

# THE SIGNPOST

Sept.-Oct. 1988  
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## RANGER'S LEGAL UPDATE

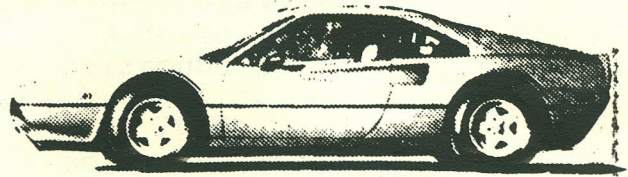
By Dave Lydick  
PRAC Valley Representative

In Sacramento County the District Attorney's Office is now providing brief weekly legal updates on videotape. Topics include new court rulings, search and seizure laws, and/or procedures for handling different case types.

You might check with your District Attorney's or Prosecutors office to see if they can provide your agency such a service. This is a good way of staying current on changes in the legal system which could affect the way your job is performed.

In this, and in future issues, I will be presenting PRAC members with updates most relevant to park rangers:

A recent court decision in Southern California narrows the interpretation of California Vehicle Code section 21113(c) with regards to "traffic" in parks. This section states, "all provisions of this code relating to traffic upon highways shall be applicable to the traffic upon driveways, paths, parking facilities, or grounds (of parks). The court



case found that a vehicle parked in the parking lot of a park was not governed by the vehicle code. Specifically, an open container of an alcoholic beverage in a vehicle was not a violation of the vehicle code. The open container violation had been used as probable cause to contact an individual who was subsequently arrested for possession, for purpose of sale, of PCP. The court ruled that being parked in the lot did not meet the requirement of traffic.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** It should be noted that this ruling may not prohibit use of county or municipal ordinances related to possession of alcoholic beverages in vehicles on park property. Check with your local District Attorney's or Prosecutors office for applicable details regarding the effect of the above listed ruling on your agency. For more information on the Sacramento County legal update program, contact Dave Lydick at (916) 366-2072.



## **PARK LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Submitted by  
Dave Lydick,  
PRAC Valley Representative

Excerpted from  
CPRS Leisurelines

- AB 544 (Killea),  
California Litter Prevention  
Act.  
This measure would enact the  
above act, and would create a  
task force to implement a  
litter prevention education  
program.

-AB 612 (Sher), Beverage  
Container Recycling For Wine  
Coolers.  
This measure would include  
wine cooler containers in the  
current redemption program for  
beverage containers.

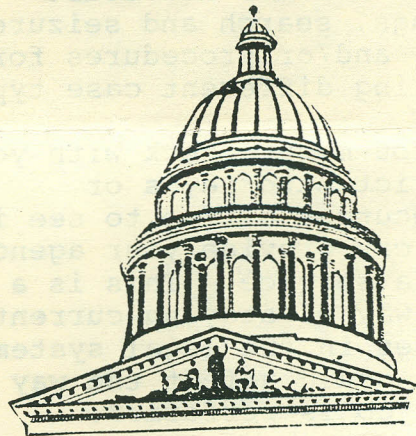
-AB 639 (Killea), Coastal  
Resources Conservation Bond  
Act of 1988.  
This measure would enact the  
bond act, subject to voter  
approval. A total of \$200  
million would be set aside for  
this program.

-AB 1794 (Costa), Park,  
Recreational & Historical  
Resources Bond Act.  
This enacted measure, when  
approved by voters, would  
authorize issuance of \$475  
million in bonds for  
acquisition, development,  
rehabilitation, or restoration  
of real property for park,  
recreation, or historical  
purposes. \$210 million would  
go to local government; and  
\$190 million would go to the  
state park system.

-AB 3536 (Roybal-Allard),  
Controlled Substances-Minors  
in Public Parks.  
This measure would enact  
punishments for selling  
controlled substances to  
minors in public parks.

-AB 4370 (Hauser),  
Firearms.  
This measure would authorize a  
person to carry a concealed  
weapon in a "campsite" without  
a license. CPRS requested,  
and was granted, an exemption  
for sites operated by local  
public agencies.

For more information on  
these, or other, legislative  
items pertaining to parks  
contact Dave Lydick at (916)  
366-2072.



### **A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO "WALKING ON HOT COALS DILEMMA"**

By Chris Crockett,  
Senior Park Ranger,  
Coyote River Parkway

During my tenure at Coyote  
River Parkway a common,  
noticeable safety hazard has  
been the dumping of hot coals  
into garbage containers, or  
onto the ground. Many trash



fires and incidences of burned feet have resulted from this practice. At this park it is believed this problem occurs because visitors have no place to dump coals from their homebrought barbeque; and they do not wish to drive back home with burning coals in their cars.

Therefore, it was suggested by park ranger Phil Teresi, of Anderson Lake County Park, that specially marked containers be placed in areas where portable barbeques are most used. These containers would allow visitors to dump hot coals in a safe area before leaving the park.

The containers suggested are 35 gallon (or less) aluminum trash cans. Aluminum cans are recommended because they are lighter to lift when ashes must be disposed of by maintenance personnel. The container openings should be fitted with steel mesh with 1"-2" openings. The mesh should fit over the top of the container like a jar lid. It should also be removable. If you have fabricating abilities, the center of the mesh can be bowed down, creating a bowl-shaped depression.

Most importantly, before these containers are put in in a park, they should be painted a different color than regular trash containers. Red is a good color since it is highly visible and is normally associated with fire. The containers should also be marked, "HOT COALS ONLY- DO NOT TOUCH CONTAINER" to advise visitors of their purpose.

These containers are successfully being used at the

campground at Coyote Lake County Park near Gilroy. They are planned for use at Coyote River Parkway this autumn.

For more information on this concept, or if you have a better concept you may wish to share, contact Chris Crockett at (408) 249-4312.



### THINGS ARE MOVING IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

By Chris Crockett  
"The Signpost Editor"

The Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation Department, Operations Division is almost fully staffed under a reorganization plan established nearly a year ago.

Recently, the Department promoted four park rangers to senior park rangers. They are Matt Anderson (Coyote Lake), Chris Crockett (Coyote River Parkway), Janine Mohring (Villa Montalvo Arboretum), and Bernard Garrison (Stevens Creek).

The three new rangers were hired this past month are Eric Goodrich and Dave Costa (Mt. Madonna/Uvas Canyon) and Lisa Varney (Coyote River Parkway). All three rangers were selected after serving the Department as seasonal employees.

Congratulations to both the Department, for making such fine choices, and the new promotees/hirees. Hopes for great success in your futures.



SO-  
**YOU THINK YOU GOT AN  
ACCIDENT PROBLEM!**

Excerpted from the  
Contra Costa Bar  
Association Newsletter,  
Linda Hurst, editor.

Accidents aren't funny,  
but the excuses behind them  
can be hilarious. Ask a human  
to explain an accident and  
you're likely to get something  
like:

"Coming home, I drove into  
the wrong house, and collided  
with a tree I don't have."

Linda Hurst decided a list  
of excuses that fell into her  
hands was just too good to  
keep to herself, so she  
printed them.

The excuses come from  
insurance adjustment forms,  
and show the creativity people  
can have in trying to place  
the blame on anybody or  
anything but themselves.

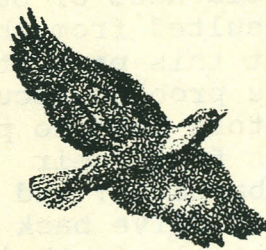
"An invisible car came out  
of nowhere, struck my car and  
vanished."

"In my attempt to kill a  
fly, I drove into a telephone  
pole."

"As I approached the  
intersection a sign suddenly  
appeared in a place where no  
stop sign ever appeared  
before. I was unable to stop  
in time to avoid the  
accident."

Other excuses fit in a  
different category that might  
best be described as a basic  
problem with grammar.

"The guy was all over the  
road. I had to swerve a  
number of times before I hit  
him."



"The telephone pole was  
approaching. I was attempting  
to swerve out of its way, when  
I struck the front end."

Others need no  
explanation.

"I told the police that I  
was not injured, but on  
removing my hat found that I  
had a fractured skull."

"I was on my way to the  
doctor with rear end trouble  
when my U-joint gave way  
causing me to have an  
accident."

"I thought my window was  
down, but I found out it was  
up when I put my head through  
it."

"A truck backed through my  
windshield into my wife's  
face."

"I pulled away from the  
side of the road, glanced at  
my mother-in-law and headed  
over the embankment."

(In parting) Pedestrians  
can also be the objects of  
humor in these excuses.

"I was sure the old  
fellow would never make it to  
the other side of the road  
when I struck him."

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you have any  
hilarious, but harmless,  
horror stories from your park  
I'd love to see them. They  
would make great material  
for a recurring feature in  
future "The Signpost" issues.  
Drop me a line at 806 S.  
Saratoga Ave., Apt. P-206, San  
Jose, CA., 95129.



## INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT OUR NATION'S STATE PARKS

Excerpted From  
An Article By  
Hoyt Gimlin In The  
September 1988 Issue Of  
Governing.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following facts were taken from an article submitted by PRAC Past-President, John Ramirez.

-In the past year, there were over 700,000,000 visits to state parks throughout the United States. This is double the number of people who visited national parks in that same period.

-There are 5,300 state operated parks and related facilities across the nation.

-Though visits have tripled since 1955, state park spending has declined by 14 percent in the first half of this decade.

-Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund park appropriations have fallen from \$370,000,000 in 1979, to only \$16,500,00 in 1988. Today's average appropriation per state is only \$300,000.

-The total state park acreage in the United States is 13,700,000 acres; an area equal in size to West Virginia.

-The President's Commission On Americans Outdoors cited the existence of 67,885 city parks, 17,000 county operated recreational areas, and 2,780 regional parks in the United States.

-On average, state park systems recovered almost 40 percent of their costs from park user fees.

-Overnight visits in state parks have risen from 10,000,000 in the 1950's, to 60,000,000 in 1987.

-Finally, the California Department of Parks & Recreation currently has over 15,000 volunteers who assist with various park operating functions.



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**The Signpost** address is 806 S. Saratoga Ave., #P-206, San Jose, CA., 95129. The editor is Chris Crockett. Articles of 1,000 words or less are welcome. All submissions may be edited without notice, and become the property of PRAC. Submissions may also be phoned in at (408) 249-4312.



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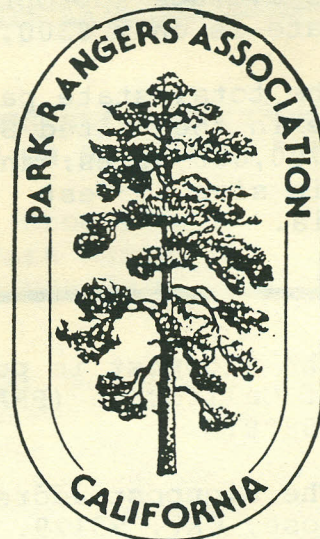
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