groups.

The congress itself had themes for each day that reflected principal concerns of the delegates. On Monday, it was the federation and its purposes, then some of the issues and problems in protected areas; on Tuesday, resource management; on Wednesday, human resources; on Thursday, the means for balancing conflicts, particularly through interpretation and education; on Friday, IRF's future.

The approach to each theme was similar - a presentation or two on the subject, followed by workshops and discussions. The topics addressed in these sessions illustrated the diversity of issues that rangers must address; among them, providing environmental education, dealing with native or aboriginal peoples resident within parks, managing parks on the urban fringe, controlling poaching and other resource depletions, establishing ranger training programs, and integrating research into resource management.

Delegates were continually intrigued to find so many commonalities in issues faced by rangers wherever they lived and worked. Discussions revealed solutions found in one country that might resolve problems in another, and served to foster the already high degree of interchanges among delegates. The text of the presentations and of the recommendations which emerged from many of the subsequent discussions will appear in full in the congress proceedings, which are to be published later this year.

But congress activities weren't limited to papers and position statements, nor to auditoriums and meeting rooms. Except for Monday, there were field trips each day of the week - a bit of good luck, as it rained on Monday but was mild, clear and beautiful through the balance of the week. The trips on Tuesday and Wednesday were to different sections of Tatra National Park - a limestone gorge, a cave high on the side of a ridge, an alpine meadow.

On Thursday, the group got to visit the park's new visitor center, then adjourned to a nearby meadow for vodka toasts, a roaring bonfire, and rounds of national songs sung by rangers from different countries. The final excursion of the week was a half-day raft trip down magnificent Dunajec Gorge in Pieniny National Park on the border of Poland and Slovakia.

There were also evening speakers and slide shows that provided some of the weeks most memorable moments. Robert Swan, who has walked to both poles and is about to mount another expedition to the South Pole, gave an extraordinary slide show on his journeys in the Arctic and Antarctic, and concluded by urging that IRF develop a worldwide ranger network to educate the earth's people on their dramatically diminishing resources. He also proposed that Antarctica be declared an international park/protected area and that it be managed by a company of rangers from many nations sponsored by IRF.

On subsequent evenings, delegates gave slide and video presentations on their parks which again revealed both the remarkable diversity of their resources and the striking similarity of their management issues. Although there were inevitable differences in cultures and in the type and severity of local problems, the fundamentals were again the same - increasing visitation, accelerating impacts to natural resources, encroachments, insufficiency of funds and staff, political meddling, and so forth.

But delegates also got to see the the breathtaking beauty of the world's natural areas, from Kenya to Nepal, Tasmania to Alaska, Brazil to Finland. The effect was to give delegates a sense of one worldwide system of parks and protected areas and a realization that rangers preserve the very last fragments of this planet's wondrous natural diversity.

The week ended all too soon. On Friday, delegates got together to review decisions made at a Thursday night board meeting, to talk about IRF's future, and to ratify a declaration that was subsequently presented to reporters at a late afternoon press conference. Particulars on each of those matters follow.

The congress concluded with a banquet, farewells, firm promises to write and visit each other, and a strong commitment to further IRF and the mission of rangers worldwide.

## **Zakopane Declaration**

The following declaration, prepared by Juan Gambarotta of Uruguay (with the assistance of Rick Smith and Bill Halainen from the United States), was unanimously endorsed by delegates and issued by the congress at the end of the week:

We, the delegates here assembled in Zakopane, Poland, at the first International Ranger Federation Congress, representing rangers from 35 nations on six continents, do hereby declare our commitment to the following principles:

- That, as principal guardians of the world's premier natural and cultural protected areas, we are uniquely positioned and qualified to monitor their health, assess their problems, and extrapolate current trends into probable futures;
- That, unless circumstances change, these natural and cultural areas under our charge will in many cases continue to slowly but inexorably decline;
- That the rangers charged with protecting these areas play a distinctive and essential role in identifying problems associated with this decline and proposing practical solutions to them;
- That these rangers also have a fundamental role in explaining the importance of natural and cultural resources to the public, thereby awakening in them the essential desire and interest in conserving them for future generations;
- That these rangers are involved in complex and highly important tasks in preservation of natural and cultural resources, but lack recognition of the importance of these tasks from the governments that employ them;
- That the majority of these rangers live in very difficult conditions, lack adequate institutional support and resources, receive meager salaries, and take significant personal and professional risks to protect these invaluable sites, which constitute core elements of the world's natural and cultural heritage;
- That they all too often sacrifice their lives in their commitment to protection of this heritage;
- And that, for all these reasons, we are firmly committed to seeking greater recognition and attention to their work, to their well-being, and to the critical status of the heritage that they protect and defend, and will exert ourselves in a concerted effort to resolve these problems, enlisting in this effort the support of the people and governments of this earth.

## **IRF Business Meeting**

An IRF board meeting was held on the evening of May 23rd. Attending were Gordon Miller, chair; Mike Marshall, treasurer; Bob Reid, secretary; and representatives from 13 member nations. The following issues were discussed:

- Representation – Miller asked if the current system of representation in IRF should be revised and simplified due to the rapid increase in membership. He suggested the possibility of associations combining on continents to select continental representatives to an IRF board. National representatives attending the meeting felt that the current system still works well, however, and that other models for representation should be examined before any decisions are made.
- Direction - At present, IRF is directed by the chairman, secretary and treasurer, all of whom are unelected. Miller asked if officers should be elected. National representatives felt that it would be premature to do so at the congress, and that decisions on a management structure, officer terms, voting, and related issues should be set aside until members can review organizational options and develop a management plan for the federation.

- Finances – Miller asked if the current financial arrangement, whereby member associations contribute one percent of their annual member dues to IRF, should be continued. The representatives felt that this arrangement was acceptable and did not place too heavy a burden on members. Miller then brought up the need to establish a central fund for administration of IRF, and suggested that the federation should seek funds from IUCN or other public/private organizations. Representatives concurred, and brought up several possible sources. Miller noted that the federation had exhausted all available resources in organizing and managing the congress, and that a full financial accounting would be provided to all member nations in the near future. He also said that efforts will be made to set up a system whereby prospective delegates to the next congress will be able to make advance installment payments which will be recoverable in case of cancellation.
- Pairing – Miller suggested that member associations look into the possibility of pairing one-on-one with associations still forming in order to provide guidance and assistance. Representatives supported this proposal. It was also noted that we need to assure that candidates fully meet criteria for membership (as stated in the IRF charter) before being endorsed by sponsoring associations.
- Next Congress – Miller asked the representatives for recommendations for a location for the next congress. Mike Landrum from South Africa said that the Game Rangers Association of Africa would be willing to host the congress at Kruger National Park in South Africa, pending evaluation of support facilities, logistics and related matters. Bill Halainen from the United States said that the Association of National Park Rangers would support a meeting in Latin America, and that it might be possible to hold the congress in Costa Rica. Representatives agreed that either of these two locations would be acceptable, depending on costs and logistical considerations. Miller asked that the two associations make assessments of these locations and report back to him by late fall; he also said that he would provide the organizations with details on the management of the congress at Zakopane to help them in their efforts. The representatives then discussed the frequency of congresses. There was agreement that they should be no more than three years apart, and that two years would be preferable, if feasible. The decision on the date for the next congress will be made when a site is selected.
- Annual Report – Miller asked that each member organization prepare a short annual report on its activities for submission to IRF at the end of each year, and said that he would provide a standard format for the report.

These decisions were brought before the delegates at the final meeting of the congress on Friday afternoon. All were ratified, and additional actions were agreed to:

- Communications – IRF will publish an internal newsletter two or three times a year (possibly more often) in English and Spanish. It will be distributed to member associations, who will redistribute it to their own members by reproduction in the association's publication, photocopying or other means. The newsletter will be kept brief; the contents will include IRF news, member association news, a calendar of coming events worldwide, a list of resources needed or available (so that member associations can help each other out), and the names of travel contacts in member nations. Efforts will also be made to develop communications via Internet.
- Publications – IRF will work to develop several publications, beginning with the congress proceedings. Other possible publications include a ranger's guide to national parks of the world, a directory of members, and a booklet describing elements of the ranger profession. The former would be used as a fund-raising mechanism.
- Practice – IRF will establish standards and an international code of ethics for rangers, employing existing models (such as the World Conservation Strategy) as models. Efforts will also be made to initiate a campaign to promote sustainability and environmental ethics in member association's parent agencies.

- Advocacy – IRF will bring to public attention significant issues affecting rangers working in parks and protected areas throughout the world.
- Networking – IRF will work to develop a system for linking rangers worldwide for purposes of travel, training, sharing resources and otherwise promoting and advancing the ranger profession.

### **Contributions To Next Newsletter**

There will be four new and continuing sections in the next newsletter, and we need you to contribute! These are the sections and what we need for each:

- Association News – What has your association been doing? Other members would like to hear what's going in your ranger organization - to organize, to promote the ranger profession, to resolve resource conservation and education issues, etc. Please send a short summary.
- Resource Sharing – Do you have something you can share with rangers in other nations? Do you have a need that rangers in other nations might be able to meet? Send your offerings or needs for the next newsletter.
- Upcoming Events – Please send us a listing of upcoming events in your association or park system which would be of international interest. For an example, see the listing that appears at the end of this newsletter.
- Personal Notices – If you or any member of your national association is looking for overseas training opportunities, plans on traveling abroad, or has any other need requiring broad contact with many rangers of the world, she or he can send along a short notice for inclusion in the next newsletter.

The deadline for the next newsletter is September 30, 1995. Please send contributions to Bill Halainen, 4032 Conashaugh Lakes, Milford, Pennsylvania, 18337, USA.

### **Sales Items**

We still have "IRF World Congress 1995" T-shirts available, but in small and medium sizes only. If you'd like a shirt, send a note to IRF, P.O. Box 37, Stirling, FX8 25L, Scotland. The cost is \$8 (U.S.) plus postage. Each shirt weighs about 200 grams, so calculate postage accordingly.

We are also looking at the possibility of developing IRF pins. If you'd like to help or can give Gordon Miller an estimate of how much it would cost to produce them in your country, please send him a note.

### **Work Experiences Sought**

IRF has received a number of inquiries from people seeking work experience with rangers in national parks around the world. They generally seek accommodations, but not pay. If you can help, please contact IRF.

## **IRF Action Plan**

The following action plan for the coming year (June, 1995 - June, 1996) was developed from the discussions and agreements reached at the congress and will be updated in each newsletter. Corrections are also appreciated.

### **A. CONGRESSES**

#### **1. Zakopane Congress**

- Provide final financial report to members (Marshall, England) – 9/95

#### **2. Next Congress**

- Provide standard criteria for evaluating future congress sites (Miller, England) – 9/95
- Evaluate sites in South Africa and Costa Rica and prepare reports for Miller (Smith and Getty, USA; Landman, S. Africa) – 11/95
- Vote to select site and date (All member associations) – 1/96

### **B. COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **1. Newsletter**

- Publish and distribute summer IRF newsletter (Halainen, USA) – 8/95
- Publish and distribute fall IRF newsletter (Halainen, USA) – 10/95
- Publish and distribute spring IRF newsletter (Halainen, USA) – 4/96

#### **2. Electronic Mail**

- Develop IRF electronic communications through Internet (Volunteer needed) – ??

#### **3. Publications**

- Find production and funding sources for rangers guide to parks of the world (Halainen, USA) – 9/95
- Publish and distribute congress proceedings (Halainen and Chetwin, USA) – 11/95

### **C. INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

#### **1. Organization**

- Establish working group to review organizational models for IRF (Miller, England) – 9/95
- Submit recommendations on preferred model to Miller (Work group) – 12/95
- Vote on preferred structure (All member associations) – 1/96
- If new structure requires new officers, seek candidates for \_\_\_\_\_ positions (Reid, Scotland) – 3/96
- Transmit ballot (Reid, Scotland) – 4/96
- Conclude balloting, begin implementing new organization (Chair) – 6/96

#### **2. Reports**

- Provide annual report model to members (Reid, Scotland) – 11/95
- Submit annual reports (All member associations) – 1/96

### **3. Dues**

- Provide model financial statement to members in conjunction with annual report model (Marshall, England; Reid, Scotland) – 11/95
- Submit annual statements (All member associations) – 1/96

### **4. Funding**

- Establish working group to develop strategy and contacts for seeking funding for IRF (Miller, England) – 9/95
- Submit recommendations to Miller (Work group) – 12/95

## **D. NETWORKING**

### **1. Pairing**

- Establish working group to develop model of system for pairing national associations with new associations (Miller, England) – 9/95
- Submit recommendation to Miller (Work group) – 12/95

### **2. National Contacts**

- Establish working group to develop list of contacts in national associations for purposes of arranging international travel by members (Miller, England) – 9/95
- Submit recommendations to Miller (Work group) – 12/95

## **E. ADVOCACY**

### **1. Ethics**

- Establish working group to draft international code of ethics for rangers (Miller, England) – 9/95
- Submit report to Miller (Work group) – 3/96

### **2. Advocacy Action Strategy**

- Establish working group to prepare list of issues to be addressed by IRF and strategies for advocating them to citizens and governments (Miller, England) – 9/95
- Submit report to Miller (Work group)

## Upcoming Events

### 1995

October 15-20

"Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas", Losehill Hall, Peak National Park, UK. A training seminar for rangers and interpreters. For more information, contact Gordon Miller (see attached address list), call 44-1433-620373, or fax 44-1433-620346.

November 7-11

Ranger Rendezvous XIX, Association of National Park Rangers (USA), Radisson Hotel, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA. For more information, contact Barbara Goodman (see attached address list).

### 1996

November

Ranger Rendezvous XX, Association of National Park Rangers (USA), Marriott Hotel, Corpus Christi, Texas, USA. For more information, contact Barbara Goodman.

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The International Ranger Federation Newsletter is produced three to four years per year and distributed to the IRF representatives for each member association. It is edited by Bill Halainen, Association of National Park Rangers, 4032 Conashaugh Lakes, Milford, Pennsylvania 18337, USA. Phones: 717-686-3838 (home phone and fax), 717-588-2430 (work phone).

## IRF Member Associations and National Representatives

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### **England/Wales Countryside Management Association)**

Chairperson Declan Kelley, 82 Grove Road, Beccles, Suffolk, England. Phones: 0502-716614 (home), 0603-610734 (work).

IRF Rep Gordon Miller, Fold Head Cottage, Grindsbrook Booth, Edale via Sheffield, S30 2ZD, England. Phones: 0433-670210 (home), 0433-670216 (work and fax).

### **ScotlandScottish Countryside Rangers Association**

Chairperson Richard Smith, 4 Linsey MacDonald Court, Dunfermline, KY 12 7 TS, Scotland. Phones: 0383-735193 (home), 0383-725596 (work), 0383-703406 (fax).

IRF Rep Bob Reid, 6 Riverside Road, Larkhall, Lanark, ML 9 1NH, Scotland. Phones: 0698-884083 (home), 0698-266155 extension 31 (work), 0698-252925 (fax).

### **United States Association of National Park Rangers**

President Deanne Adams, 3009 13th Avenue West, Seattle, Washington 98119-2021, USA. Phones: 206-285-8342 (home), 206-220-4251 (work), 206-220-4251 (work fax).

IRF Rep Barbara Goodman, 4725 50th Street West, Number 1408, Bradenton, Florida 34210, USA. Phones: 813-792-1841 (home), 813-792-0458 (work), 813-792-5094 (work fax).

### **Northern Ireland Northern Ireland Countryside Staff Association**

Chairperson Hugh McCann, Drumadravey, Irvinestown, County Formanagh, BT94 1LQ, Northern Ireland. Phones: 03656-21066 (home), 03656-21588 (work).

### **Africa Game Rangers Association of Africa**

Chairperson Peter Hitchins, Post Office Box 683, Port Edward 4295, South Africa. Phones: 03930-92370 (home and work)

Vice Chairperson Bruce Bryden, Kruger National Park, Post Office Box X402, Skukuza 1350, South Africa.

### **Eire Irish National Park Rangers Association**

Chairperson Brendan O'Shea, Killarney National Park, County Kerry, Ireland.

### **Italy Associazione Ligure Agenti Di Vigilanza Ambientale**

Chairperson Augusto Atturo, Via Martiri della Liberta 32/14, 16156 Genova, Italy.

### **Denmark Naturvejleder Foreningen i Danmark**

IRF Rep Jesper Vagn Christensen, State Forest District of Fyn, Sollerupvej 22, Korinth, DK 5600 Faaborg, Denmark.

### **Paraguay Asociacion de Guardeparques del Paraguay**

Chairperson Alejandro Cantero, Casilla de Correo 3303, Asuncion, Paraguay.

### **Honduras Fed-Ambiente de Honduras**

IRF Rep Nasry Javier Ictech, Apartado Postal 3844, Tegucigalpa, M.D.C. Honduras.

**Costa Rica**                      **Acorena C.R.**

IRF Rep                              Franklin Carmiol Umana, P.O. Box 8-4330, 1000 San Jose, Costa Rica.

**Dominican Repub.**              **Confunto del Guardaparques de la Republic Dominica**

IRF Rep                              Ingeniera Gabriel Valdez (address not available).

**United States**                      **California State Park Rangers Association**

President                              Bud Getty  
IRF Rep                              Mike Lynch, PO Box 292010, Sacramento, California 95829-2010, USA. Phones: 916-558-3734 (home), 916-387-1179 (fax).

**Australia**                              **National Park Rangers Association of Western Australia**

President                              Rory Neal  
Secretary                              Gordon Thomson, 61 Thomas St., Subiaco, 6008 Western Australia (PO Box 414, Subiaco, 6008). Phones: 09-3885400, 09-3823986 (fax).

**Romania**                              **Ecologist Youth of Romania**

IRF Rep                              Calin Georgescu, 27 Academiei, eti II, ap5, sec 1, 70108 Bucharest, Romania. Phones: 401-6150232, 401-3124263 (fax).

**Portugal**                              **Associacao Portuguesa de Guardas e Vigilantes da Natureza**

Secretary                              Francisco Jose Semedo Correira, c/o Parques Natural de Sintra-Cascais, Rua General Alves Rocardas 10 2 Esq, 2710 Sintra, Portugal.

**Iceland**                              **Iceland Rangers Association**

IRF Rep                              Kristinn Stefansson, Landvaroafelag Islands, PO Box 696, 121 Reykjavik, Iceland. Phones: 354-7-81812 (work fax).

**Nepal**                              **Rangers Association of Nepal**

Secretary                              Ashok Khand, Royal Chitwan National Park, Kashara, Chitwan, Nepal. Phones: 977-56-21932, 977-1-229380 (fax).

**Kenya**                              **Individual**

IRF Rep                              David O. Onsembe, District Warden Office, Post Office Box 879, Kakamega, Kenya, East Africa.

**Finland**                              **Individual**

IRF Rep                              Trygve Lofroth, Finnish Forest and Park Service, Archipelago District, 21 710, Finland.

**Sweden**                              **Individual**

IRF Rep                              Thomas Hansson, Stenhuvuds National Park, S-27735 Kivik, Sweden. Phone: 46-414-70677 (phone and fax).

**France**                              **Individual**

IRF Rep                              Jean Marie Cevasco, Parc National du Mercantour, 10 place Guillaume Tell, 06380 Sospel, France. Phone: 33-9304-1332.

**Australia****Individual**

IRF Rep

Kristen Appel, PO Box 1046, Alice Springs, Northern Territory 0871, Australia. Phones: 61-89-569770, 61-89-569819 (fax).

**Malta****Individual**

IRF Rep

Alexander L. Borg, Malta Planning Authority, Sultana Building/3, Mediatix Place, Zabbar ZBR OZ, Malta. Phone: 356691978, 356464804 (fax).

(Individuals are named as IRF representatives only in instances in which they are working to establish national ranger organizations).