



INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

Winter, 1999

Volume 6

Number 1

Note from the Editor

There was no Fall edition of the International Ranger Federation Newsletter due to the editor's extended illness. We have accordingly skipped from Summer, 1998, to Winter, 1999. The Spring, 1999, issue will appear in March. PLEASE send information on your ranger association by March 1, 1999.

IRF News

President's Report

Since there was no fall newsletter, many of you have likely not heard that my home park in England approved a six month leave of absence for me so that I could place full time and attention on the work of the Federation. This came about through the efforts of many people, particularly fund raisers led by treasurer Mike Marshall. The six months began in October and will end in April. The time has flown by, but considerable headway has been made in a number of areas.

In September, I flew to Portugal on a private visit. During my stay, though, I met with Manuel Franca Doria and Maria Cunha of the Portugese Ranger Association. Among other things, we talked about contacts between Portugal and Brazil so that IRF could help the Brazilians establish a ranger association. Both Manuel and Maria have contacts in Brazil and will be working on this.

During early October, I attended the Europarc Conference in Mallorca and gave a workshop on IRF. Attending were delegates from Russia, Germany, Austria, Italy, Slovenia and Hungary. I talked about the history and development of IRF and about the next world congress. The workshop was useful in clarifying the term "ranger" and gave me the opportunity to encourage the formation of ranger associations. I also had the chance to talk with a number of delegates from the countries represented. Meetings were held with:

- Victor Popov, director of national parks in Russia, and Natalia Danilina, the IUCN/WCPA vice chair for Russia. They reported that there are 1,000 rangers in Russia and that they have a great desire to communicate with other rangers. Information on developing a ranger association will be sent to Natalia; Vlado Vancura, who speaks Russian, will be working on developing further contacts.

- Fred van der Vegte, director of Kennermeduinen National Park in the Netherlands. Fred plans on starting a ranger association and will be provided with support materials.
- Martin Solar from Slovenia. Martin has provided a contact which should lead to the establishment of a ranger association.
- Leszek Lubczynski, director of national parks in Poland. Leszek has agreed to support the development of a Polish ranger association. Zbig Niewadomski, who attended the San Jose congress, has been trying to establish an association, but has met with some resistance from people who fear a trade union.
- Delegates from Norway, Latvia, Lithuania, Serbia, Hungary, Bulgaria, France and Spain, all of whom expressed interest in the work being done by IRF and offered to find contacts. I will be working with Vlado on developing these possibilities.
- Eva Pomgratz, director of Europarc. We agreed to a number of ways that IRF and Europarc could work together - an exchange of newsletters, articles by IRF for the Europarc Bulletin, links between web sites that IRF and Europarc are both in the process of developing, Europarc consultation with IRF on future ranger training courses, joint development of a "good practices" guide for rangers, and development of a memorandum of understanding outlining specific ways in which the two organizations will cooperate in the future.

I attended the English Countryside Management Association's annual conference in mid-October, where I gave a presentation on current developments in the federation and provided details about the congress in South Africa. During the conference, I had the chance to talk with Adrian Philips, chair of IUCN/WCPA, about a number of topics. Adrian is very supportive of IRF and agrees that we should develop closer links with IUCN at the regional level. He also provided some advice on possible funding sources.

October travels concluded with a trip to Slovakia, Poland and Austria. The trip to Slovakia was funded by that government and an English fund that was presenting a ranger award. I addressed a meeting of the Slovak Ranger Association, then traveled to Tatra National Park for discussions with Vlado Vancura about new ranger organizations, training and a host of other IRF topics. I then continued on to Poland, where I discussed the formation of a Polish ranger association with the staff at Tatra and Ojcow National Parks, and to Vienna, where I met with Prof. Bernd Lotsch, head of the Natural History Museum in Vienna, who is a strong supporter of IRF and is interested in helping start a ranger association in Austria.

In November, I was the guest speaker at the Scottish Countryside Ranger Association's annual conference. Scotland is on the verge of designating its first national parks, and debates on this are intense. SCRA continues to be a strong supporter of IRF. A second trip in November was to the U.S. Association of National Park Rangers' annual "rendezvous", held this year in Tucson, Arizona. I met with vice president Rick Smith and many ANPR colleagues on a wide variety of issues, particularly development of ranger associations in Central and South America (see below) and on fund raising for delegates to the Third World Congress from nations that will be less able to afford to send rangers to South Africa.

Although I have been traveling a lot, I've also had the chance to work on IRF business while at home, including responses to a great deal of correspondence, discussions on the development of an IRF web site, work on the structure and functions of the federation and its international executive council, and efforts to link up with rangers worldwide.

The latter continues to be exciting, as a number of new national and regional associations joining IRF in the near future. Here's a summary of where we stand in our discussions with those organizations as of this winter. The name of the lead contact in IRF is noted at the end of each entry.

South/Central America

- Ecuador - The 110-member Galapagos Ranger Association has asked for affiliation with IRF. The Association of National Park Rangers endorsed their application, and they are our newest member organization. It appears likely that other Ecuadorian rangers will also sign up in the near future. Rick Smith.
- Paraguay - Contact is being made with AGUAPA, the Paraguayan ranger organization. Juan Carlos Gambarotta.

- Venezuela - An individual application is expected soon. Rick Smith.
- Cuba - An application for membership is expected. Rick Smith.
- Panama - An initial approach has been made with national rangers. Ronald Mora.
- Argentina - An application is expected. Rick Smith.
- Trinidad - An initial expression of interest in membership has been received. Bill Wade.
- Bolivia - An expression of interest in membership has been received and is being pursued. Rick Smith.
- Mexico - Same as above. Rick Smith.

Europe

- Russia - An application is pending. Vlado Vancura.
- Slovenia - An individual representative application is expected. Gordon Miller.
- Norway - Initial contact has been made, interest has been expressed, an application is pending. Gordon Miller.
- Poland - Meetings and correspondence have been held with Polish rangers. Zbig Niewadomski.
- Spain - A new, nationwide Spanish Ranger Association was to be formally chartered on January 24, 1999. An application for membership in IRF is expected. Gordon Miller.
- Ukraine - A letter has been sent; a reply is awaited. Gordon Miller.
- Netherlands - Significant headway has been made in forming a national association. Gordon Miller.

Asia

- Vietnam - Contact has been made with Vietnamese rangers, who have expressed an interest in membership. Gordon Miller.
- China - We are awaiting a reply to a letter to a contact in Hunan Province. Gordon Miller.
- India - We are awaiting a reply to information sent to interested Indian rangers. Gordon Miller.
- Indonesia - A letter has been sent to interested rangers. Gordon Miller.
- Philippines - Same. Gordon Miller.

Africa

- Senegal - A letter and membership information has been sent to a contact in Senegal. Gordon Miller.
- Gambia - Same. Gordon Miller.

IRF-Sponsored Training in Mexico

Vice President Rick Smith attended a law enforcement training course in Valle de Bravo, Mexico, co-sponsored by IRF and the Mexican Natural Resources Law Enforcement agency, PROFEPA. Rick gave the keynote address on behalf of IRF. Fifty-four rangers from 14 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean attended the course, which consisted of both classroom and field activities.

While there, Rick accepted one provisional IRF affiliation from three Venezuelan rangers who are in the process of forming a national association of park rangers. He also met with rangers from Cuba, Argentina and Ecuador and reviewed their progress toward affiliation. Rick believes that IRF will receive soon receive affiliation requests from these countries. He also received strong expressions of interest in affiliation from Bolivian and Mexican rangers.

The participants in the training course all signed a declaration, prepared by a small committee of the participants. Among other things, the declaration (below) endorses the San Jose Declaration, adopted during the Second World Congress of the IRF last September. The declaration also urges the formation of national ranger organizations and their affiliation with the IRF. Rick reports that he answered countless questions about the upcoming Third World Congress, now scheduled for September, 2000.

This was the first training course that IRF has sponsored in the Western Hemisphere. Rick says that the course evaluations contain many lessons for agencies wishing to sponsor subsequent training courses, an activity strongly endorsed in the declaration.

The text of the Valle de Bravo Declaration follows:

We, the participants in the first training course for Latin American park rangers, held in Valle de Bravo, State of Mexico, United States of Mexico, from October 26 to October 31, 1998, representing the feelings of the rangers from 15 countries, and recognizing the role played in sponsoring the training course by the International Ranger Federation (IRF) and the Mexican Federal Solicitor's Office for the Protection of the Environment (PROFEPA), a branch of Mexico's Department of the Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries (SEMARNAP), and conscious of the need to undertake actions to reverse the deterioration in natural resources, declare:

- That we ratify the Declaration of San Jose, Costa Rica, adopted during the Second World Congress of the IRF, held from the 25th to the 29th of September, 1997, and approved by representatives from 41 countries on 6 continents.
- That we recognize, support and value the contributions of female park rangers and urge that they work under conditions of equality.
- That we encourage the development of means and methods of communication between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in relation to protected area management, paying special attention to critical issues such as interpretation, education, training, protection programs, and environmental legislation, as well as the development and implementation of general management plans for all protected areas in the region.
- That countries of the region should seek to identify ecological corridors and propose the creation of protected natural areas, using agreed-upon criteria, and develop common protection programs and plans to guarantee species survival.
- That countries should concentrate their efforts on mitigating existing environmental problems that are the result of conflicts between the efforts to preserve natural resources and the efforts to use these resources, promoting the implementation of alternatives that lead to sustainable development.
- That countries should expand the role of the park ranger beyond that of only an agent for the protection of natural resources to one of being an integral participant in the management of protected areas.
- That countries, to the extent possible, should develop ways to value the professional role that park rangers should play in not only protected areas themselves, but in their zones of influence.
- That countries should establish suitable means to enhance the professionalization of park rangers.
- That countries should develop rules and regulations which guide the activities of their park rangers.
- That we propose to the IRF that it publish information bulletins that address the fundamental interests of Latin American and Caribbean nations.
- That countries should take into account professional, moral and ethical requirements that park rangers should possess when assigning the necessary personnel to protected areas.
- That we support the creation of national associations of park rangers.
- That countries should promote the interchange of park rangers and the sponsoring of events with the objective of keeping alive a spirit of cooperation and international solidarity in the conservation of natural resources.
- That we support the creation and good management of national systems of protected areas.
- That we consider that any action which leads to the deterioration of any one protected area adversely affects the system as a whole.
- That we defend the right of every person to live in a healthy environment that satisfies his development and quality of life.

IN LIGHT OF ALL THAT IS EXPRESSED ABOVE, we consider that the implementation of the recommendations of this declaration should lead to the creation, in Latin America and the Caribbean, of unified, organized and trained corps of park rangers who can successfully meet the challenges of the new millennium.

Third World Congress

Progress continues to be made on preparations for the Third World Congress in Kruger National Park in September, 2000 - just 19 months from now. A brochure has been completed and mailed out which has details on the congress. It contains a form to be submitted if you're interested in receiving further information on the congress. If you don't have the brochure, you can still respond by sending your name, organization, address, phone number, fax number and/or Internet address to: The Secretariat, IRF Congress, PO Box 147, SKUKUZA 1350, Kruger National Park, South Africa. The telephone/telefax number is 27-13-7355195; the e-mail address is merle@mpu.co.za.

Meanwhile, rangers in England are working on a project entitled "Africa in the Roar" in which IRF members will be driving three four-wheel-drive vehicles from Egypt to Kruger NP, picking up rangers on the way. The event will be reported at a web site: <http://ds.dial.pipex.com/town/street/xhm74/index.html>. Declan Keiley of CMA would like to know of any potential funding sources for this project. You can contact him at gillingham.broads@dial.pipex.uk.

Sales Items

Colin Dilcock reports that IRF pins and decals are available to member associations, who may then sell them to their members. IRF does not sell directly to individuals due to costs. If your association would like to acquire pins or decals, please contact Colin, whose new Internet address appears below.

Federation Directory

There have been some changes to the IRF Directory which was sent out with the summer 1998 newsletter. Please make these changes to the directory:

- Galapagos Ranger Association - The Internet address for this new member association is wachot@fcdarwin.org.ec. The president's name is Ruben Cevallos Jimenez. Further information will appear in a coming edition.
- Romanian Ranger Association - The new Internet address for Calin Georgescu is ncsd@sdnp.ro. Calin is currently working for the National Center for Sustainable Development in Romania.
- Asociacion De Guardaparques y Guias de Naturaleza - Juan Carlos Gambarotta also has a new Internet address. He can be reached at jgambaro@adinet.com.uy.
- Slovakian Ranger Association - Vlado Vancura has both a new Internet address and new phone numbers. His phone numbers are 421-844-221-214 (work), 421-844-223-436 (home); his Internet address is vlado@aprojekt.sk.
- Canadian National Park Wardens Association - Mark Halley has moved to a new park. His new home address is Box 343, Tobermory, Ontario, Canada, NOH 2R0. His home phone is 519-596-2233; his work phone is 519-596-2062. Mark's Internet address remains the same.
- English Countryside Management Association - Colin Dilcock has a new Internet address: C.Dilcock@northyorkmoors-npa.gov.uk.
- Naturvejleder Foreningen i Danmark - Ida Marie Jensen has a new Internet address: ima@nathist.aau.dk.
- Iceland Wardens Association - The new IRF representative for the association is Gloey Finnsdottir.
- Associazione Ligure Agenti Di Vigilanza Ambientale - Augusto Atturo has a new Internet address: ecopol@iol.t. The Italian ranger association's web site has also changed; it is now <http://users.iol.it/ecopol>.

News About IRF Associations

Asociacion De Guardaparques y Guias de Naturaleza (Uruguay)

The Uruguayan Ranger Association announced in its bulletin, Custodios, that its members have reservations about the contents of a proposed protected area law that is pending in the Uruguayan congress. The association has asked for assistance from the IRF in suggesting language that could be included in the act that would eliminate hunting and carrying of firearms within Uruguayan protected areas. The IRF sent suggestions. Updates on this situation will appear in future newsletters.

The Fondo Para Las Americas approved \$23,000 in funding last December for a training course for rangers in Uruguay which is being sponsored by the association. The course will be four months long, with many days in the field. We are very proud of having the opportunity to increase and improve the quality of Uruguayan rangers.

Uruguay has a new protected area - Arequita National Park. It is only 1,000 hectares, but this is not bad for Uruguay. It has an endemic white flower bromelia and one of the few caves in the country. Now we need at least one ranger to protect it, but this is not easy because the government does not want more civil servants. The association will again have to show the importance of our profession.

We have also learned of a good bulletin created in Argentina. Some time ago, the first issue of Guardaparques en Patagonia, edited by Ricardo Pereyra, was published. The aim of the bulletin is to raise the quality of the profession and maintain communications among Patagonian rangers. The e-mail address is lagunablanca@zapala.com.ar.

Juan Carlos Gambarotta, Chair

Associazione Ligure Agenti Di Vigilanza Ambientale (Italy)

A new law relating to various environmental matters has been approved by the Italian parliament and became official on December 14th. One article of the bill will permit coastal regional parks to enforce marine resource regulations with their own park rangers. It will now be possible for local park authorities to create marine park ranger positions, which would be more specialized in wildlife and environmental patrols than Coast Guard personnel. Thanks to the same law, two new national parks - Alta Murgia and Val d'Agri - will be established in southern Italy.

Augusto Atturo, Chair

Scottish Countryside Ranger Association (Scotland)

Since the last newsletter, SCRA has hosted a return visit from our "twin" ranger association in the Landvarafelag Islands in Iceland. Four Icelandic rangers spent ten days touring around various ranger stations throughout Scotland, getting an overview of our different systems and approaches to work. We hope that the visit strengthens the ties between our two nations and will lead to a job exchange next summer.

We have been contacted by a Spanish ranger, Luis Cavero Sancho, who is looking for articles for a ranger magazine he edits called "Guardabosques." He's also interested in establishing links between Spanish rangers and the IRF. To this end, we have put him in touch with Gordon Miller.

Tony Wilson, IRF Representative

Association of National Park Rangers (United States)

The U.S. Association of National Park Rangers held its annual ranger rendezvous in Tucson, Arizona, in December. At this meeting, ANPR's international committee designed its fund raising strategy for the Third World Congress. The object of the fund raising will be to seek donations to support the participation of rangers from the Western Hemisphere at the South African congress who would not be able to attend without some financial assistance. The committee also considered whether ANPR should enter into a partnership with one of the hemisphere's newly formed ranger associations to assist that association in its first years of operation.

Rick Smith, IRF Representative

Slovak Ranger Association (Slovakia)

October 24, 1998 was a big day for rangers in Slovakia. We held a small celebration on the occasion of officially finishing one part of a bilateral project between Slovakia and Great Britain entitled "Improving Ranger Service in Protected Areas in Slovakia." The project includes a training program and our own Slovak training manual - methods for ranger training based on the experience of rangers in Peak National Park and on trainers' skills from Peak's training center at Losehill Hall. The training manual includes diverse ranger activities, such as legislation, environmental education, communication, practical land and resource management, rescue service, and outdoor activities. The training manual has been approved by the Ministry of the Environment, which makes it official.

Vlado Vancura, Chairman

Naturvejleder Foreningen i Danmark (Denmark)

The ministers of environment from Europe, the former USSR states, the U.S. and Canada met in June to discuss and sign an agreement about the rights of citizens to deal with matters concerning the environment. In connection to this conference, about 20 NGOs had exhibitions and held other activities. Naturvejleder Foreningen i Danmark took part in the exhibition and some activities, and told delegates about our work during three days of the conference.

Ida Marie Jensen, IRF Representative

Upcoming Events

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| March 8-11, 1999 | "Managing Sensitive Environments: Fulfilling the Vision," 1999 Parks Conference, California State Park Rangers Association and Park Rangers Association of California. Wyndham Garden Hotel, San Rafael, California, USA. Contact: Send questions via the Internet to parks1999@hotmail.com . |
| September 10-16, 2000 | International Ranger Federation, Third World Congress. Kruger National Park, Republic of South Africa. Contact: John Forrest via the Internet at gra@sco.eastcoast.co.za . |