

The Signpost

March - April
1991

From The Presidents Desk

The Yosemite Conference
By Christopher George

Reflecting on the Yosemite Conference, all I can say is "Success"! As a result of the overwhelming participation of our members, PRAC has come into it's own. In the past, we have always felt a little tied to both CSPRA and LEAGUE in order to have a successful conference. We now know that we can be a successful and independent member of this tri-member association.

Due to the increase in PRAC membership throughout the state, it was decided during the conference to amend our Constitution Bi-Laws. This is to better serve and assist our members state wide. New geographical areas have been created along with new positions within the Executive Board. For the first time, there can be actual involvement with members wanting to serve on the Executive Board, Committees and program planning.

As it was said so many times at the conference, "*This is your Association.*" I feel that you, our members, truly believe this and want to get more involved.

The Yosemite Conference was a success because so many of our guest speakers and lectures took a personal interest in the conference. We were able to participate in a wide variety of interesting topics. This was due to the diversity of our members and their individual agencies throughout the state. We are now all a little more aware of how special we are as park rangers.

During the workshop sessions, I heard how much people enjoyed the topics being discussed. The only problem was that they were unable to attend some workshops because they were involved with another one at the same time. That's why for the first time we video taped each of the workshops. If you were unable to attend a session, and would like to see it, please contact us and we'll send you information on how to get a tape of it.

As President of PRAC, I have had the honor of working with a very caring group of people. People like Doug Bryce, our Executive Manager, who has been the true figure head of PRAC. His many hours of devoted service has made both PRAC and the Yosemite Conference the success that it was. Then there is Bob Donohue, who was the conference Committee Chair. Bob, by his undaunted contributions and strong leadership, truly made the conference at Yosemite one that will be had to repeat. Bob and his committee; Bruce Weidman, Ken Weiner, Tom Hoffsommer, Cheryl Goss, David Sloan and Doug Bryce all deserve a standing ovation for their hard work. I know I will always be indebted to each of them for their dedicated service.

There are so many people I wish to thank personally but am unable to do so at this time. I do however wish to thank all of you who attended the Yosemite conference. Your comments, interactions and friendship truly made the event a warm and memorable occasion.

1991 Conference A Huge Success

I certainly hope you were on of the fortunates who attended the 1991 annual conference in Yosemite. If you were, you were part of one of the most successful conferences PRAC has ever put together. Over 50% of our membership was in attendance.

Besides the location, this conference was special because it was the 15th anniversary celebration of PRAC. We had a huge birthday cake that was quickly consumed. The cake was provided by our executive manager Doug Bryce. It seemed there were as many people at the birthday celebration as there have at some of our past conferences!

It was gratifying to see so many people arrive early for the conference. Having the workshop in "ranger heaven" made it easy for people to find ways to want to come early. One of the early activities that helped was the Hug-A-Tree program taught by Cheri Hill. Approximately 40 people attended the session and were treated to a very entertaining and informative program. The rest of Monday was devoted to tours of Yosemite Valley. Due to the snow storm, we toured in

luxurious busses rather than open air trams. Fifty-five people took advantage of the tours.

Tuesday and Wednesday were taken up by the workshops. The various tracks were very informative and educational. I believe we provided something for everybody. There was law enforcement education for those who needed or wanted it, interpretation information for others and resource management instruction. We even had a job session for students where they could learn how to go about landing that elusive first ranger position.

Speaking of the students, there were around 20 that made the trek, 18 from Chico State alone. They were a hardy group because they camped out while being snowed on and enduring some very cold temperatures at night. Despite this, they were always there on time for the sessions. Their help during the conference was invaluable and much appreciated.

The banquet Tuesday night was special for two reasons. The benefit raffle for Todd Quick's family brought in several hundred dollars. The generosity of people in the ranger profession is something to behold. Thank you all.

Also that evening, William Penn Mott, Jr., former Director of the California State Parks and Recreation Dept. and the National Park Service, was named to an honorary lifetime membership of PRAC. His talk was both inspirational and educational. He pointed out what the role the ranger must take in order to help solve some of the problems facing humankind now and in the future. Parks are a vital resource and it is up to us to make sure they are preserved.

The conference was opened and closed by two very accomplished speakers. Peter Steinhart, an author who has written for Audubon magazine and New Yorker along with several books, opened with a talk about "Surviving on Sunsets." He spoke on the plight of the ranger who gets paid in sunsets rather than a great deal of monetary rewards. He told us how he felt that rangers historically were people of character. He helped set the tone for the rest of the conference.

Bill Hendricks closed out the conference with one of the more inspirational conferences I have had the opportunity to attend with his talk on the "Role of the Ranger." He took us back to that day we put on our uniform for the first time

and the overwhelming sense of pride we felt wearing that uniform. He made everybody in that room relive that moment and you could feel the good vibes just going through the room. It was a great way to end a great conference.

I would like to add a personal note. I had a great committee to work with for this project. Without their untiring efforts this could never have been possible. They all put in numerous hours making sure PRAC

would have the very best conference possible. Along with each of the individuals I am about to name, I would also like to thank the various agencies involved for allowing the committee to take the time necessary to put this all together. I would especially like to thank my agency, the City of Chico, for allowing me the time. I know that for awhile they were wondering what kind of scam I was running because I was receiving more faxes than the City Manager!

Again, a sincere thank you to:

Ken Weiner and David Slaone of the City of Roseville,

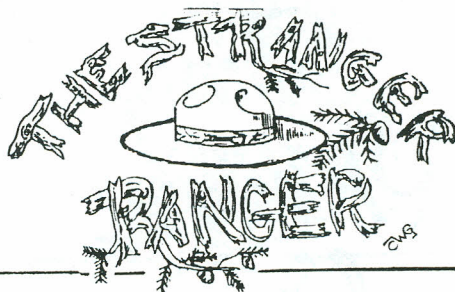
Cheryl Goss, Sly Park, El Dorado Water District,

Bruce Weidman, Livermore Area Recreation Department,

Tom Hoffsommer, Sacramento County,

Doug Bryce, Executive Manager, PRAC.

Bob Donohue
1991 Conference Chair



"IF I MAY, RANGER, I WOULD SUGGEST SOMETHING TAPERED THE OTHER WAY." *Chad S. 4/91*

Annual Membership Meeting

The PRAC annual membership meeting was recently held at Yosemite, during the just completed successful conference. The following are highlights of that meeting.

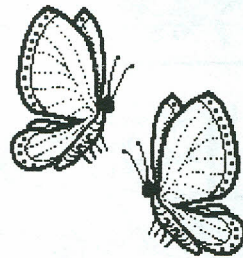
Park Stewardship Foundation of California; created as a non-profit foundation to raise money to further the work of CSPRA and PRAC.

Revised Constitution; new by-laws have been adopted to reflect the changes within PRAC that have occurred during the past few years.

Camp Out; there is a possibility for PRAC to use the City of Livermore's campground at Lake Tahoe sometime this fall. The last camp-out was a few years ago in Marin county.

Dues Increase; there is a need to bring in more money to keep up with the postage, printing and travel expenses. Regular membership would go from \$25 to \$35 and Agency by \$10/year. This would have to be acted on by the Board after the election. (Would possibly go into effect after June, 1991.)

Next Board Meeting; the first meeting of the new board (under the new by-laws) will be June 1, 1991 at the home of Doug Bryce, in Sacramento. Any interested member may attend.



Attention Students

Remember that if you are interested in applying for the PRAC Scholarship this year, your application is due June 1, 1991. If you have not received an application packet, contact our Executive Manager, Doug Bryce at (916) 383-2530.

Future Training

Plans for the spring workshops have been finalized and they will be a reality soon. But what about any workshops for this fall? If you have any suggestions on subjects or training sites, let us know. For there to be any workshops this fall, planning must start now. So put your thinking caps on and come up with some ideas that can be used.

Contact Doug Bryce if you have ideas or would like to offer your services to organize a training seminar for this fall.



Ballots Are In The Mail

If you are a voting member, you should be receiving a ballot for the new PRAC Board as required by the bylaws that were adopted at the annual membership meeting just held in Yosemite NP on 3/13/91.

Don't forget to vote and get your ballots mailed in by May 4, 1991.

Nature Notes

by Tom Maloney
Park Ranger II,
County of Orange

Did you know that Jimson Weed, a poisonous plant, is actually in the same family as the potato?

Another poisonous plant, Groundsel, smells like sage but is deadly to eat or drink as a tea.

Did you know that glochids, the small very fine spines of the prickly pear cactus are used to make "itching powder?"

Did you know one of the easiest ways to remove "jumping cholla" cactus segments from a body is your comb? Just slide your comb between the cholla and the skin and lift the cholla segment off.

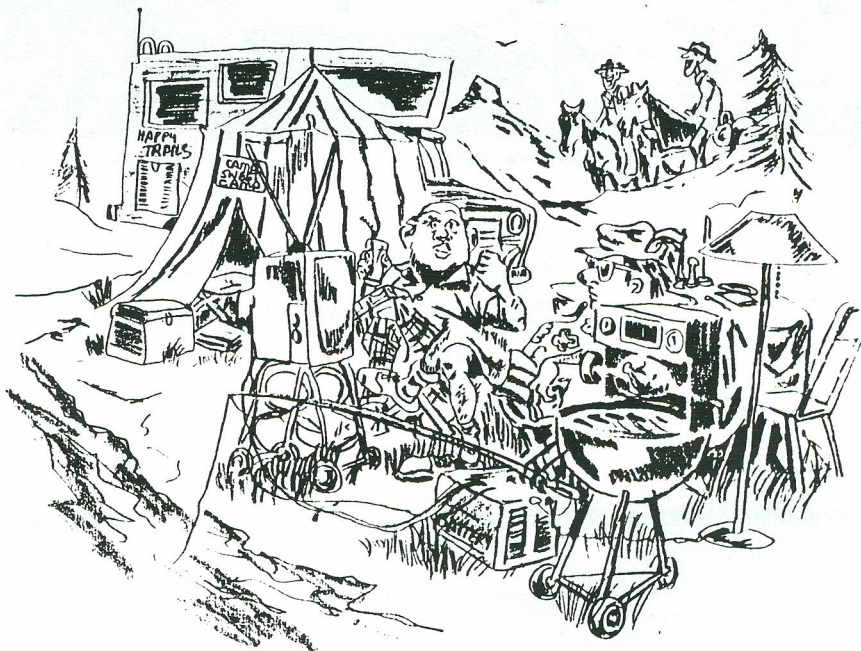
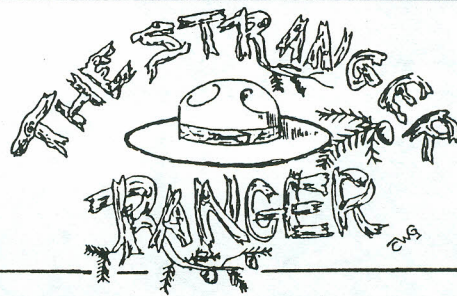
On Flowers

An easy "rule of thumb" to determine what pollinates what flower is to see what color it is:

White or pale yellow flowers are usually pollinated by night flying insects such as moths.

Bright yellow or orange flowers usually by bees.

Red flowers are usually visited most often by humming birds.



LOOK AT THOSE RANGERS LAUGH! IT WOULD DO THEM GOOD TO ROUGH IT ONCE IN AWHILE!

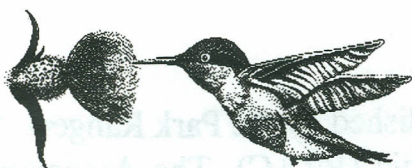
Charles D. 4/91

Happy Birthday PRAC

Hard to believe but PRAC just had a birthday party, in Yosemite of all places. Here is the proof; a birthday cake!



We have been around as an organization for 15 years now. Through good times and bad times. PRAC is still with us. May the next 15 years be as interesting. Good fortunes!



Training Reminder!

There will be two training opportunities in the next few months. The first training seminar will be Public Relations. This seminar is sponsored by PRAC in cooperation with the County of Orange, Harbors, Beaches & Parks and Anaheim Parks, Recreation & Community Services. It will be held on April 19, 1991 at Santiago Oaks Regional Park in Orange, CA. The cost will be \$50.00 per member.

The other workshop will be fire training or "What To Do First!" This will be held at West Valley Community College on May 7 & 8, 1991. Instructors will be from CDF and West Valley Community College. The registration fee for this hands on training will be \$50.00 per member.

For more information, phone Doug Bryce at (916) 383-2530.

The PRAC General Store

Mugs & Caps

Mugs and caps are still available. These are high quality baseball caps (green or brown twill-type, \$7.00 each) and coffee mugs (blue and white glazed ceramic, \$5.00 each).



PRAC Agency Directory

The new revised PRAC Ranger Directory is now available. It lists agencies with "ranger personnel" throughout California. The cost for this resource is \$5.00.

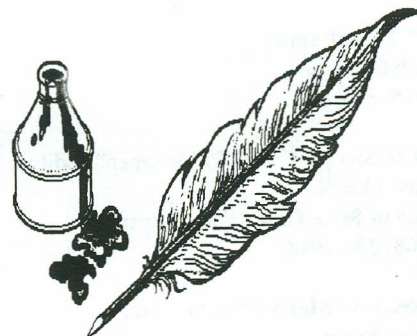
To purchase any of the above items, send a check, payable to: PRAC, P.O. Box 28366, Sacramento, CA., 95828-0366. Please indicate number of items requested, along with size and color if applicable.

HOW TO SEND ARTICLES

PRAC members having access to a Macintosh computer with Microsoft Word / Write / Works, MacWrite or WriteNow Programming can write their article on the computer and mail the disk to The Signpost Editor for use in future issues of the PRAC newsletter. This will speed up production greatly. The disk will then be mailed back to the sender once it has been copied.

Naturally, for those without a Macintosh, articles may be mailed or even phoned in, in the normal way.

For more information contact David Brooks, The Signpost editor at (408) 336-2948. Disks or any other articles can be mailed to: David Brooks, 560 Hillcrest Drive, Ben Lomond, CA 95005.



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CALIFORNIA**

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