



PARK LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 3

www.parkranger.com

SEPTEMBER 1998

Letter from the President

Colleagues and associates, it is an honor to write to you in my first open forum letter. It is still a little hard to grasp, but serving as president of the Park Law Enforcement Association just hasn't sunk in yet. Maybe it has been the busy spring and summer at work that has kept me from thinking about all the responsibilities. Quite possibly just trying to keep up with my wife and my six year old daughter has kept me preoccupied. As we work through the dog days of summer, I look at P.L.E.A., its history and the past-president's list and notice I have some very big shoes to fill. I am honored to take on the task, and feel confident about my term, and P.L.E.A.'s future. As your president, I accept the challenge, and I am committed to serving this association, and leaving my name in the archives with my predecessors.



As an organization, we are growing rapidly and there is a lot going on. As President, my goals are simple.

- 1. We must keep our members more informed.**
- 2. We must expand our membership base.**
- 3. We should begin to use our website as a way to create an information base helpful to all Park Rangers.**

I have already been on-line regularly with some of our members exchanging information and now through the discussion forum members and non-members alike can share information about Park Law Enforcement.

Now we plan to do the same with our Newsletter. We want you, the members, to be more involved with the content of the newsletter. Contribute articles, cartoons, and campfire stories. We will begin publishing the newsletter bi-monthly. Another goal is to offer our members, whether that be on-line, by phone, or through our newsletter, are more services. We are adding a toll free number for your questions and orders. We can now securely accept credit cards for your memberships or gear online at www.parkranger.com.

With board approval this fall at P.L.E.A.'s mid-year conference, I will be proposing that we hire a full-time administrator, one which besides handling the memberships, will be our editor, web-site host, and publisher. As a professional organization we have grown to a point where the Board of Directors can no longer keep up with all of the duties, and meet the needs of the membership properly without some help. I have already been hard at work with our website, which has had over 60,000 hits since last year, and have been looking at some more items to add to our merchandise besides the clothing lines. Adding law enforcement equipment, safety items, and outdoor gear to our line, along with footwear, and a wider variety of clothing products is something we will be working on in the next few months.

As president, I see us planning for the future. Protecting our wildlife areas and parks down the road with competent educated people, is something this organization should be a part of. Every night, as I answer E-mail, I am rejuvenated about my job and the profession that I am in. You would be too, if you could see the numbers of youth wanting to become part of this business. The Park Law Enforcement Association should be there, and we should be the answer to their questions! Providing them with our insights into educational information, possible training perspectives, or even a list of internship programs, is something we need to be a part of. Whether that be a good college to attend, or the names of agencies to talk to, they need our help, and we will be needing theirs someday. I want to look at a scholarship program in our near future, and possibly offering a selected few students the chance to attend our annual conference. Believe it or not, I even receive E-mail from kids as young as grade school wanting to find out about this profession, or to just finish a book report.

I believe in P.L.E.A., our membership, in our future and that together we can preserve our heritage and shape our future together.
Thanks for your support!

A Special Thanks!

The P.L.E.A. Board of Directors wishes to extend a special thank-you to the agencies who have sponsored or hosted Annual Park Law Enforcement Workshops.

The development and presentation of quality programs is hard work, to say the least, which often goes unrecognized. The efforts of the individuals from these agencies have moved the Association forward and provided an opportunity for the professional growth of P.L.E.A. members.

On behalf of the Association, thank you.

National Park Service

Palisades Interstate Park Commission, NY

Lake County Forest Preserve District, IL

Zion Park District, IL

*Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Dept.
Division of State Parks*

Florida Department of Natural Resources

Johnson County Park District, KS

*Maryland National Capital Planning
Commission*

Hamilton County Park District, OH

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

*Durham Carolina Police Department, Park
Ranger Division*

*Florida Department of Environmental
Protection, Division of Law Enforcement*

*City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division,
NMM*

Be on the lookout for more information!

There are two immediate tasks which P.L.E.A. hopes to accomplish this winter:

1. **Update our membership directory**
2. **Receive information from members**

Please contact us at your convenience to verify our membership records. We hope to publish a member directory at the beginning of 1999.

We want your letters, stories, pictures, etc. for consideration for future newsletters and website postings. The phone lines are open and the internet is primed. *We are ready to hear from you and are eager to respond to your questions, needs, etc.*

There are 3 ways to contact us:

1. **Call 1-877-PARK LAW**
2. *e-mail us at verify@parkranger.com*
3. or Mail to us:
P.L.E.A.
1715 Baltimore Suite C
Kansas City, MO 64108

The P.L.E.A. Newsletter will begin publishing on a bi-monthly basis beginning with this issue. The next newsletter will print in early November, so please contact the editors soon with any input you would like to be considered for Nov/Dec. '98.

Thank you for your patience while waiting for this newsletter. Keep the information coming and we'll keep the newsletters on time. If you would like to advertise in the next newsletter, please contact us for rates and terms.

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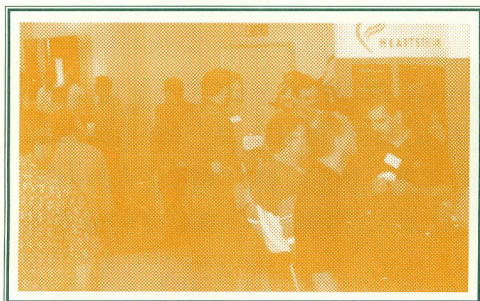
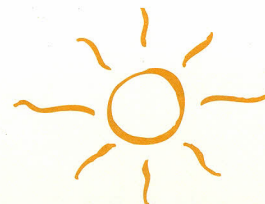
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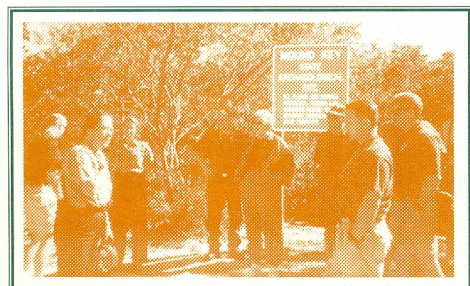
(800) 331-0852 ext. 2904

19th ANNUAL P.L.E.A. CONFERENCE SHINES IN FT. MEYERS, FLORIDA

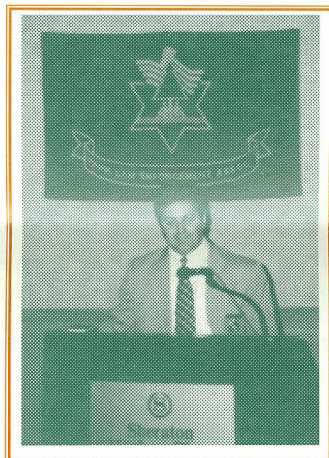


The 19th Annual Conference in Ft. Meyers, Florida lived up to any expectations that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Law Enforcement projected. With enrollment near 125 attendees, and beautiful sunny weather, to go along with the great view over the harbor, the conference was a huge success. The greatest challenge that our host, The Florida Marine Patrol, had to overcome, was trying to keep conference attendees in the sessions and away from the tropical setting at the pool, which just happened to be adjacent to the hallway we had our breaks in.

There were a number of interesting training sessions put together including Environmental Crimes Investigations; Law Enforcement Patrol Techniques, involving mountain bikes, helicopter, patrol boats, all terrain vehicles, and patrol vehicles; an interesting class about protecting our wildlife, and the increasing diversity of the criminal activity involved; along with a boat tour to Mound City Archeological Site, and Lovers Key State Recreational Area, which were rare tours that only conference attendees got to attend, and the general public will never get a chance to explore.



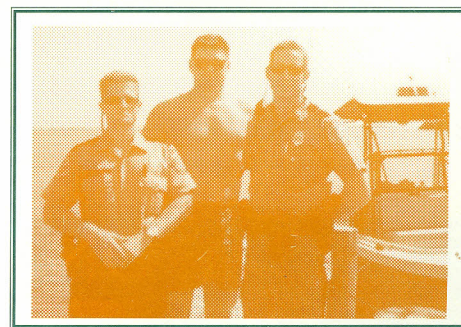
While the attendees were forced to go to sessions, spouses toured the Ft. Meyer's area. The Thomas Edison Home, and Henry Ford Winter Estates were just a few of the attractions besides the nearby beaches, and the many major league baseball teams in spring training nearby. The conference Hotel was right on the harbor and overlooked the marina. The downtown area was within walking distance, but a horse drawn coach ride appealed to some of the attendees. The sounds of music and dance filled the streets after dark, as attendees visited the many shops and dining establishments.



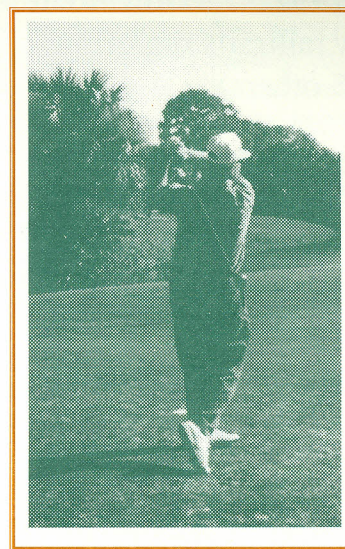
We must compliment The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, The Division of Law Enforcement, and the Florida Marine Patrol. The men and women of this organization went out of their way to host a top notch conference. The hospitality and professionalism that they showed were first class.

A special thanks, to Captain Carl Nielsen for being the ultimate conference coordinator, and for masterminding a superb conference without any glitches. He persevered and continued the tradition that P.L.E.A. has for putting on the finest park law enforcement conferences in the country.

There are others we would like to also thank in Florida, Lt. Colonel Joe Henderson, Lt. Colonel Eric Miller, and Colonel Mickey Watson for their support of P.L.E.A., and for being such advocates of their profession. Many men and women have gained from your experience, time, and effort. Keep up the good work, and thanks from all of us who attended the conference.



We cannot forget some great friends we met along the way. You made our stay a four-star experience. Lt. Keith Barcomb, Lt. Rob Beaton, Officer Randy Bowlin, Officer Kenneth Bowman and Pat Wells. *Thanks!*



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Park Patrol Spotlight on **AIRCRAFT PATROL**



Some park lands are too vast or remote to patrol by any other means than aircraft patrol. Airplanes and helicopters are used by park officers for this type of patrol.

Aircraft are not only used for patrol but also for other valuable missions. Aircraft can be used for spotting and extinguishing material on a fire or by delivering fire fighting crews to a scene of a fire. They also are very helpful during search and rescue missions.

Areas that would take days to search by ground can be covered in a few hours by an aircraft. Rescue Rangers can also be airlifted and dropped directly to a victim and removed in a short time.

Park officers who patrol from aircraft must have extensive and specialized training. They may be trained in areas such as navigation, rope rescue, first aid, fire fighting, rock climbing, search techniques, and communications.

CRIME ON THE TRAILS



A Rails-to-Trails Conservancy survey of 372 trail managers found that only 11 reported crimes against people on their trails in 1995 and 10 in 1996. Although comparable crime figures are scarce, the FBI reported 335 muggings per 100,000 people in 1995 compared to 0.53 per 100,000 users of surveyed trails. Other federal crime statistics show that fewer robberies occurred in parks (6.4%) than in homes (10.1%), parking lots, (13.6%) or on the street (20.7%) in 1992. Download a summary of "Rails-Trails and Safe Communities" at www.railtrails.org/crime-os.html or call (202) 331-9696 for the full report (\$7.95 members, \$9.95 others).



Wildlife Artistry
Cindy Cunningham
Owner/Wildlife Artist
913-422-3111

WORK CONTINUES ON OBTAINING 501.(c)3 STATUS FOR P.L.E.A.

NEW STATUS WOULD MAKE DONATIONS
DEDUCTIBLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

PLEA Director, Tim Curtin, continues his work with tax attorney, Richard Lange, to obtain an IRS exemption as a 501.(c)3 organization. PLEA's current status does not allow deductions on individual tax returns for donations to PLEA, but, does exempt the Association from paying state and federal tax on income. A 501.(c)3 exemption will provide the means for individuals and companies to donate money to PLEA and deduct these donations as charitable contributions.

At this time, a projected five year operational budget is being developed for inclusion in the application and filing packet. Once completed, the packet will be mailed to the I.R. S. office in Washington, D.C. for review. PLEA's attorney will monitor the review process and provide additional information, if necessary. A final ruling is expected prior to the annual conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



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PARK LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION

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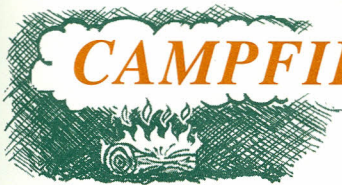
P.L.E.A.
1715 Baltimore Suite C
Kansas City, MO 64108



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AGENCY, \$70 ☐
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Renewal \$70. ☐

P.L.E.A. is affiliated with the NATIONAL RECREATION & PARK ASSOCIATION



CAMPFIRE STORIES

Send us your stories!

This week's campfire story comes from
Koodbeyurtown, U.S.A.



A beautiful lake in Western Koodbeyurtown, U.S.A. lies glistening under the light of a full moon on a cool September evening. A young couple sits parked in a sporty 1957 Chevrolet sedan admiring the view and each other. It is their first date, and after the basketball game they decided to come out to the lake for the beautiful view and to talk and get to know each other better. Things are just beginning to get interesting for the young couple, when a scratching, dragging sound is heard on the roof of their vehicle. Startled, but determined to not appear cowardly, the young man opens the door to look for the source of this noise. As he lifts his head up to look at what is on the roof, the young woman hears a terrible noise and her boyfriend's headless body collapses to the dirt. The young woman begins screaming and never stopped until she ended her own life thirteen years later in a mental hospital only 2 miles from the lake. She never became coherent again. The culprit, "The Hookman", had escaped from the maximum security Federal penitentiary. He has never been apprehended. As far as we know, this is just a story.

This is just one of the stories told about the famed "Hookman" character who supposedly wanders the woods around the Koodbeyurtown Lake. The screaming woman can also reportedly be heard from time to time by a certain Shelter House. There is also a shelter house at the lake that one of the parkrangers will not go to. He says that the swing starts swinging on its own when he goes there.

These stories are often referred to as "modern" myths, and I am sure that many of our parks have their own "Hookman" or "Hatchet Woman". I will be very interested in hearing your particular stories, so that we can scrutinize common elements, and possibly even inspire a good goosebump or two. Send me your stories, and let's make this an interesting column! All submissions will remain confidential if requested and we can change any names for purposes of anonymity.

Campfire Stories Editor
Sgt. Shelton



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UPCOMING EVENTS

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Nashville, Tenn
September, 1999

20th ANNUAL P.L.E.A. CONFERENCE

Albuquerque, New Mexico
March 3-6, 1999

21st ANNUAL P.L.E.A. CONFERENCE

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**20th ANNUAL
P.L.E.A. CONFERENCE**
March 3-6, 1999

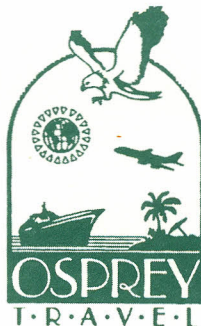
**The City of Albuquerque, Open Space
Division will be the Host Agency for the
1999 P.L.E.A. Conference.**

*The conference will be held at the Sheraton Old
Town Inn from March 3-6 and the theme will be
"Managing and Protecting Cultural Resources".*

The Albuquerque Open Space Division manages over 27,000 acres of natural park lands, including several archaeological sites and is the co-manager of Petroglyph National Monument along with the National Park Service. The conference will focus on issues of managing and protecting archaeological sites and how this differs from managing recreational lands. Tours of Piedras Marcadas Pueblo, a pre-historic Native American pueblo ruin dating back to 1300 A.D.; Petroglyph National Monument; and Acoma Sky City Pueblo, which has been continuously inhabited since approximately 1150 A.D., will be included in the conference.

The Albuquerque Metro Area is a community of close to 700,000 people in the heart of the Southwest and served by 10 major airlines. The average daytime temperature in March is in the mid fifties with a nighttime low in the high twenties.

The Sheraton Old Town Inn has a guaranteed rate of \$75. per night, single or double, from Saturday, Feb. 27 through Monday, March 8, for conference attendees registering by Feb 9, 1999.



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WHERE WERE YOU WHEN?

with your host- Tim Curtin

**PLEA Director, Chief of Ranger Police,
Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Illinois**

As many of you know, I have been working on obtaining a more flexible tax exempt status for the Association. This work requires research of past records to establish a history of the Associations's activities. Members may find the following information interesting; and I wish to offer a challenge. I have attended eleven of the fifteen annual PLEA workshops listed below. Members who have attended more than eleven, please contact me (603)942-6066. I will publish the results in the next newsletter. My bet is that the overall winner will be from an agency west of the Mississippi.

**1984 - Lake Barkley/Cadiz, KY
1985 - Lake Barkley/Cadiz, KY
1986 - Lake Barkley/Cadiz, KY
1987 - Grand Canyon, AZ
1988 - Bear Mountain, NY
1989 - Zion, IL
1990 - Wagoner, OK
1991 - Cocoa Beach, FL**

**1992 - Lenexa, KS
1993 - Reno, NV
1994 - Andover, MD
1995 - Covington, KY
1996 - Austin, TX
1997 - Durham, NC
1998 - Fort Myers, FL**

GOLF COURSE HEIST SPOILED!

*By Lt. Greg Smith
Hamilton County Park District Rangers
Cincinnati, Ohio*

On May 6, 1996, at 6:30 A.M., the Hamilton County Communications Center received a call that the Meadowlinks Golf Course Clubhouse had been burglarized. Golf clubs and equipment worth over fourteen thousand dollars was taken. Two days later, a golf course clubhouse in the City of Cincinnati was burglarized. In that offense the burglars tripped the alarm and just barely escaped apprehension by responding officers. The only items taken in the burglary were golf clubs and golf equipment. Aided by a violent thunderstorm, the burglars eluded police. This time they got away with over five thousand dollars of golf equipment.

Based on the similarities of these two burglaries the Hamilton County Park District Rangers and detectives from District Two of the Cincinnati Police Department teamed up on the case. After several days of cooperation between the two agencies, a break came in the case. An informant in the golf community told a Ranger of an estab-

lishment in the City of Cincinnati where new golf clubs were being sold. These "new golf clubs" had price tags from one of the victimized establishments on them. The informant was able to give them the name of a suspect. Since the clubs were in the City of Cincinnati, Rangers notified CPD of the investigation, and were able to gather information on the suspect from criminal records and CPD,

In order to get the verification that the clubs were those stolen, Rangers went undercover to purchase some of the clubs. Several successful buys were made by a Ranger undercover and a CPD undercover.

Finally, they had enough evidence and search warrants were served and stolen property recovered. The suspect, who admitted to being a fence and dealing in large quantities of stolen merchandise was indicted on eleven felonies. The defendant served one day in jail.

Notwithstanding the sentence, this case illustrates a great degree of teamwork between two agencies, working for a common goal. This was a case where all personalities were set aside and cooperation was the key focus. Unfortunately, the suspect is still on the street and still involved in criminal golf activity.



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