

EXPLORER

The Park Law Enforcement Association Newsletter

SUPPORTING THE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE KEEPING OUR PARKS & WILDLIFE AREAS SAFE

Volume 6

Winter 2002

President's Message

I, like you I'm sure, look back upon last year and don't know where the time has gone since September. We had just completed Labor Day Weekend and were looking forward to the weather change and the predictable slow down once the kids all head back to school. It has been an overstated reality that our lives have all changed since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. From the loss of so many emergency personnel and civilian lives, to our getting on an airplane to visit family or attend a conference, life has changed.

In this newsletter you'll read an article by PLEA member, Ray Brown, who attended our conference in Kansas City last year. It is a first-hand account of his participation at the site that has now become known as Ground Zero. I want to express my appreciation to Ray for sending his article to us and for his and so many others' valiant efforts on September's tragic day.

Moving onto more normal business, my e-mail attempt to have members send me articles for the newsletter met with moderate success. Many of the authors of the information in this newsletter stated it was their first time in submitting an article. My thanks to everyone who has contributed and I'll continue to send out e-mail announcements for articles. If you are not receiving the e-mail announcements, you can send me your e-mail address at nlapera@ebparks.org and I'll include you on the

distribution list.

Our midyear Board Meeting was held on October 5, 2001 during the NRPA Congress in Denver. We had a quorum of board members attending and were able to conduct business. Fred McCormick, from Minneapolis Park Police had responded to my request for interested members to join the Board of Directors and a motion to appoint him as a board member was approved.

My invitation still stands for interested energetic members who want to join the Board of Directors to contact me. The position requires you to attend the yearly PLEA Conference and hopefully the NRPA Congress, where we hold our midyear Board Meeting. You can send me an E-mail or send a letter of interest to: Chief Norman Lapera, East Bay Regional Park Police, 17930 Lake Chabot Road, CA 94546.

This will be my last President's message as I turn over the reins to Stuart Foland at our conference this year in Maryland. It has been a fast two years since we hosted the conference in Oakland. I'm happy to say that the newsletter is back on a consistent publication schedule and will only get better with your submission of articles. I promised the Board I would take over as editor of the newsletter and will continue to do so through the next year. Hope to see as many of you as can attend the conference in March.

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Ohio PLEA

News From Across the Nation

9-11 A call for help

By Raymond G. Brown

The first radio transmission came stating "A plane had just crashed into the World Trade Center." This was soon followed by another transmission "People are jumping out the windows." Inspector R. Gentles and myself were still in the office at 104th Street. As we collected our equipment, another transmission stated "A second plane had crashed into the other tower." We got into my vehicle and with lights and sirens on headed south towards the World Trade Center. As I banked the turn onto West Street in front of Chelsea piers, I got my first look at what damage had been done. The north tower had a large hole in it with flames and smoke coming out. I could only see smoke coming out of the south tower.

I originally pulled my vehicle up in front of the American Express building on West Street and was about to park, when I realized that it might be in the way of the fire trucks. So I pulled around the corner to South Ave and parked it. When we arrived at West Street, I met with Sgt. N. Mercado and seven of the academy officers. I was surprised to see the amount of people that were standing on West Street just looking up at the Trade Center. We set up a perimeter by pushing all the people back (west) towards the water and putting up police tape on the west side of West Street. Once we made sure the area was clear of non-emergency personnel, I tried to make my way north.

I made it as far as Vesey Street when I felt the ground tremble. I heard this thundering sound and saw a cloud of tan smoke, followed by brown, then gray, and then turning to black, the first tower fell. As I was advising the public to move to the north or south, a cameraman told me that there was a woman stuck inside a vehicle east on Vesey Street. Not being able to see my hand in front of my face amidst all this black smoke, I felt my way down Vesey Street by banging my hand on the sides of the vehicles on the street. I must have hit five or six vehicles when I finely heard a woman yelling "Help me, I'm stuck in here". I questioned the woman as to whether she could get out of the car or if she was trapped inside. She stated she could get out but was afraid. I convinced her to get out of the car and hold onto my belt so we

News From Across the Nation

could make our way west towards the water. Once the woman was safe on the promenade, I tried to locate my officers by radio. They were getting the residents out of the building at the south command.

As I made my way south on the promenade, I felt the ground tremble again and I knew what was coming. As I turned to look behind me, I could see a crowd of people heading towards me. The crowd was in a panic. They were pushing other people out of the way. As the crowd passed me they had pushed a heavyset woman to the ground and were running over her. I was able to get the woman to her feet, but by that time the thick black smoke enveloped us. I couldn't carry the woman to safety, so I sat with her on a park bench and put my jacket over her head and tried to calm her down. We sat on the bench until the smoke had passed. When it did, I tried walking with the woman towards the south. A fireman was passing by, so I asked him if he could help me by taking this woman with him. He agreed and took the woman towards Battery Park. I made my way to West Thames Street where the south command is located. Thankfully all my officers were safe and accounted for.

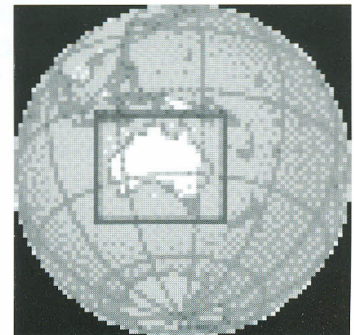
I will never forget September 11th, 2001, a day in which all New Yorkers will remember as a "day of destruction". The City of New York Department of Parks & Recreation has a lot to be proud of: the beauty of the parks like Central Park and Prospect Park; the history of its historic houses; the way its pools and beaches bring joy to so many during the hot days of summer. Now it has one more thing to be proud of, that the members of Urban Park Service work for this Department. I have stood side by side with Marines in combat and during peacetime. The same pride I get in saying "I am a Marine", I now get when I say, "I am a member of Urban Park Service". I can only hope that all members of Parks & Recreation can stand a little taller and say with pride "I am a Park worker".

National Accreditation for DuPage

The Law Enforcement Department of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Illinois, completed its National Accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Beginning in 1999, department members analyzed, revised and created operational policies in accordance with the professional standards established by the Commission. The process culminated in April of 2001 with a four-day on-site inspection by C.A.L.E.A. assessors and subsequent approval by the CALEA Board of Commissioners in July of 2001. During the inspection, the department's administration, management and operation was measured against national police standards. The District's ranger police force became the third park law enforcement agency in the country to achieve accreditation status.

And From Australia... Holiday Greetings from Down Under

The PLEA Newsletter staff (that consists of one person by the way) received a Christmas Card from Ranger Pat Quinn, who works for the Maroochy Shire Council, Queensland, Australia. His card wishes all members joy and peace and special wish to stay safe this upcoming year. He included a ranger patch from Maroochy Shire Council and the editor will be forwarding the patch on to the PLEA Board for inclusion in our patch collection.



A LOST PERSON INCIDENT

By Kenneth N. Laidlaw

A search and rescue event is any operation aimed at helping someone in trouble, someone who cannot solve his or her problem alone. The problem may or may not involve an injury, but the common denominator is that the victim is isolated. A search and rescue operation will eliminate the victim's isolation. Either the victim must be transported to the solution or the solution transported to the victim.

Park law enforcement agencies have a mission to provide a professional level of search management, leadership, cooperation, and search techniques to efficiently and effectively confine, locate, access, stabilize, and transport lost or injured persons within their parklands.

There is a need to recognize that **a search is an emergency** and it will be necessary to work cooperatively with other agencies to insure both a timely and adequate response to all incidents involving lost and missing persons.

After an initial investigation by the responding agency has determined that a person is, in fact, missing a HASTY SEARCH should be conducted early in the development of the search organization. Simply stated, a hasty search commits to searching areas where gathered information suggests the subject is most likely to be, e.g.: trails, attractions, play areas... A hasty search is not an efficient or a thorough search of the entire search area. When it is determined that a search will begin the following **Starting Search Checklist** may prove helpful. This checklist may be useful for 30 minutes or several hours depending on the situation. The subject may be located or hasty teams will return with more information that may indicate reasons to move to a more involved level of response, another topic.

This beginning checklist assumes an understanding of some concepts and definitions. Generally the definitions of terms will follow ICS and recommended guidelines from the National Association of Search and Rescue. Levels of search and rescue response, subject profile to determine search urgency, and a lost person questionnaire are available from NASAR sources. Samples of ICS SAR forms can be located in the Table of Contents at www.basarc.org and downloaded.

STARTING SEARCH CHECKLIST

- ☐ Establish who is in charge of the incident.
- ☐ Identify the IC, Command Post location and Incident Name, e.g.: "Officer Smith is Tilden Park IC and the command post is in the parking area at Big Springs Trailhead on South Park Drive." This information should be passed along to the Communications Center.
- ☐ Begin to develop an ICS organization indicated below.
- ☐ Start an Incident Briefing form (ICS 201).
- ☐ Assign someone to record resources as they arrive on a Check-In List (ICS 211).
- ☐ Locate the PLS (Point Last Seen) or LKP (Last Known Point), isolate and protect it (including scent articles and footprints) until you can send Search and Rescue trained personnel to investigate it.
- ☐ Set up containment boundaries in an attempt to limit the search area. Assign personnel to road-blocks, trail blocks, lookouts, etc.
- ☐ Assign an Officer and/or Search and Rescue personnel, to stay with and interview the reporting party; document the interview by completing the Lost Person Questionnaire (one LPQ for each missing person).
- ☐ Assign personnel begin a hasty search and to contact individuals that may have seen the subject, e.g.: other park users, park staff, concessionaires, and ranchers...(ICS SAR 104)
- ☐ Complete the Search Fact Sheet for distribution (ICS SAR 100A).
- ☐ Begin to investigate and notify locations where the subject may appear outside the search area.
 - ☐ The subject's own home.
 - ☐ Local Hospitals.
 - ☐ Local Police Departments and Jails.

- ☐ Bus companies - AC Transit, County Connection, etc.
- ☐ Taxi Services.
- ☐ Friend's homes.
- ☐ Relative's homes.
- ☐ Places of employment.

- ☐ Issue a B.O.L.O. to local agencies that may have contact with the subject, e.g.: city, county, and State Highway Patrol.
- ☐ Have the person entered into NCIC (required by DOJ) as a missing person. This must be done within 4 hours of the report being made to the law enforcement agency.
- ☐ Map the search area on ICS-201. Take into consideration possible distance traveled since the time last seen, physical boundaries and the subject's ability.
- ☐ Investigate the PLS or LKP in detail.
- ☐ Complete ICS-201 and present to the new IC.

January 2002.

(Notes: Legislative support was gratifying. We received far more universal support than we expected. Numerous other "traditional" LE agencies provided their support in this endeavor. These included Police Departments, Sheriff's Departments, FOP, AZ G&F etc.)

To drive the point home a little I bring two statements from our visitors.

1. I have been stationed on Lake Havasu (a very busy recreational lake on the AZ – CA border) for 21 years. When I first started the common question was "Why are you wearing a gun?" Last Memorial Day, I had stripped off my duty gear (after a 14 hour day), was en route to my residence and had to make a stop. One of our regular campers, driving by, shouted out "Why aren't you wearing your gun!!!!" (Note: I did have my back up weapon and a set of cuffs with me)
2. A speeding vehicle was stopped in the area of our launch ramps. The vehicle had caused some major "heartburn" to our visitors prior to our stopping it. Routine checks showed the operator had a felony warrant out for his arrest. As we were cuffing the suspect, a park visitor driving by made the statement "That's why I come to this park"

While we adhere firmly to the philosophy of "Information & Education" whenever possible, park visitors have come to expect a safe, pleasant environment. They don't make the distinction between "cops" and "park rangers". If there is a problem, they want it taken care of.

I am not taking sides on the debate of LE as a function of Park rangers. It is what each agency decides it should be.

The purpose of this letter is to thank all of the people involved in getting this action passed and to finally see the LE rangers receive the recognition for the work they do for what it is; essential, dangerous and being different from "traditional LE" only in the setting that it takes place in.

James R. Wilson, Park Manager II

Lake Havasu State Park, 1801 Highway 95, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406

Arizona Park Law Enforcement Joins

APSPRS

After 30 years of being excluded from Arizona's Public Safety Personnel Retirement System, Park Law Enforcement Officers have now been enjoined into the system.

This represents a radical change in the perceptions and conceptions about one of AZ's "non-traditional" law enforcement branches.

LE rangers petitioned our Agency for permission to join. Our Agency cooperated fully, including our governing board (AZ State Parks Board). Sponsorship in the House and Senate was secured and after a few "false starts" legislation was passed removing the sanction on ASPB LE Rangers from joining the PSPRS.

Shortly after that, legislation was passed funding the enjoinder. Our enjoinder date has been set for

Tactical Tracking

By Stephen G. Martin,
Rhineland Police Department

Policing and protecting visitors and natural resources in our nation's parks and forestlands presents unique and diverse challenges seldom encountered by our urban counterparts. Outdoor crime scenes can encompass vast areas of land with difficult terrain. Locating and preserving evidence can be difficult. Perpetrators of crimes in our jurisdictions can all literally vanish into the night. One advantage we have over officers working in the concrete jungle is a wide and varying medium of surfaces, and more chances that the suspect will leave behind valuable footprint or spoor evidence. Following the trail to the subject's tent, cabin, or vehicle has solved many crimes. What do you do if the subject is armed, and fleeing the crime scene through the park or forest? I hope that you are employing tactical tracking techniques.

Tactical tracking is a process by which the valuable spoor evidence left at a crime scene is followed with the intent of catching the suspect. Tactical tracking differs from the animal tracking or backtracking techniques that you may use when attempting to locate a problem animal. Tactical tracking is the aggressive follow up of suspects using all means possible to make an apprehension. Tactical tracking is used to close the time and distance gap between the suspect and tracker. Tactical tracking is not a venture that should be entered into without property backup. This type of tracking is done by members of a tracking team.

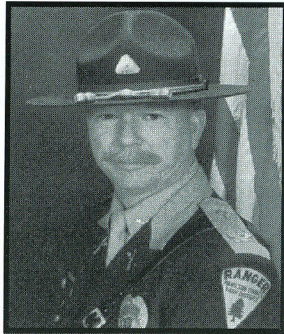
Tactical tracking teams are already in high demand by correctional facilities and agencies with large rural expanses in their jurisdiction. Several national law enforcement agencies, and United States Military also use tactical tracking. Ideally, tracking teams consist of four Officers or Rangers. One officer is designated as the controller and serves as the team leader. This officer will dictate the tactics of the team. The tracker is the officer that concentrates on locating and following the correct spoor. The remaining two team members are the right and left flank officers. The flank officers provide front and side cover for the tracker and controller.

The team usually operates in a formation shaped like the letter Y. The tracker is located at the intersection of the Y with the opening of the Y moving forward. This formation allows the flank officers to provide protection to the tracker and the controlling, while scanning ahead for possible contact with the suspects. Other formations and techniques are utilized based on the area of operation, terrain, weather and the possibility of contact with the suspects. Tracking teams can also isolate the location of suspects enabling additional teams of officers to contain the suspect and make a safe arrest.

The leading trainer for tactical tracking operations is David Scott-Donelan. Mr. Scott-Donelan can trace his tactical tracking roots to thirty years of military service in the bush of Southern Africa. Tracking techniques developed and honed as an officer in the renowned Rhodesian Selous Scouts, and other special operations units have been refined for law enforcement application. Scott-Donelan has provided training to federal, state, and local officers across the United States through his Tactical Tracking Operations School based in Mesquite, Nevada. Several different basic and advanced training courses are available based on the operational needs of the students. The training courses are presented at the Tactical Tracking Operations School facility and at various locations through the United States. Mr. Scott-Donelan has authored a book entitled *Tactical Tracking Operation an essential guide for military and police trackers*. The book contains the basic information needed to understand tactical tracking and is augmented with examples of tactical or combat tracking situations encountered by the author in Africa. More information about tactical tracking can be found at <http://members.aol.com/mantrack/>.

Tactical tracking has a real and important place in park law enforcement. Park Officers and Rangers trained in tactical tracking will be safer, smarter, and more effective in protecting both visitors and natural resources.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Service Award



**Colonel
Richard Greer**
Hamilton County
Park District Rangers

For making a strong and positive impact on Ohio law enforcement and his community throughout his career with the Hamilton County District Rangers, Colonel Richard Greer has been presented with the Distinguished Law Enforcement Service Award.

Colonel Greer is currently in his 27th year of criminal justice service with the Hamilton County Park District Rangers. He is responsible for providing law enforcement, safety and risk management, communications, public relations, marketing, visitor center and gift shop operations, farm demonstrations, and volunteer programs in 17 parks that span 13,888 acres. The park district serves the greater Cincinnati area, and receives more than 5 million visitors each year.

Colonel Greer began his career with the Hamilton County Park District Rangers in 1975. He was promoted to chief ranger in 1983 after working his way through the ranks of sergeant and captain. He eagerly assumed the duties of his new position and immediately set forth departmental goals and objectives to improve the operational effectiveness and to provide the highest level of law enforcement service to the community. Colonel Greer reorganized the rangers by assigning a full-time criminal investigator and implementing mounted, bike and marine patrols. He immediately began to relocate, remodel, and modernize the five substations and their headquarters building. This included the computerization and networking of all locations, operations, and records. The colonel transitioned the department from revolvers to Glock semi-automatic pistols, and placed shotguns in every marked patrol unit. He implemented a physical fitness program to provide the community with physically fit rangers capable of effective and efficient response to routine and emergency law enforcement situations. The program further contributed to the health and well being of every ranger by reducing stress and fatigue, on-duty injuries, and health-care costs. He also organized a departmental color guard that performs at major law enforcement and civic functions countywide. In 1990, a national organization named the rangers a Best Dressed Law Enforcement Agency. The rangers' new uniforms completed against 400 other law enforcement agencies nationwide for this prestigious honor. In 1995, the rangers became the first park law enforcement agency ever accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies required for national accreditation. The rangers have been twice reaccredited since then.

Colonel Greer has won numerous awards and commendations during his esteemed career. They range from his heroic efforts to save the life of a park visitor in 1977 to his appointment as an honorary citizen of the state of Oklahoma by Governor Henry Bellmon in 1990. Additionally, the colonel continues to be actively involved in extra criminal justice duties separate from his regular obligations. He serves on various boards and commissions, and is a member of many law enforcement organizations – locally, statewide, and nationwide. Such associations include the Hamilton County Police Association, National Park Law Enforcement Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Ohio Chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates. Colonel Greer's noble initiative, civic concern, and commitment to excellence have contributed to his becoming a dynamic leader and a significant force within the Ohio law enforcement community.

His leadership has been the key to the exceptional standards of public safety service administered by the rangers by which other park law enforcement agencies measure their success. Through his significant contributions to the park district and to numerous professional organizations dedicated to the improvement of criminal justice, Colonel Richard Greer has brought great credit upon himself, the Hamilton County Park District Rangers, and the Ohio law enforcement community.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY PARK RANGERS WIN FINAL APPEAL IN SUPERIOR COURT RULING

By RoseLee L. Fleming, Senior County Park Ranger

In the last week of October 2001, the New Jersey State Appellate Court ruled that Gloucester County In the last week of October 2001, the New Jersey State Appellate Court ruled that Gloucester County Park Rangers must be certified and must receive state mandated PTC approved police training.

In August of 1999, about 10 of the county's park rangers filed suit against the county claiming that training approved by the NJ Police Training Commission was mandated under Civil Service requirements. The county maintained that the training was not needed, and that the rangers did not need to be certified. The rangers wanted certification status similar to other park rangers in the state. Two previous Superior Court rulings have supported the rangers' suit, and ordered the county to provide them with the training.

After a court order last fall, the Gloucester County Police Academy received certification to offer

training classes, and the necessary classes were provided the rangers in late January of 2001. Gloucester County is one of six of the state's 21 counties that employ park rangers, and had been the only county that did not provide the mandated training.

The county's final appeal challenged the state's authority to make them provide the training, and the decision was made in the rangers' favor. The case was also precedent setting and will be published in state law books as clarifying the powers of the state Department of Personnel and the PTC to require local government entities to provide this training.

It is interesting to note, however, that the LECR offered in February 2002 does not include county park rangers as applicants. When questioned, the state DOP affirmed that the county park ranger test has now become separate. This is a worrisome change that bears watching, and we hope to keep you informed.

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P.L.E.A. NEWSLETTER

