

PARK LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION

Serving the Park Law Enforcement Community for over 26 Years

NEWSLETTER



CHICAGO HITS ONE OUT OF THE PARK

by Mike Burko, PLEA Editor

IPLEA Hosts 2007 Park Law Enforcement Association National Conference

The Illinois Park Law Enforcement Association (IPLEA) and the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County joined with the Forest Preserve Districts of Kane and Will Counties, the Fox Valley, Lockport Township and Rockford Park Districts, the McHenry County Conservation District and the Park District Risk Management Agency to present the Park Law Enforcement Association's annual national conference.

The conference was held Wednesday June 6th thru Friday the 8th at the Hyatt in Lisle, Illinois.

The PLEA board met on Monday June 5th. The Board welcomed its new members Gary Dodson, Rob White, Sgt. Reginald McCrary and Captain Raymond Castro Jr. (present) to the PLEA Board of Directors.



Photo courtesy of Jerry Venable

The Board discussed a number of issues including membership, future conferences, registration rates for conferences, program committee, scholarships, development of a speakers bureaus, the PLEA website, fees for posting job openings, and potential board openings due to future retirements.

Later that evening the hosts and vendors sponsored a reception, which allowed the attendees an opportunity to meet with and see the PLEA vendors and sponsors.



Photo courtesy of Jerry Venable

The conference opened on June 6th with the posting of colors by the Forest Preserve District of Dupage County, bagpipes by Aurora Police Department and the National Anthem being sung by Lisa Hodges of the Rockford Park District.

Wednesday's featured speaker was Gordon Graham. Gordon Graham, a 30-year veteran of California Law Enforcement, delivered a riveting presentation on Organizational and Operational Risk Management, Civil Liability, Professionalism, and Ethical Decision Making.



Photo courtesy of Jerry Venable

Mr. Graham's presentation was eye opening, humorous and specific to our business. Mr. Graham left the participants with an experience that they will carry with them for years.

Thursday program included a tour of famed Soldiers Field, and the Chicago lakefront. While at the lakefront, participants were treated to a tour of the Illinois DNR, Chicago P.D. and Coast Guard marine patrol units.



Photo courtesy of Jerry Venable

The evening finished off with a lavish dinner aboard the Spirit of Chicago and time on our own at the Navy Pier.

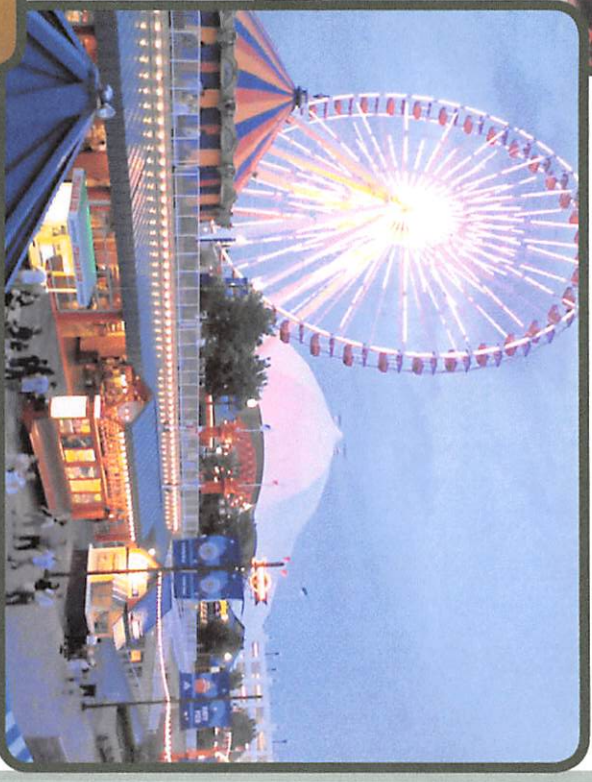
While on the boat, the Association President, Steve Newsom and Past President Ralph Hays presented Tim Curtin with the Association's Lifetime Achievement award.

The conference wrapped up on Friday with a presentation and equipment display by Mr. Thomas Mefferd of the DuPage County Office of Emergency Management.



Photo courtesy of Jerry Venable

Below are some more photos courtesy of Jerry Venable of our great time in Chicago!
See you in Cleveland in 2008!





PLEA 2008 CONFERENCE

29th ANNUAL CONFERENCE CLEVELAND, OHIO

May 5-9, 2008

Hilton Garden Inn – Downtown

www.clevelandgateway.stayhgi.com

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Valerie Van Brocklin, Former Prosecutor, Speaker & Contributing Author – SOLO: On Her Own Adventure www.valvanbrocklin.com

TOPIC: *The Spirit of Leadership: Winning Hearts & Inspiring Action*



**Co-hosted by:
Cleveland Metroparks
&
Lake Metroparks**

UNEXPECTED LINE OF DUTY DEATH

On June 7th, 2006 the Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Department was impacted by the sudden and unexpected death of one of its members. Sergeant Robert "Mickey" Sims of our department was working a part time law enforcement position at a local college. Sergeant Sims was making his rounds when he suffered a heart attack and was pronounced dead at a local hospital, a short time later.

There was an immediate response from members of the Ranger Department who arrived at the hospital to support the family. The family, needless to say was devastated by their loved ones death and were, understandably in turmoil.

Being a friend to Mickey, Chief Greg Loftus designated me as a "Liaison Officer" to the family. The Chief advised it would be my responsibility to stand by them throughout the funeral and beyond, to assist in making their grieving period easier in anyway we could.

Arrangements were immediately made to station a Ranger and a marked patrol unit at the family home to be there in case the family need us and as a direct line of communication between the family and the department.

Following the funeral it was decided that we would maintain the "Liaison Officer" to assist the family in obtaining any financial benefits they may qualify for. This was a new experience for our department and we had no formal process or starting point to do this. Our best opportunity to locate and learn about such benefits would come from the computer.

Following some computer research we found an organization called "Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc." This is a comprehensive and very thorough and caring site. It is obvious these are people who have experienced the death of a loved one and have taken the responsibility to assist survivors of law-enforcement, line of duty death. The site is extensive and comprehensive and the best way to learn who they are is to go to the website and see what they offer. The site can be accessed through www.ohiocops.com.

In going to the site I began to learn there are numerous benefits families in this situation are eligible to obtain. The benefits range from local benefits through your own Human Resources Department, to State benefits, Federal benefits, corporate benefits, Blue Coats, Inc, Veteran's Benefits, and Social Security. These certainly are not all inclusive.

One of the documents I learned about from "Concerns for Police Survivors" was their "Personal Law Enforcement Financial Diary". This is a comprehensive publication which you provide to your family and includes most, if not all, pertinent financial information; should a member die suddenly or in the line of duty. The publication is truly a gift to your family that will lessen the trauma and confusion that follows such a death. The publication can be downloaded from the above site and all they ask is a short credit line in your document.

As a result of our experience we were able to obtain a fully paid college education for the 16 year old surviving daughter. We assisted the spouse in applying for Worker's Compensation, and Federal benefits through the "Home Town Heroes Act" which presently is in the amount of \$267,000.00. Their case was referred to Bluecoats, Inc., and they are presently being assisted by an attorney pursuing what may rightfully and morally be theirs.

The Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Department now has a process in place which will allow for the appointment of a "Liaison Officer" should a line of duty death ever occur again. In addition we have used the financial diary and have provided a copy to each ranger and their family; along with the above benefit information. This was done through a formal in-service training seminar. In addition, we developed a manual which is kept in the Chief's office with all the above information. By using the manual any member of the department can be a "Liaison" to the family.

Having suffered through our loss and the consequences thereafter, we are now better trained and better equipped to deal with any such events in the future. Do not allow the "It can't happen here" mentality prevail in your agency. Be prepared.

If anyone wishes to contact us regarding any of this information, please feel free to do so by contacting the Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Department @ 440-331-5530. The in-service training session is about 1 hour in length and I would be glad to present it to your department free of charge.

Lieutenant John V. Kosek, Sr.
Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Department

PLEA DISCUSSION BOARD NEWS

Parkranger.com gets 60,000 page requests per month and 40,000 of those are for our discussion board! In order to fully utilize this resource, we have a few suggestions for all of you who use this board, or for PLEA members who haven't yet visited.

We have established some places on the discussion board for PLEA members to share links to pictures of your departments, vehicles, and equipment, or just to inform everyone about your special events or news. Since this area of our website gets so much traffic this is the perfect place to communicate with the park law enforcement community about PLEA and what we do!

When you sign up as a new member, we encourage you to be visible as a PLEA member by using PLEA somewhere in your login name or identify yourself in your posts or signature, so that board users will be able to know of your affiliation with PLEA. We can encourage people to join by letting them see what we do and how we as PLEA members believe in the power of joining together to share our experiences, and knowledge.

The discussion board is also the place to go for anyone new or old in the park law enforcement field. There is a wide variety of subjects discussed, and a great deal of information is available there. There are also many Rangers interested in sharing patches, setting up photo sharing on sites like Facebook, and many other opportunities for networking.

Park Ranger Discussion Board
A place to discuss Park Law Enforcement Issues

[FAQ](#) [Search](#) [Memberlist](#) [Usergroups](#)
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Wyoming Ranger Shooting

[new topic](#) [post reply](#) [Park Ranger Discussion Board Forum Index -> Park Law Enforcement Issues](#)

[View previous topic :: View next topic](#)

Author	Message
NarcRanger Joined: 29 Apr 2007 Posts: 3 Location: National Park Service	<p>Posted: 29 Apr 2007 11:21 pm Post subject: Wyoming Ranger Shooting</p> <p>I recently heard about a Wyoming Ranger having been in a shooting last summer at Glendo State Park during a large disturbance. Any truth to that? What happened?</p> <p>"Q: Do you have any physical impairments in your legs, knees, or ankles? A: Yes - I just had eye surgery." - A drunk driver I arrested.</p> <p>Back to top profile pm email</p>
Weste Joined: 11 Aug 2006 Posts: 6 Location: Cheyenne, WY	<p>Posted: 04 May 2007 10:04 am Post subject: Glendo State Park Disturbance</p> <p>NarcRanger,</p> <p>Yes there was one shot fired.</p> <p>The brief details are there was a disturbance between two groups of campers in adjoining campsites at about 0100 hours. A third party attempted to intervene to break up the disturbance and was cut on the arm, presumably with a knife. Two Rangers arrived at the scene within a few minutes and bystanders identified an individual as one of the participants. The Rangers moved toward the suspect, who charged toward one of the Rangers. The second Ranger saw something shiny in the suspects hand and believed the suspect was attacking his partner. He fired one round at the suspect but missed. The suspect was able to out run both Rangers but was detained shortly thereafter by other officers in the area.</p> <p>The victim was unable to positively identify the suspect (or anyone else) as having been involved in the incident. Both groups involved in the disturbance are suspected of being affiliated with street gang activity in the Denver metro area.</p>

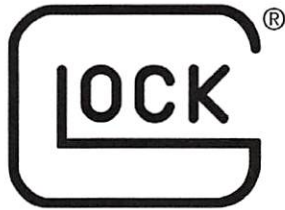
just go to www.parkranger.com- and click on discussion board

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Colonel
Hamilton County Park District
10245 Winton Road
Cincinnati, OH 45231
(513) 521-3980

Fred McCormick**Vice President**

Sergeant
Minneapolis Park Police Dept.
3800 Bryant Ave. South
Minneapolis, MN 55409
(612) 370-4777

Blake Frigon**Treasurer**

Sergeant
Johnson County Park Police
7900 Renner Road
Lenexa, Kansas 66219
(913) 438-7275

Rick Haake**Secretary**

Deputy Chief
Forest Preserve District
of DuPage County
P.O. Box 5000
Wheaton, IL 60189-5000
(630) 871-6417

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Capt. Carl Nielsen

Bureau of Florida Park Patrol
SW District
2295 Victoria Ave.
Ft. Myers, FL 33901-2896
(239)332-6975

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Mike Burko

Chief of Rangers
Lake Metroparks Ranger Dept.
11189 Spear Road
Concord, Ohio 44077
(440) 358-7290

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Nesbit

Assistant Chief
Saint Louis County Parks
41 South Central Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63105-1734
(316)963-9211

Captain Raymond R. Castro Jr.

City of San Antonio Park Police
600 HemisFair Park, bldg # 337
San Antonio, Texas, 78205,
210-207-8592

Nate Pinkard

Chief
Mill Creek Metro Park District
P.O. Box 596
Canfield, OH 44046
(330) 744-3848

R. Dan Crone

Park Ranger
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Saylorville Lake
5600 N. W. 78th Ave
Johnston, IA 50131
(515) 276-4656

Dr. Bruce Wicks

Assoc. Professor
Department of Leisure Studies
University of Illinois
104 Huff Hall
1206 South Fourth St.
Champaign, IL 61820
(217) 333-4410

Bill Jacobs

Captain (Retired)
Minneapolis Park Police Dept.
19175 Rutledge Rd.
Deephaven, MN 55391
(952) 473-2084

Stuart Foland

Past President
Captain
Johnson County Park Police Dept.
7900 Renner Road
Lenexa, Kansas 66219
(913) 438-7275
Fax (913) 438-8074

Larry Habegger

Chief Ranger
Oklahoma State Parks
15 North Robinson, Ste; 210,
Oklahoma City, OK 73102
(405)521-3416

Larry Brownlee Sr.

Past President
Division Chief
Maryland Nat'l Capital Park Police
Prince George's County Division
6700 Riverdale Road
Riverdale, Maryland 20737
(301) 429-5620
Fax (301) 577-2498

PLEA STATE AFFILIATES

KANSAS PLEA

Rick Martin/President
Park Manager
Kanopolis State Park
Kansas Dept. of Wildlife & Parks
200 Horsethief Rd.
Marquette, KS 67464
(785) 546-2565

OHIO PLEA

Dale Steele/President
Ranger Lieutenant
Greene County Park District
651 Dayton-Xenia Rd.
Xenia, OH 45385
(937)562-7405

ILLINOIS PLEA

Jeff Diedrick/President
Chief of Police
McHenry County Cons. District
18410 US Hwy 14
Woodstock, IL 60098
(815)338-6228

**UTAH STATE PARK
OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**

Floyd Powell/President
264 North 900 East
Brigham City, UT 84302-2313
floydpowell@utah.gov
(435) 734-9494

PLEA Calendar of Events

May 5-9, 2008

29th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CLEVELAND, OHIO

Hilton Garden Inn – Downtown

www.clevelandgateway.stayhgi.com

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