

# RANGER

The Journal of the Association of National Park Rangers

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ANPR  *Stewards for parks, visitors and each other*  
The Association for All National Park Employees

Vol. 24, No. 3 • Summer 2008



Who Remembers Combined Rangers?

# Letters

## Fine issue of *Ranger*

I just received my latest issue of *Ranger* (Spring 2008) and was very impressed with the high quality of information content. I commend you for devoting a special section to NPSers who are no longer with us. I especially found the tribute to Steve Robinson, who I once had the pleasure to meet at Crater Lake when he was stationed interpreting at the Watchman fire lookout, to be of interest. Steve was employed as a seasonal. I believe there needs to be much more effort devoted in the pages of *Ranger* magazine to seasonal issues, especially since the bulk of day-to-day activities in frontcountry and backcountry resource management, interpretation and law enforcement are carried out by seasonal employees. Thank you for a job well done in producing this latest issue of *Ranger* magazine.

Owen Hoffman  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

## Cherish NPS family members

Thank you for forwarding my copy of *Ranger* (Spring 2008). It was both heartwarming and wrenching when I opened the first page and saw the pictures of so many people I either knew or thought of as family. Chris Anderson was the heart of our volunteer program at Lake Mead. J.R. Lang and his wife, Helen, who passed away two years before her husband, were our adopted parents and grandparents at Katherine Landing on Lake Mohave. J.R. and Helen would dispense hugs or "butt kicks" as needed throughout the crazy and hectic summer seasons, and they reminded us of holiday traditions through the winters. Steve Robinson was the minstrel of the Everglades. Bob McGhee was a truly nice person and a blast to have in an incredibly boring fee collection training. This list goes on, but I just wanted you to know how much I appreciated your kindness.

Jan Kirwan  
Hobo Sound, Florida



### Share your views!

Signed letters to the editor of 100 words or less may be published, space permitting. Please include address and daytime phone. *Ranger* reserves the right to edit letters for grammar or length. Send to [fordedit@aol.com](mailto:fordedit@aol.com) or Editor, 25958 Genesee Trail Road, PMB 222, Golden, CO 80401.

## Disappointed on gun stance

As a park ranger who is also a proud gun owner, I'm a bit sad to see the ANPR take up the cause against guns. I'm not surprised, but I did want to share at least one voice of dissent. I would carry my guns onto NPS property if I were allowed to. I have friends who won't attend weddings and other events in the park because they aren't allowed to bring their guns that they have a legal right to carry within their state. I think honoring concealed weapons permits issued by the states would be an olive branch the NPS could offer to the conservative public, which could in turn increase our source of visitors and monetary support.

Noemi Margaret  
San Francisco, Calif.

## Support position on no firearms

I just found your website and was looking through it and found your position on firearms. I was very happy to see your position against firearms in our national parks. Thank you. I am an advocate for gun ownership rights, but the National Rifle Association gets out of hand in trying to push guns down everybody's throat. What about my rights? Again, thank you for your article. I live near Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. My wife and I really enjoy the ranger-guided tours. We love our national parks and our rangers!

Earl Jerzyk  
Lake Ann, Michigan

## Grateful visitor says thanks

I am donating to the Association of National Park Rangers. I was recently rescued by three rangers in Death Valley due to dehydration from a stomach virus. They did great work and I am forever grateful.

Nancy Otovic  
Danvers, Massachusetts

## Presidential choice?

In November a presidential election will impact the future of the National Park Service. As an ANPR member, I've been asking myself which candidate would be the best choice for the parks and its employees? McCain? Obama? Clinton? I would like to see ANPR address this issue and provide information to its members in this magazine and on its website so that they can make an informed decision on election day.

Pete Peterson  
Warrenton, Virginia



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## ANPR Calendar

*Ranger* (Fall issue)  
deadline..... July 31

*Ranger* (Winter issue)  
deadline..... Oct. 31

Ranger Rendezvous XXXI .....Dec.10-14  
Santa Fe, N.M.

### Coming next issue:

NPS Training: Sufficient or Deficient?

*Ranger* (ISSN 1074-0678) is a quarterly publication of the Association of National Park Rangers, an organization created to communicate for, about and with National Park Service employees; to promote and enhance its professions, spirit and mission; to support management and the perpetuation of the National Park Service and the National Park System, and to provide a forum for social enrichment.

In so meeting these purposes, the Association provides education and other training to develop and/or improve the knowledge and skills of parks professionals and those interested in the stewardship of national parks; provides a forum for discussion of common concerns of all employees, and provides information to the public.

The membership of ANPR is comprised of individuals who are entrusted with and committed to the care, study, explanation and/or protection of those natural, cultural and recreational resources included in the National Park System, and persons who support these efforts.

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#### Submissions

Prospective authors should contact the editor or editorial adviser before submitting articles. Editor, Teresa Ford, 26 S. Mt. Vernon Club Road, Golden, CO 80401, (303) 526-1380; fordedit@aol.com. Editorial adviser, Mark Herberger, (605) 433-5552.

#### Deadlines

Spring issue ..... Jan. 31  
 Summer issue ..... April 30  
 Fall issue ..... July 31  
 Winter issue ..... Oct. 31

Submit copy to editor in Microsoft Word format or Rich Text Format as an attached file to [fordedit@aol.com](mailto:fordedit@aol.com) or on computer diskette to the address above.

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**Cover art:** Wood carving by former ANPR member Rob Arnberger, image courtesy of artist

## President's Message

**D**uring the early years of my career as a National Park Service ranger I valued the words of Walt Dabney, ANPR member and for a time the NPS chief ranger in Washington. One statement I remember Walt making (paraphrased) was this: "One of the management functions that the NPS performs most poorly in is position management."

The NPS has poorly managed the park ranger occupation since the 1960s, first through the park ranger/park technician position management system and for the last 14 years under the Ranger Careers system. My perception is that NPS management has been unwilling to insert the leadership necessary to focus park ranger duties on those that are mission-critical as priorities. Absent direct links in specific terms to the NPS strategic plan, park level strategic plans and park annual work plans, many park rangers' annual performance plans emphasize duties in ratios that aren't in line with the standardized Ranger Careers position descriptions.

This issue of *Ranger* is focused on using the full range of position management tools found in Ranger Careers to best meet each individual park's needs. Included is ANPR's official position on refocusing the NPS' efforts in position management of the national park ranger profession.

On another issue, ANPR continues to struggle along with many good ideas and suggestions but few members actually willing to commit the time to see suggestions and programs through to fruition. For more than a decade ANPR has needed a new involvement from members who are at the early or midpoints of their careers — members who have a passion for the NPS and its employees, the agency's fundamental purpose as defined by law, and the National Park System.

So where are you? Are you coming? While our longstanding members have served ANPR well for many years, they are moving into different phases of their lives with different responsibilities and may no longer be focused on issues that impact NPS employees on a



daily basis. Many of these longtime members have related to me that they are ready for a new generation of NPS employees to lead ANPR in tackling issues and programs most timely now and into the immediate future. We need fresh enthusiasm, fresh ideas and those with the conviction to do the work necessary to keep ANPR active and

relevant for today's NPS employees. Without you I fear that ANPR will continue to struggle to produce any meaningful results, and our collective ideas and concerns will continue to have only marginal impact with NPS and other government decision makers.

I joined ANPR in 1982 when I was 25 years old. I began more active involvement in 1988 when I ran for and was elected to ANPR's Board of Directors. While my happiness with ANPR has ebbed and flowed over the years, depending on what issues were or were not being advocated for, I have never regretted the decision to be a more active ANPR member.

My perception is that the exposure helped my individual career in most instances, and positive outcomes like Ranger Careers and lessening the threat of outsourcing NPS jobs would not have happened without the involvement of ANPR members working outside the "official chain-of-command" communication system.

I urge you to take the same chance and become more involved in ANPR business, whether working on advocacy issues or social enrichment opportunities. Please check our website at [www.anpr.org/volunteer.htm](http://www.anpr.org/volunteer.htm) to learn more about opportunities to help ANPR succeed. You also may contact any board member to find out more (contact information on back cover). The future of our organization truly is in your hands.

*A. Scot McEwen*

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# ANPR Board Sets Official Position on Full Utilization of Ranger Careers

Management of the national park ranger profession has evolved during the history of the National Park Service. The NPS used several position management strategies for the park ranger occupation prior to 1994. As a matter of necessity rangers performed generalist duties in the early years of the NPS, allowing park rangers to be multiskilled workers, spending equal amounts of time in such disciplines as interpretation, resource management, maintenance, law enforcement and emergency services. These strategies allowed for a great deal of flexibility, but left park ranger positions lower graded and administratively “nonprofessional.”

With the passing of time, larger staffs in parks and legal mandates beginning to be enforced on certain qualities of NPS work, various duties historically performed by park rangers began to migrate to newly formed disciplines such as maintenance and resource management. With these changes park ranger positions became more specialized, too, concentrating on interpretation, law enforcement and emergency services.

The most recent official servicewide policy on management of the national park ranger position was finalized in July 1994 and is titled *Ranger Careers*. *Ranger Careers* established three professional, GS-9 full-performance-level positions in the park ranger series. These position titles are:

**Park ranger – interpretation (I)** performing resource education and public use management

**Park ranger – protection (P)** performing resource protection and public use management

**Park ranger – protection/interpretation (P/I)** performing resource protection, resource education and public use management.

Both the park ranger (P) and park ranger (P/I) positions were to hold law enforcement commissions.

One of the most attractive aspects of *Ranger Careers* was that it was to be “a management-driven personnel system and not a personnel-driven management system,” as former NPS Chief Ranger Jim Brady was fond of saying. In other words, park managers and supervisors were supposed to be intelligent enough to analyze the mix of duties needed for their park and self-select the appropriate mix of

positions in the three position descriptions to accomplish the park’s workload in interpretation and protection. While there were some “less than desirable” implementation models of *Ranger Careers* at individual parks, over time the more enlightened park managers were able to properly identify the work duties needed to meet annual park work plan goals in interpretation and protection and utilize the appropriate mix of the three position descriptions to meet the park’s needs.

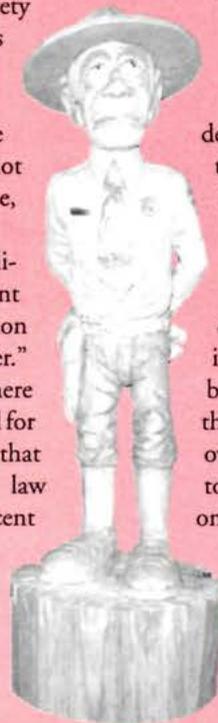
The three position descriptions each have their own strengths and are best utilized to meet specific needs. However, it is important to remember that the journeyman GS-9 grade of all three is based on the professional-level knowledge of park natural and cultural resources and the incumbents’ ability to use this knowledge to educate park visitors, neighbors and/or cooperators about park resources, or the ability to use this knowledge to protect park resources from damage, destruction and/or removal by individuals engaged in intentional or negligent illegal activities. This resource knowledge is required by all three positions to successfully complete the grade-controlling duties performed by the incumbents. A park ranger (I) spending the vast majority of duty time providing information to park visitors that does not utilize and communicate this resource knowledge would not be performing at the full-performance, GS-9 level. Likewise, a park ranger (P) spending the vast majority of duty time enforcing public safety and property regulations and laws and providing emergency services so that there is not time allowed for them to gain or utilize this resource knowledge to educate visitors would not be performing at the full-performance, GS-9 level.

The park ranger (P) position qualifies for enhanced annuity retirement (20-year) and meets the legal definition of a “federal law enforcement officer.” This position fits well in parks where illegal activity occurs or the potential for such activity occurs at a frequency that keeps the incumbents performing law enforcement duties at least 51 percent of their on-duty time. Most often these parks are large in acreage or have high visitation, or both, and normally have separate divisions of employees with greater than one employee in each division.

The park ranger (P/I) position does not qualify for enhanced annuity retirement (20-year) and does not meet the legal definition of a “federal law enforcement officer.” This position fits well in smaller parks or smaller districts of medium or larger parks where the law enforcement workload is moderate to minimal, and where all employees are frequently asked to perform duties in other disciplines. In parks where responses to law enforcement or emergency services incidents are infrequent this combined position provides the park with professional interpretation and law enforcement services in one employee with smaller budget ramifications than hiring a full-performance, GS-9 employee in each discipline.

The United States received a shock with the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, that permeated almost every aspect of our daily lives. Position management of the NPS park ranger profession did not escape the changes demanded by the administration in charge of the executive branch in response to the attacks. The U.S. Department of the Interior ordered the NPS to swiftly mobilize sufficient commissioned rangers to cover facilities and offices of DOI all over the country. This included so-called “icon parks” such as Independence, Mount Rushmore and Statue of Liberty, DOI facilities such as offices in Washington, D.C., and dams and other infrastructure on DOI-managed lands.

The NPS had problems meeting this departmental request for at least two reasons. First, most commissioned rangers were not trained in terrorism detection, prevention or response. The task to be performed required specific knowledge and personal protective equipment and most park rangers had neither. This was especially true of those commissioned rangers in the park ranger (P/I) positions in the smaller parks. Secondly, parks barely had enough rangers to cover the necessary shifts to protect their own parks and to provide education to park visitors. Many small parks had only one commissioned ranger, and so many parks refused to allow all or part of their commissioned rangers to be assigned to these temporary duty assignments. Needless to say DOI, the Department of Justice and the administration were less



*Image of wood carving courtesy of Rob Arnberger*

than satisfied with the NPS response and pressed for changes in NPS policy, guidelines and directives to “correct” what they viewed as position management deficiencies in preventing and/or responding to future terrorist attacks. One of these changes appears to have been a prohibition on utilizing the park ranger (P/I) position description.

Since this guideline/directive went into effect sometime after Sept. 11, 2001, it is ANPR’s opinion that the national park ranger profession has returned to a far less effective position management scheme. Small parks with small operational budgets are especially vulnerable to being forced to do without either professional protection or professional interpretation services. While creative managers have found other avenues to substitute for these professional services (volunteers, cooperating association employees, local agency law enforcement, adjacent federal land management agencies), we believe these options are almost always substandard to the fundamental purpose of the NPS stated in the 1916 Organic Act, as amended, because they do not have the professional knowledge of park cultural and natural resources required by NPS employees in the Ranger Careers position descriptions. While we could name individual parks where these professional services are absent, we have chosen not to at this time to avoid singling out specific park managers whose choices have been severely restricted by this position management guideline/directive.

It is ANPR’s official position that the NPS abandon any national park ranger position management guideline, directive or addendum to Ranger Careers that prevents park managers from utilizing the full range of position descriptions found in Ranger Careers, including the combined park ranger (P/I) position that is critical to efficiently operating small parks and/or smaller districts of medium and large parks. 

*This ANPR official position was adopted by a board of directors vote as required by the bylaws.*

# Demise of the Generalist Ranger?

By John T. Waterman  
Valley Forge

Many National Park Service employees, especially those of a certain age, bemoan the loss of the “generalist” ranger — that fabled ranger of yore who could identify every critter in the park, knew all the trails but could also get Boy Scouts off cliffs and drunks off the roads. Some have gone so far as to say today’s law enforcement ranger no longer wants to do generalist type duties and would rather just be a gun-toting police officer.

Although I question whether the true generalist ever existed in any great numbers, it’s important to note that two major changes have occurred in the ranger series to make the generalist even rarer. One change is the introduction of competencies and professionalization of the law enforcement ranger. The other is a more than 40-percent reduction in permanent law enforcement rangers and a 50-percent reduction in seasonal law enforcement rangers.

In 1994 the NPS embarked on a mission to professionalize its ranger ranks in both interpretation and law enforcement. It was referred to as Ranger Futures (later enacted as Ranger Careers). Arguably, the largest change came within law enforcement. Included in this specialized series was an enhanced retirement annuity, otherwise known as the 6c package. To meet the “rigorous duty” standards imposed by 6c regulations, law enforcement rangers were required to pass one of the toughest medical standards in the federal government, a physical fitness battery exam and expanded LE training requirements. Initial LE training requirements currently are a minimum nine-month academy divided between FLETC in Glynco, Georgia, and a park where the ranger-trainee is supervised by a field training officer. That means being away from your family and home park for almost all of that time. LE rangers are then required to have an additional 40 hours of law enforcement refresher training each year.

For the first six years of the Ranger Futures model, many rangers continued as generalists, with their duties including LE, EMS, SAR and fire. There was a drastic change in 2000. Since the inception of Ranger Futures in 1994, some rangers had been waiting for a determination of whether their prior 1994 service counted toward their retirement. Due to the incredible backlog, the Department of Interior formed a

## PERSPECTIVE

team called FLERT, the Firefighter and Law Enforcement Officer Retirement Team. FLERT, which evaluates and handles 6(c) enhanced law enforcement and firefighter retirement claims, has tended to obstruct NPS park rangers from receiving their 6(c) special law enforcement retirement benefits. Ironically, some rangers are being denied 6(c) enhanced law enforcement coverage although they do the same work of others who have already been approved. The sudden change in decisions in 2000 was due to a new interpretation of the definition of law enforcement.

For retirement purposes, a “law enforcement officer” is defined as: “. . . an employee occupying a rigorous position, whose primary duties are the investigation, apprehension or detention of individuals suspected or convicted of offenses against the criminal laws of the United States, or the protection of officials of the United States against threats to personal safety, as provided in 5 U.S.C. § 8401(17).”

This new interpretation has been backed by DOI and the Merit Promotion Review Board and has led to hundreds of law enforcement rangers being denied retirement benefits, requiring many to work well past the mandatory separation age of 57. This is while they still are required to meet the physical fitness and medical standards. Because most of these rangers have waited more than 10 years for a decision, they have been effectively denied the opportunity to change careers to obtain the benefits they expected.

The other major change has been in the actual duties law enforcement rangers are now performing. Emphasis in training and actual job functions are now focused on meeting the 6c enhanced-annuity law enforcement definition. As has been stated in FLERT determinations, firefighter duties, EMS, security details, interpretation, resource management and general police work such as road patrol do not meet FLERT’s fundamental idea of law enforcement. FLERT’s emphasis has been that in order to fully meet the definition, law enforcement rangers need to be performing investigations. It is important to remember that LE rangers haven’t forgotten their roots of why they became park rangers. Rather, they have been pushed into a corner by DOI to meet a specific job classification or risk losing their retirement.

We have all heard the same story — park



and rangers — for us to be the “ranger for all seasons” that many in the NPS and the public expect. There isn’t space to address the increasing professionalization requirements of SAR, EMS and, especially, fire. It is almost impossible to maintain competencies in all these skills, to say nothing of being able to identify

a Wilson’s warbler in flight.

As such, LE rangers have had to change emphasis, concentrating on better training, tactics, equipment and staffing for adequate officer back-up. In order to meet GPRA goals, emphasis has been placed on meeting visitor satisfaction requirements and concentrating on visitor-centered issues. This is also combined with meeting the ever-increasing demands of homeland security rotation requirements. It is important to note that crime statistics in the national parks have remained relatively stable for the past 10 years, thanks in part to the dedication of the law enforcement ranger.

The professionalization of the ranger ranks was long overdue. Its impact on the law enforcement ranger has been tremendous. There is still a ways to go. In the next four years approximately 43 percent of the current law enforcement ranger ranks are eligible for retirement. Even though many LE rangers are not staying with the NPS to age 57, they are deciding to get out due to current fears that their retirement may be in jeopardy and the continued push for doing more with less. The NPS needs to start filling some of the ever-increasing empty positions now before the floodgates open.

I am pleased that the president of ANPR has extended an invitation for the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge to comment in *Ranger* magazine and offer our thoughts on the status of the park ranger profession, specifically law enforcement rangers. 🏠

*John Waterman is president of the United States Park Ranger Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police, organized to protect and advance the professional needs of commissioned law enforcement rangers while providing the camaraderie and social support system for which the FOP has been famous since 1917. He began his NPS career in 1991. Currently he is stationed at Valley Forge as a permanent Level 1-commissioned law enforcement ranger and emergency medical services instructor.*

## The Generalist Ranger with Specialized Skills

### PERSPECTIVE

By Pete Swisher  
Scotts Bluff

Operating a small park with a staff in which one person may constitute an entire division exposes both the strengths and limitations within an individual ranger’s personal skill-set. In many cases, rangers may find the opportunity to cross divisional lines refreshing and a part of the break in monotony that makes our jobs more interesting. At other times being asked to perform a task outside of the normal range of responsibility generates ire and questions about management’s decision-making process.

The traditional viewpoint of a national park ranger is one of aptitude, capability and integrity, as illustrated in William C. Everhart’s book, *The National Park Service*. He writes: “If the Park Service does communicate a positive image, much of the credit belongs to the rangers, who possess an extensive assortment of skills . . .”

Occasionally, it can be prudent to develop an employee in areas that will both encourage growth personally and benefit the park operationally. However, it can be a dangerous slope to traverse when not managed responsibly.

Here is a case in point. Scotts Bluff National Monument began years ago to require additional interpretive work from the park’s only protection ranger. The end result was a protection ranger many years later overburdened with interpretive responsibilities and challenged to identify time within a regular work day to effectively patrol the park.

Conversely, the interpretation operation, through natural attrition, had no full-time interpreter, relying solely on the seasonal workforce to provide only basic interpretive functions. This represents an extreme situation that effectively diluted two programs where professional standards have been identified and arguably were not being met.

On the other hand, a responsibly managed program can operate effectively using the combined protection/interpretation series when particular attention is given to each respective professional arena. Some of the best protection rangers I’ve known have been first and foremost, excellent communicators. The higher standard rangers are held to include the

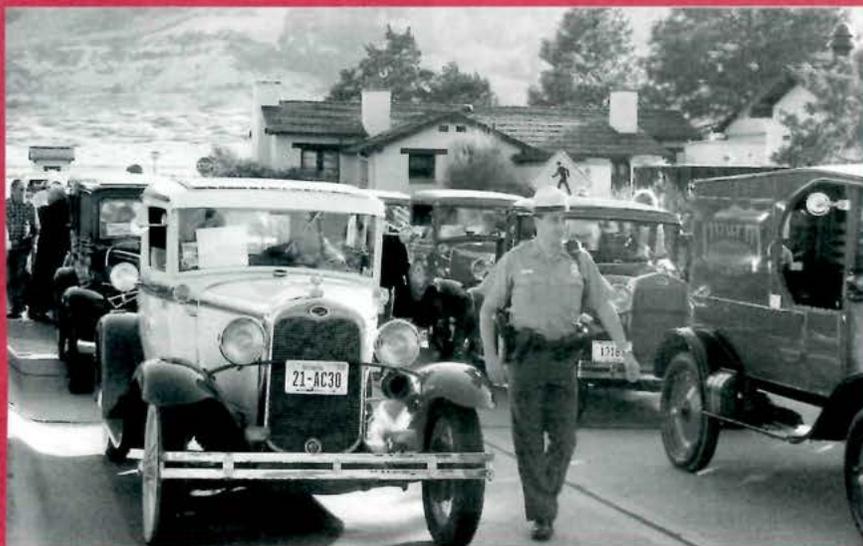
divisions are underfunded, understaffed and have been doing more with less for years. So the final straw in the demise of the generalist ranger is the dramatic decrease in the numbers of law enforcement rangers at many parks. At a meeting in recent months at an East Coast park, we learned that in 1994 this park had 42 permanent law enforcement commissions and is now down to 17, even with a steady increase in visitation. A smaller urban park had 16 permanent law enforcement commissions and in less than five years is down to seven. Law enforcement divisions are now forced to compete for the same pot of money that all the other divisions are sharing.

Finally, for several years in a row, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility has stated that “law enforcement work in the National Park Service is the most dangerous in federal service. NPS officers are 12 times more likely to be killed or injured as a result of an assault than FBI agents.”

The Department of Justice Bureau of Statistics has stated that the NPS suffers the worst record of having its officers killed or injured by assaults in the line of duty of any federal law enforcement agency. A study (*Analysis Of Assaults Upon National Park Rangers: 1997-2003*) carried out by Northern Arizona University on this alarming rate of assaults on rangers found:

“Based on the reports it appears that NPS rangers have a wider range of duties than most other federal law enforcement agents. The range of duties performed by the NPS rangers appears to be even more diverse than what would normally be found in local law enforcement agencies. Again, based on the information provided in the reports it appears that some NPS rangers had difficulty transitioning from non-law enforcement roles to law enforcement roles. Specifically the difficulty seemed to be greatest when there was a need to transition from an educational/informational role to an enforcement role.”

In short, it is too dangerous — to the public



Juan Morris

The author marches in a parade next to antique cars.

public's perception that the ranger is also an educator. In order to realize this goal the ranger must be capable of successfully donning the hat of resource educator, all the while employing current acceptable practices in officer safety. It's a lot to ask, and some feel it may be a step backward. However, the reality under today's fiscal environment for smaller park operations is that there is still a need for generalist ranger positions.

The argument is that smaller parks are proportionally underfunded, and that the impact of the funding crisis is felt sooner because a particular program area becomes diluted more quickly or it disappears all together. Small park operations take solace in requiring not just rangers, but all types of positions, to wear the many hats necessary to answer all of the mandates, reply dues or operational requirements placed upon them today.

*In Search of Excellence* authors Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman Jr. wrote:

“... one of the main clues to corporate excellence has come to be ... incidents of unusual effort on the part of apparently ordinary employees.”

In this case, the authors were impressed with employees who by action, were systematically and routinely going the extra mile to ensure the satisfactory experience of the customer. This works until the point of maximum returns is superseded, at which time employee satisfaction, morale and productivity suffers. An ineffectively managed combined position would result in an unbalanced workload, and it could sacrifice the quality of work and possibly quell the enterprising spirit of an otherwise productive ranger.

Much of the problem lies within expectation. A protection ranger hired specifically under that series has a contract with the park. The contract states that the park wants the ranger to perform all of the safety, security and protection functions commonly associated with a law enforcement program. Conversely, an interpretive ranger hired under a non-commissioned job announcement has no reasonable belief of being required to perform the duties of a law enforcement ranger. Both are good at what they do, but neither can transpose roles and remain effective.

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument is a good example where the combined series could be beneficial. The park experiences a low number of case incidents. However, it occasionally falls victim to criminal activity. Currently there isn't enough caseload to justify the full-time dedication of a protection ranger to solely perform patrols and security assignments. On the other hand, the combined series would enable the ranger to complete the required protection functions, maintain a small fire cache, manage the EMS component and still augment the interpretation operation.

The key is in responsible management. Just as the ranger needs opportunities to maintain protection skills, the ranger also needs the chance to gain accreditation in interpretive program development. Opportunities such as regional special-event teams can provide an avenue for developing and maintaining protection skills; identifying specific interpretive competencies can further development in public speaking and program presentation skills.

To support one function at the expense

of the other is counterproductive both to the ranger and the park operation. Experience has shown that the specialized protection ranger will become bored in a low-volume, law enforcement park and move to a park with a more active protection operation; not filling vacant protection positions may result in irreparable damage, loss or injury that could have been avoided. Park management is looking for professional delivery of visitor services with some degree of continuity in personnel; the ranger is looking for an enriching experience that provides opportunity for growth and the development of professional skills.

At no point should we consider eliminating the current position descriptions that created the more specialized protection and interpretation ranger series. These positions are necessary and should continue to be the norm for most park purposes. A healthy debate regarding the need for another series may simply reinforce that we have already made the best decisions possible in position management.

I am a staunch supporter of both professional series, and I wouldn't advocate diluting the protection series and place the incumbent at risk to physical injury or worse. Evaluation of FLERT impacts would also have to be accounted for, and acceptable parameters would need to be identified.

The protection/interpretation series, when managed responsibly, may be the only alternative for the operational survival of smaller parks. There remains a need for the specialized skills of the protection ranger and the interpreter, and the combined series is not a substitute for those positions. The combined position would allow for the augmentation of both specialized visitor service areas.

While the statement may draw fire for potentially weakening both the protection and the interpretation professions, it remains a reality that small parks cannot fully fund every position for which some relative need may exist. It could be a healthy process to reassess our generalist roots for any potential application to our future challenges. 🏠

*Pete Swisher has worked with the National Park Service for 15 years. Currently he serves as the chief park ranger for both Scotts Bluff and Agate Fossil Beds national monuments. He began as a volunteer at Rocky Mountain, and has worked at Ozark National Scenic Riverways, Effigy Mounds, Lincoln Home and Mount Rushmore. An alumni of the Midwest Region Special Events Team (nine years), he is a defensive tactics instructor, firearms instructor and fitness coordinator.*

# The New Professional

## Professionalization of the Law Enforcement Ranger

By Bruce Bytnar  
Retired

I am now enjoying the first few months of retirement following a 32-year career as a ranger with the National Park Service.

I started as a seasonal park aide interpreter in a small historic park and ended as a district ranger in a large park. I worked in law enforcement since receiving a "C Card" (this predated commissions) in 1976, served on wildland fire and all-risk incident command teams, and supervised and managed a busy district protection, interpretation and resource management operation for 18 years.

I don't mention this to brag because I know there are plenty of people out there with more experience than I, but rather to establish my credibility as a witness to the changes that have occurred in the NPS and the ranger profession over a 30-year span. I grew up as a "generalist ranger" and have always supported this concept. I firmly believe that although the Service has changed over the years, the core mission of the national park ranger remains the same:

*"... to promote and regulate the use of the...national parks...which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."*

Although the ways rangers perform law enforcement duties have evolved, many of the same skills that contributed to the concept or myth of the generalist ranger are still relevant.

### Professional Innovations in Law Enforcement

Many events, including Ranger Careers, have had a direct impact on the ranger profession. This eventually brought about the addition of 6c enhanced retirement and its implications. Perhaps one of the overlooked consequences has been the expectation placed on individual employees and managers to live up to the ideal of professional and modern law enforcement standards. This includes the examination and implementation of up-to-date and current training and field practices. One of the more visible programs to come out of this new age of rangers is the field training program for all employees completing basic law enforcement training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. This Servicewide initiative gives new rangers directed and positive field experiences to build on those skills learned at FLETC, and to return to their duty parks better prepared to perform their jobs in a professional and competent manner.

This new infusion of professionalism is also having positive impacts on individual parks and managers when exploring the best ways to administer visitor activities and provide for resource and visitor protection. There have been no significant increases in the number of law enforcement rangers in recent years, although the workload hasn't diminished. Therefore, individual parks are looking for ways to make the most effective use of available staff and implement new practices to meet these objectives.

The historic mindset of providing daily coverage for areas by uniformed rangers without specific assignments has proved



ineffective in preventing more serious crimes against both visitors and resources. Staffing levels in most parks are not adequate to provide 24/7 coverage, and this has resulted in no decrease in criminal activity, threats to visitor safety or degradation of resources. Rangers are forced to remain in a reactive mode and oftentimes respond to incidents after scheduled duty hours. One possible solution being used in many parks is the concept of problem-oriented policing, which has been successful in many jurisdictions throughout the country.

On the Blue Ridge Parkway, district supervisors were asked to go with their field staffs and identify the most critical protection issues. It was quickly apparent that one such issue was the increasing number of motor vehicle collisions with many resulting in serious injuries and property damage. Reports from rangers were verified by an analysis of collision history identifying areas with higher incidences of collisions. It was also determined that a disproportionate number of these collisions involved motorcycles. It was decided to take a multidiscipline approach to tackle this problem, involving analysis, education, engineering/design and enforcement.

The results have been impressive. The Blue Ridge Parkway has seen a 20 percent-plus decrease in serious injury collisions. This decrease is significant because every year for five years the number of collisions had been increasing. The initial objective was to prevent the increase.

## Small park challenges

Compiled by Mark Herberger

The Ranger Careers Directive 94-3 states that "GS-025 park ranger positions shall be managed as multi-skilled generalists, whose duties will primarily entail protecting park resources, interpreting and educating about park resources, and public use management."

After 14 years, how has the 025 ranger profession evolved and stood this test of time? With specialized duties, professional training, budget restrictions and other issues at play,

what are the challenges park managers face in delineating the roles and functions of their ranger workforces?

Superintendents responsible for "small park" operations were contacted several months ago to acquire information on their challenges within this topic. One small-park area from each state was selected. The superintendent was asked two questions:

1. As a small park area do you employ a full-performance GS-9 025 protection ranger and/or a full-performance GS-9 025 interpretation ranger, or a combined P/I ranger?

2. What is your No. 1 challenge in managing a small park with this organizational structure?

Of the 53 inquiries, 25 responded with these comments (kept anonymous to encourage heartfelt replies):

1. We use full-performance protection and interpretive rangers; no combined P/I rangers, although I have expectations of protection rangers to be able to perform a rudimentary tour and respond to visitors' questions. Interpretive rangers play a role in all special events managed

*(continued on page 8)*

The results exceeded those expectations.

Several other compensations were derived from these actions. Although the number of violation notices greatly increased, the number of more serious felony and misdemeanor incidents decreased. Rangers have developed better officer safety skills in handling violators and traffic stops in these high-risk situations. Additional training and implementation of criminal interdiction techniques have resulted in increases in criminal apprehensions and prevention of crimes within the park. Some areas historically known as hangouts or contact sites for criminal activity have seen sharp decreases in these activities.

This illustration is just one example of the type of work being accomplished throughout the NPS. Shenandoah has been working with problem-oriented policing for resource crimes that have produced dramatic interagency investigations resulting in prosecutions in both federal and state courts. Shenandoah is also working with patrol models that ensure adequate staffing of law enforcement rangers in specified areas identified through analysis of historical criminal activity. Tactics from the military, called operational leadership, are being developed as a risk management program at Lake Mead to ensure safety of law enforcement rangers.

Benefits of professional strategic and tactical planning for law enforcement such as these include the safety of employees and visitors. Rather than scheduling one ranger to cover an area alone, staffing is done in groups or teams to address specific or potential problems. This provides quicker response for backup and safer control of incidents.

Conducting work at a higher professional standard demands additional effort by supervisors and managers. These types of operations require an elevated demand for planning, training and coordination.

As a district ranger I supervised a protection, interpretation and resource management operation. An organizational change resulted in my position evolving into a more traditional protection management role. I looked forward to having time to spend in the field and concentrating on one functional area. What I found was that keeping up with a professional and progressive protection program was more complex and time consuming than I had expected. In order to develop and maintain an effective law enforcement operation within the district, I had to dedicate more time to administration and management. Newer requirements for training, planning, coordination, analysis, administration, developing responses to criminal

activity, and an increasing potential for violent criminal activity have left little or no time for additional activities.

### Application of Generalist Skills to Law Enforcement Today

These examples illustrate how modern and emergent techniques are being developed for use in the national parks by today's professionals. However, to remain effective many of the skills of what was once considered the "generalist ranger" still apply but perhaps in a different context.

The role of educator is still important to the law enforcement ranger. Not only do law enforcement supervisors and managers need to learn and accept new strategies, they need to be able to educate those above them and the field staffs working under them. Should strategies be adopted that alter traditional coverage schedules for law enforcement rangers, other divisions and employees within a park also need to be educated as to why these changes are being made and how to handle any minor incidents that occur during the day.

For example, instead of dispatching a ranger to help a disabled motorist in the park, a tow truck is called instead. Rangers also need to educate other agencies, prosecutors and judges about threats within the park. Many times these contacts evolve into professional presentations involving multimedia, GIS mapping, and resource and mission education.

Any increases in proactive enforcement to address problems in an identified park area will result in additional visitor contacts by rangers. Why am I being stopped? I have never seen so many rangers in this area before? These are golden opportunities to educate park visitors and neighbors about protection issues and resource concerns or to gather information. In instances where this education component is combined with enforcement activities, public reaction can be positive. Most people like to know you are looking out for their safety and protecting important resources. In many instances these contacts will result in gathering valuable intelligence that can be used in developing future strategies or tactics to tackle problems.

Knowledge and understanding of park resources is also essential for rangers to be effective in resource protection. How can you protect endangered species of plants if you can't identify them or locate their habitats? This is where communications with researchers and resource managers becomes an essential part of the law enforcement ranger and manager's tool kit.

In historical parks and historic park sites, the ranger needs to be well-versed in the events and locations of significant resources. Without the base knowledge and understanding of the significant resources within a park, rangers are unable to predict and prevent criminal activities within the park. We know criminals are making use of this information and focus their illegal activities at these locations.

An in-depth understanding of visitor use patterns and expectations can be another valuable tool in predicting and preventing criminal activity. Criminals concentrate on where the victims — visitors or resources — are.

Law enforcement rangers often are the first employees to take initial, on-scene command of incidents. They need to be well-trained in the incident command system and prepared for fires, searches, rescue operations and major crimes until other certified managers can respond. This is a critical responsibility; early, proper management of incidents often determines the overall severity or success of such operations.

Professionalization of the NPS law enforcement program goes beyond issues of pay and retirement. Managers and supervisors need to provide the role model of professionalism through planning and direction. Field rangers need to show their professionalism not only through the proper application of skills and training, but by contributing to the decision-making process through the information, insights and analysis of threats to visitors and resources. The skills needed in the past to be a traditional generalist ranger — law enforcement officer, educator, resource manager and incident manager — are still needed to succeed in today's NPS. Those who can balance these skills will continue to contribute to the mission of the Service and to the success of their own careers. 



Bruce Bytnar

*Bruce Bytnar retired in January 2008 after more than 32 years as an NPS ranger. He began his career as a seasonal interpreter at Fort McHenry, then moved to Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania. Finally he worked three different districts on the Blue Ridge Parkway, ending his career in the Ridge District. He worked with regional and national incident command teams on wildfires and all risk incidents. In addition, he was a guest instructor at FLETC and in the NPS Fundamentals Program.*

# The Continued Absence of the Generalist Park Ranger

By Stacy D. Allen

Shiloh

**O**n a cold winter night in February 1991, two men were apprehended by three National Park Service law enforcement personnel for digging up Civil War artifacts on Shiloh National Military Park. It set in motion seven months of investigation, case preparation and prosecution involving felony violations of the Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979 for unauthorized excavation of federal land, damage to government property assessed at more than \$15,000 and conspiracy.

This relatively unknown relic hunting case involving an old battlefield park in west Tennessee set a number of legal precedents regarding the enforcement and prosecution of cases of archaeological resource protection. First, it was the first felony ARPA case to be prosecuted for looting a federally administered Civil War battlefield. Second, it was the first case where the defendants pleaded not guilty, exercising the right to be tried by jury. Lastly, when the jury found in favor of the government, finding the two defendants guilty on all three felony counts, the two men became the first looters of an NPS-administered Civil War battlefield to be sentenced with imprisonment.

This successful Shiloh ARPA prosecution helped pave the way for similar court actions involving other agency-managed battlefield sites across the nation. In addition, the Shiloh looting case as investigated, prepared and prosecuted by commissioned park employees serves as a useful case model in the instruction of hundreds of federal law enforcement officers, archaeologists and attorneys in current federal archaeological resource protection training courses. However, there is an underlying touch of irony in how current agency personnel management policy would impact this 17-year-old looting incident. If, hypothetically,

this particular case occurred today, involving all the same incident parameters — two looters committing a similar violation on the park, with the same three park employees working the incident — the case would never be prosecuted. That's because, in the wake of changes enacted through implementation of Ranger Careers in 1994, the three Shiloh protection personnel who apprehended, investigated and prosecuted this important looting case to its successful precedent-setting conclusion in 1991 would not hold law enforcement commissions in this agency.

It isn't because they have since transferred to another agency, moved on to occupy non-law enforcement positions or attained the mandatory retirement age, but for the simple reason these employees would never be commissioned today by the NPS because of the primary jobs they occupied 17 years ago within the Shiloh Interpretation and Resource Management Division. These three park rangers, as tradition and court records defined them, were the park resource management specialist, the lead ranger for interpretation and visitor services and the museum technician. In 1991 they were three of the five fully commissioned law enforcement personnel working at the park. Given the current Servicewide policy on management of the national park ranger profession, which only uses two of the three benchmark park ranger positions as defined for effective personnel management through implementation of Ranger Careers, these three NPS personnel occupying those same primary job performance functions today wouldn't be permitted to carry law enforcement commissions because they didn't perform law enforcement duties at least 51 percent of their on-duty time.

**N**o one can argue that management of the national park ranger profession has evolved during the history of this agency.

The NPS used several position management strategies for the park ranger occupation prior to 1994. As a matter of necessity, rangers like the five fully commissioned personnel working at Shiloh in 1991 performed generalist duties that permitted them to be multiskilled employees. They spent equal amounts of time in such disciplines as interpretation, resource management, maintenance, law enforcement and emergency services.

**H**istorically, this position management strategy allowed for considerable flexibility, but left park ranger positions lower graded and administratively nonprofessional. With the passing of time, larger staffs in many parks and legal mandates being enforced on certain qualities of agency work, various duties traditionally performed by the ranger corps migrated to newly formed disciplines such as maintenance and resource management. The work of park rangers became more specialized as personnel began to concentrate on interpretation, law enforcement and emergency services.

However, at small- and medium-sized parks, where annual budgets and staff organizations traditionally are small, specialization of the national park ranger series to these strictly defined job functions has come with a price. In most cases it has adversely affected the ability of managers to protect and preserve park resources and provide public services for visitors at these parks.

This old chief will be the first to challenge that the current means of managing the national park ranger profession is not necessarily superior to the old way. Ranger Careers has benefited many commissioned park rangers and parks. However, the selective implementation of Ranger Careers did not benefit "all" commissioned park rangers nor has it been the best fit for managing the protection program for every type of national park. Since 1994

## Small park challenges

*(continued from page 6)*

under ICS. 2. We have one protection and one interpretive ranger position being lapsed due to lack of funding. I am in the process of restructuring the lapsed interpretation ranger into a park guide because it is the only way I can get a position back into the field at current funding. I have maintained

my law enforcement needs assessment levels for many years. I am afraid we have specialized ourselves to the point where unless you have staff willing to be flexible, these type of rangers will not exist in the future. Both types of ranger positions need to be well trained and have the skills needed to do their respective jobs, but as our numbers grow smaller they must have the ability to perform a variety of duties.



1. The park employs one GS-11 protec-

tion/chief ranger who supervises one GS-9 interpretation ranger and one GS-4 visitor use assistant. 2. There is difficulty for the protection/chief ranger if they do not have an interpretive background in supervising an interpreter. The interpreter can be resistant to the GS-11 because they do not have experience in the interpretive field. This puts up a wall between the two. With the amount of specialization in the NPS and all the training needs of protection rangers, it is very difficult

the Servicewide management of the ranger profession, with its associated budget impacts, has simply forced many small parks to cut protection services by reducing the number of positions.

One primary reason for this has been the restriction to make use of the combination protection and interpretation (P/I) benchmark park ranger position. As envisioned through Ranger Careers, this combination or “generalist” position was to provide park managers with the operational means and flexibility to maintain, within budget and organization limitations, a directly proportional and functioning protection operation within small parks and/or smaller districts of medium and large parks without forcing managers to gut their protection staffs to meet the required stipulations and standards governing use of full-performance park ranger protection (P) positions. The protection (P) position fits well in parks where illegal activity occurs or the potential for such activity occurs at a frequency that keeps the incumbents performing law enforcement duties at least 51 percent of their on-duty time.

In most cases these parks are large in acreage or have high visitation, or both, and normally have separate divisions of employees with greater than one employee in each division. In addition, the protection (P) position qualifies for enhanced annuity (20-year) retirement. Thus, another issue confronting the use of the combination (P/I) position is the formal creation of two corps of protection personnel — those who have enhanced annuity retirement and those who would not. The combination (P/I) ranger position is not covered by enhanced annuity retirement. However, this agency already has two corps of protection rangers, both created by implementation of Ranger Careers — fully commissioned park rangers who possess enhanced annuity, 20-year retirement and those who do not. This latter group of fully commissioned personnel

(many who possess more than 20 years of commissioned service) who have been denied enhanced annuity coverage is not a small number of rangers, and despite a general apathy within the NPS toward their plight, still daily strap on the defensive equipment to provide capable professional protection work on behalf of the parks they steward and the visitors enjoying them.

My entire 24 years of service as an employee of this agency have been performed at smaller units within the National Park System, parks where the traditional diversity of park ranger job functions are still managed under interpretation and resource management organizational structures. Staffs at these parks are small, but workload demands, by the nature of the resources preserved and annual visitation, are high for every employee.

At Shiloh in 1991, all five permanent employees assigned to the ranger division possessed a full law enforcement commission, a condition of their employment desired and managed for by park leadership. Although four of the five possessed primary core mission duties lying outside of law enforcement (either in resource management or interpretation), the very size of the protection staff, in having all positions commissioned, provided park management with greater flexibility in effectively scheduling and staffing for assigned duties, meeting annual performance goals for the park and the agency, and dealing with illegal activities. Each of the commissioned employees possessed knowledge, abilities and skills to carry out the multitude of required park ranger job functions in the historic tradition of early rangers — enforcing the law one minute and interpreting the compelling story of the park in the next, and providing



Courtesy of NPS

**A Shiloh commissioned park ranger conducts a soldier program for school children.**

management with the staff to perform numerous in-house natural and cultural resource management actions.

In smaller parks like Vicksburg and Shiloh, and at medium-sized parks such as Cumberland Gap and Congaree Swamp, where responses to law enforcement or emergency service incidents are likely to be more infrequent than at Independence, the Great Smokies or Yellowstone, the combination of professional interpretation and professional protection services in one employee with its smaller budget ramifications than having to hire a full-performance employee for each discipline makes appropriate sense. This type of management-driven personnel system fits well in smaller parks or smaller districts of medium or larger parks where the law enforcement workload is moderate to minimal, and where all employees are frequently asked to perform duties in other disciplines.

Today, the Shiloh Interpretation And Resource Management Division has within its post-Ranger Careers organization only two primary law enforcement positions covered by the enhanced annuity retirement that meet the legal definition of a federal law enforcement officer. Position specialization is the new order, and Shiloh was forced to create specifically defined professional interpreters and resource management positions. Given the important

to find a commissioned person who also has the interpretive background to manage an interpretive operation. Few interpreters want to make the commitment to become protection rangers.



1. Yes, one of each. 2. Both wear many hats outside their expected position descriptions. The park is closed to visitors from November through April. There is plenty of work to keep a LE ranger busy from a paper work/program

development perspective but the actual enforcement load is very light. It is important that the LE ranger becomes very involved in community programs in order to keep up his/her level of presence.



For about 10 years we have had no NPS LE program. We let our commissions go and have been very happy with the results. At one time we had as many as three LE rangers; now none. All our law enforcement is provided by two

counties. We call the county sheriffs when an incident happens. The most common is an alarm goes off (thunderstorm causing the electricity to go out). Keeping a good relationship with both LE agencies and others (state patrol, state game wardens) is extremely important. The most serious incident was a suicide a few years ago and looking back, having an LE ranger would not have prevented it. I have been very happy with how all this has worked.

*(continued on page 11)*



Thomas E. Parson

**Josh Clemons, a generalist park ranger at Shiloh, works here as a wildland firefighter.**

role of these disciplines on this 113-year-old battlefield park, the need for these positions has grown within the organization since 1994, while budget and strict adherence to protection work requirements restricted the number of law enforcement personnel management could afford. The limited number of professional specialized law enforcement positions, now standing at two, retards the flexibility in scheduling and protection services not witnessed when five permanent “generalist” rangers carried commissions. The low number of commissioned rangers and the administrative necessity to program protection duties to permit law enforcement rangers to meet their enhanced annuity stipulations means the two protection personnel at Shiloh are less frequently asked to perform duties in other disciplines. Furthermore, retention of a smaller protection staff at a park the size of Shiloh has developed some troubling issues. The single transfer or retirement of one protection ranger can force the park to operate with only one federal law enforcement officer for as much as six to nine months as the park follows procedure to fill the vacancy. It also has become far more difficult to fill the vacant positions. Vacancy certifications for open protection ranger positions at Shiloh are small, with no more than two to eight applicants routinely listed on each vacancy cert. This compares to nearly three dozen applicants for a recently announced “part-time” visitor use assistant vacancy. Furthermore, the need to try and fill any protection vacancy as quickly as possible limits the ability of management to tactically recruit qualified, noncommissioned entry-level personnel into commissioned protection positions. To do so demands the park to commit to an even greater length of time in not having a vacancy filled with an already commissioned journeyman park ranger, as it moves through the process of getting any newly hired entry-level protection ranger professionally trained and commissioned to perform law enforcement for this unique agency.

Although Shiloh experiences its share of

serious protection issues, particularly ARPA, wildlife poaching, theft of government property and vandalism, the park is not attractive to many protection rangers stationed at parks where illegal activities are far more frequent. In this regard, Shiloh is now a ticket-punch location for protection personnel who transfer in only to depart within two years with another park on their résumé, gaining the necessary experience to compete for other positions. This frequent shifting of protection personnel from one park to another is understandable. At small parks like Shiloh or Stones River where organizational limitations have led to fewer commissioned employees, it creates significant operational deficiencies over the long term. Throughout my six years as chief of interpretation and resource management, the two primary law enforcement positions at Shiloh have been simultaneously filled only for 14 of the 72 months. This dysfunctional position management history is the result of one retirement, three protection ranger transfers to other parks and the management decision to recruit two promising SCEPs and train them at the entry level in an attempt to get qualified new blood. This recruitment strategy was half successful, gaining the agency a quality protection ranger, but at a cost of down time while both rangers waited to attend basic training at FLETC and complete the supervised field training program at another park. Although one of these employees left the NPS to work for another agency before earning a commission, the park enjoyed the benefit of the second ranger’s professional protection services for 14 months before the employee transferred to another park.

The only saving grace throughout this six-year period is that I still carry a full commission. Although I’m one of the commissioned rangers not covered by the enhanced annuity program, I can still meet the job demands of the professional protection ranger and provide law enforcement for the park. However, the demands on my time during these vacancies impacts the supervision and management of the entire division (23 permanent and seasonal employees and about 600 volunteers annually). This is not an enviable management position if one is responsible for directing a functional, core mission program to protect resources, visitors and employees at a prominent national park. I envy the position manage-

ment flexibility my predecessors experienced when I was a buck ranger. The operational and organizational adaptability they enjoyed, despite smaller staff size, by possessing a corps of motivated and highly qualified generalist rangers was simply more efficient and effective given the budget ramifications, staff limitations and resource complexity of the smaller parks.

The national park ranger profession has become a far less effective position management scheme with only partial implementation of the three Ranger Careers benchmarks. Small parks with small operations budgets are especially vulnerable to being forced to do without either professional protection or professional interpretation services. While some managers may have found other avenues to substitute for these professional services (volunteers, cooperating association employees, local agency law enforcement, adjacent federal land management agencies), these options are almost always substandard to the fundamental purpose of the NPS as stated in the 1916 Organic Act. These types of personnel lack the professional knowledge of park cultural and natural resources required by NPS employees in the Ranger Careers position descriptions.

To fully implement effective use of the combination park ranger position will require the NPS to determine how best to reasonably compensate rangers who are required to be commissioned but conduct the infrequent, but no less complex or dangerous protection stewardship needed in many parks.

There are counter arguments to my thoughts on this matter, but I contend there remains a significant role for the commissioned “generalist” park ranger. My beloved park and many others experience the adverse effect of the generalist ranger’s absence. 

*Stacy D. Allen is a supervisory park ranger at Shiloh National Military Park where he serves as chief of interpretation and resource management.*



**CSA Camp Shiloh Battle Anniversary**

Courtesy of NPS

# 'Setting the Stage' for 025 Protection Rangers

Article and photos by Mark Herberger  
Minuteman Missile

## Act 1

"Wouldn't you know it," the chief ranger said. "We took the time and effort to hire a permanent protection ranger, spent more time and funding to send her off to FLETC, and now as her field training is almost complete she's accepted a position at that other park. Our budget doesn't cover all the things LE rangers already have to do, and now the superintendent is really going to be on me for this. It seems as if most people nowadays want to do their own thing or move somewhere else where the pay is better. When's the Park Service going to do something about it?"



Although the above narrative is fiction, we have probably heard similar testimonies from NPS employees charged with overseeing visitor protection programs. Such challenges are not new to the men and women of the NPS. Recruitment and retention, training needs, classifications standards, funding shortfalls and more have been topics of conversation our ranger circles have held for many years. Sometimes the conversations lead to change; sometimes not. With many issues of importance, the positive changes we once made sometimes resurface in slightly different forms for each generation to contend with again.

The history of protection rangers and the evolution of their roles and functions are rich in lure and reality. Articles and opinions have been authored, directives and policies have been levied, and the growth, reinvention and



Rangers Ron Sams and Stan Buchanan at Badlands prepare for their daily duties.

regrowth cycle of what constitutes an 025 protection ranger fill many files and bookshelves. Sorting it all out and putting into practice the "best practices" for our park areas in the 21st century are now what matters most.

Yellowstone Superintendent Horace Albright hired rangers in 1926 whose duties were described as "a police force . . . protection of the forests, fish and game . . . information supplying . . . answering of questions, lecturing, and guiding . . . and care of all government property." Interestingly familiar?

A couple generations later the 1976 amendments to the General Authorities Act provided the NPS with a mandate to designate employees to perform law enforcement functions. Further clarifying the mandate's intent, the House committee report stated "that law enforcement activities in our National Park System will continue to be viewed as one function of a broad program of visitor and resource protection." Of key importance is that protection rangers should maintain "the appearance of all

designated employees as representatives of a resource and people-serving agency, and not as members of an organization whose only function is law enforcement."

With the 1976 backing of law, how would the NPS ensure professionalization of its protection ranger workforce and remind employees what 025 ranger jobs are all about? In 1994 one intended means was called Ranger Careers, a position management strategy establishing benchmark position descriptions detailing roles and functions for 025 protection rangers at the GS-5, 7 and full-performance 9 levels. One directive of Ranger Careers was that all 025 rangers, whether in protection or interpretation, be managed as multiskilled generalists whose duties primarily entail protecting park resources, interpreting and educating about park resources, and public use management. Ranger Careers specified that "rangers specializing in the resource and visitor protection function must have training to do the full range of law enforcement work." Having on-site experience, park supervisors and managers also were to have the wherewithal for deciding an organizational chart best suited to the needs of protection and interpretation at their area.

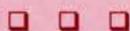
## Act 2

On the final day of an operational evaluation at Great Park, the regional human resource member of the evaluation team (a position classifier for the Service) interviews a GS-9 protection ranger. He asks, "What do you do?" The dutiful ranger replies, "I'm a law enforcement ranger." The classifier says, "OK, but what

## Small park challenges

(continued from page 9)

We have saved plenty of money and have put our scarce resources (funds) in resource management, interpretation and facility management.



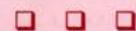
Our organization recently had GS-9 LE positions and they were abolished because incidents at our three sites were so few they did not warrant a full-time or even part-time LE position. All EMS, fire and LE are under three local agreements. We do have

three GS-9 full-time interpretive positions, and since arriving I discovered they do not meet their intended job requirements of interpretive planning, exhibit and media development along with new programs and special events. Instead (and I am sure we are not the only park), we dumped other critical tasks, such as IT work, permits, safety and concessions, on the GS-9s, thus preventing them time to do their basic job. These are being addressed now so the interpretive GS-9 rangers can do their jobs!



1. No. We hope to hire one based on a successful OFS request in FY09 or FY10. 2.

Concerning LE, a huge challenge is that we cannot generally count on county LE staffs (one or two persons for 2,000 square miles), and they cannot enforce federal laws even if they can respond. It is at times a significant challenge.



1. No. 2. Though the park likely has unidentified LE needs, the NPS owns very little property in the boundary. While it might be useful to have LE expertise, relative to planning for security, our need would likely not be for a GS-9 commissioned ranger. There could be some value in a traditional generalist ranger,

(continued on page 12)

actually are your daily duties?” The ranger says, “Let’s see, mainly I patrol the district, enforce regulations and write citations. I also respond to search and rescues, fight fires and really get into emergencies; a little bit of everything I guess.” The regional classifier says: “Sounds like a great job,” travels back to the regional office and suggests that the NPS downgrade all similar positions throughout the Service to the GS-7 level.



With Ranger Careers benchmark position descriptions, a full-performance protection ranger needs to carefully look beyond traditional law enforcement descriptors for grade-defining duties. While the majority of protection work is law enforcement with skills sets in SAR, fire and emergency response, these packaged duties don’t carry a full-performance GS-9 classification. For protection rangers, the package must also include skill sets in resource stewardship and resource education. Ranger Careers PDs don’t require protection rangers to become “resource managers” or “park interpreters.” Those are other professions. They do, however, have law enforcement rangers serve as visitor and resource protectors, resource stewards and resource educators. Maybe the wherewithal is all in the percentages.

NPS Management Policies 2006 continues to put law enforcement into context by stating: “Park law enforcement activities will be managed by superintendents as part of a comprehensive, interdisciplinary effort to protect resources, manage public use, and promote public safety and appropriate enjoyment.” Law enforcement activities are described in Section 8, Chapter 3; the first sentence states that a law enforcement program is an important tool in carrying out the mission of the NPS. Section 8.2.5 highlights another tool: emergency operations and search and rescue; Section 4, Chapter 5, another tool: fire management; Section 7 lists another tool: interpretation.

Our policy guidebook adds, “The duties of commissioned employees will not be limited to just law enforcement; they will also continue to incorporate a diversity of other protection concerns, as stipulated in House Report No. 94-1569.”

Just a few years ago many NPS personnel, along with oversight groups such as ANPR and the Coalition of NPS Retirees, went to bat for all of us when Management Policies was threatened with a political rewrite. Dust a copy off and have it as recommended reading for full-performance rangers of all types.

Like other career tracks, protection ranger PDs set a standard for job-seeking incumbents



**Computer duties and paper work can be time consuming and keep rangers out of the field.**

and demand individuals be well-versed and well-trained in a variety of KSAs. The resource management position descriptions detail important skill sets for their job. Interpretation

ranger benchmarks list their full performance KSAs. Likewise, the protection park ranger benchmarks list not only law enforcement criteria, but resource stewardship and resource educations standards. Like the other career tracks within the NPS, well-intentioned PDs and professionalization efforts for protection rangers have faced a series of growing pains and unintended consequences.

We have witnessed varying degrees of success and setbacks as a result of reorganizations in the 1990s, flat congressional appropriations, infighting and image problems, training fits and starts, and divergent levels of support from managers. Another issue for which we have witnessed change, has been the pool of candidates from which supervisors and managers select career rangers.

### Act 3

“A month late from that ‘Franchise’ place and I don’t think we’ll be able to get any seasonal rangers off of this crummy cert,” says the protection manager, sighing. “Each year the pool seems to be drying up and there is no way the seasonal academies have graduated

## Small park challenges

*(continued from page 11)*

with responsibility for LE and resources, but even that would not be a high priority yet. If we were to employ a commissioned ranger, current policy would require direct supervision by the superintendent, time that is not readily available due to the demands of the park’s partnerships. A commissioned ranger with combined LE and RM duties would also cause an imbalance in the structure of operations management.

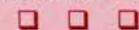


I supervise one GL-9 law enforcement 6c position and one GS-9 interpretation position. Both use the benchmark position description under Ranger Careers. The organization of work into two ranger disciplines seems to work out well, as each has its own program specialty. The interpreter does the education program, coordinates volunteers, and plans special events and interpretive projects. The protection ranger conducts patrols, does physical security system maintenance and handles the EMS program. We are required to meet all NPS standards as if we are a big park with a larger staff. A great deal of time is spent working on mandatory requirements, reply due reports. Work that should be ac-

complished by lower graded/seasonal staff is being done by the permanent staff. There are many occasions in which a GS-9 or a GS-12 works the visitor center because there is no one else. Work that should be accomplished by permanent staff is being done by volunteers. We have documented 96 percent of all facilitated interpretive program hours are presented by volunteers. Park management is aware, but is not willing to make adjustments.



1. We employ both. Our organization includes a chief of operations (also a commissioned ranger), two supervisory rangers (one for protection, one for interpretation), two full-performance protection rangers, two full-performance interpreters, two park guides and seasonals as funding permits. 2. Our No. 1 challenge is overloading the chief of operations. He also manages the cultural and natural resources programs. He voluntarily surrendered 6c status, but if he leaves, I’m not confident that we will be able to replace him with someone who has the same skills and credentials. We need someone with the law enforcement background and abilities, but who will carry other responsibilities that will disqualify him/her for 6c benefits? We can’t afford two division chiefs.



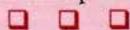
The park does not have either GS-09 positions;

enough people to come close to filling the Centennial Commitment.” In agreement, the district ranger laments, “I remember not that long ago how it took me a couple of years to get on with the Park Service because the competition was so tough; there were over 30,000 applicants for the seasonal positions being hired.” “I just don’t know what’s happening,” says the manager. “For the past several years we’ve had to cut seasonal positions because of the budget; now that we have Centennial funding, there’s no pool of qualified applicants. With no seasonals, where are we going to get our future permanent rangers?”

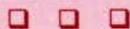


The “where have all the young men and women gone” scenario plays out across the system. Actually, the scenario has been playing out for 30 years. In 1979 there seemed to be an abundant supply of teachers and college students seeking a summer seasonal position. That year 33,000 applied for the few thousand available positions. By 1989 the number of applicants decreased 50 percent, and in a poll conducted by *Ranger* magazine, 40 percent of responding park areas said they didn’t receive

the challenge is different because the park definitely needs a full-time protection ranger.



All we have here is one full-performance GS-11 chief ranger. However, this coming year we will add a permanent STF GS-07 park ranger (protection), and neither of these positions are or will be involved with interpretation. As for involvement with natural resources, they do the special permits for uses such as gathering of plants for ceremonial uses only, etc.



1. We have one permanent full-time GS-9 protection ranger, one permanent subject-to-furlough GS-9 protection ranger and no chief ranger. We have one full-performance GS-9 interpretation ranger and one chief of interpretation (GS-11). 2. In law enforcement, 1.75 FTE to cover 750,000 acres for 12.5 hours per day, seven days a week. It can’t be done! The superintendent serves as the de facto chief ranger, which is not very effective. In interpretation, the inability is building a comprehensive education outreach program, provide VC coverage, walks, talks and evening programs. For many years we have only had one seasonal interpretation ranger, which means the GS-9 and GS-11 provide some VC coverage and some guided walks. Therefore, VC coverage, most summer walks and talks, and evening programs are provided by HNA

an adequate number of applicants. By 1999 the WASO Seasonal Employment Office received about 10,000 applications. The supply of applicants has been steadily decreasing and, with respect to law enforcement seasonals, has reached a point where there may not be enough qualified applicants to fill existing vacancies.

The decades have been tough on our seasonal ranks. Whether through scarce opportunities to enter permanent positions, housing conditions or the lack of benefits, the NPS has lagged behind the eight ball in many cases. In addition to these deficiencies, candidates for seasonal protection positions have had to contend with tuition costs at law enforcement academies, and training, competency and accreditation demands. For park areas facing budget deficiencies, base cost projections have left few choices for managers but to cut discretionary spending, sometimes also known as seasonal hiring.

Trends evolve too. Visitors’ travel patterns have broadened traditional summer seasons, and Gen Xers and Millennials have a different view toward careers and earnings than previous generations of the seasonal workforce. Twelve-

staff, VIPs, SCAs and interns. In past years, park visitors had contact with few uniformed 025 interpretation rangers.



1. We have three VRP GS-9 rangers, one interpretation GS-9 and a chief ranger GS-11. 2. Keeping the VRP rangers motivated to seek new ways to do their jobs. Patrols can easily become routine. Often they know what to look for, and what to expect can be an advantage but it can also limit their willingness to try new things. We have a very motivated seasonal ranger who is trying new ways to approach problems and is having more success than the permanents. I have requested that patrol rangers get out and walk through our picnic area but they prefer to ride through in their cars. This limits their exposure to a few minutes, whereas if they walk, they could contact dozens of visitors more effectively. They do it because I expect it but they resist. I wonder if Ranger Careers has caused NPS rangers to feel like they only need to patrol in their vehicles to be successful?



The park has a full-time GS-9 protection ranger, a GS-9 education specialist and a GS-11 park ranger interpretation under the chief of interpretation and visitor services. A chief ranger under the above title is then

*(continued on page 14)*



**Vincent Littlewhiteman, protection ranger at Badlands**

point plans, Vail and other summit agendas, congressional hearings, even Ranger Careers have had their input on these matters.

What are the odds that the NPS will be able to recruit permanent protection rangers without the seasonal protection ranks from which to screen, evaluate and select? One idea to increase the pool and stack the odds in favor of finding enough applicants would have to include serious funding increases for seasonal hiring and the mechanism for a massive hiring thrust. It could mean \$40.6 million in base increases for up to 3,000 seasonal positions.

Some 50 percent of all park visits occur from May through August, and the work of seasonal rangers allows national parks to sustain the high level of service the public expects and the resource protection mandated by our mission. Unfortunately, reductions such as pay absorption and across-the-board cuts have resulted in disproportional cuts to seasonal operations. Since 2001 there has been a greater than 20-percent decline in the number of base-funded maintenance, interpretation and protection seasonal employees. As part of the Centennial Initiative to revitalize the seasonal program, appropriations were sought and Congress approved funding for 1,000 facility management, 1,000 interpretation and visitor service, and 1,000 visitor and resource protection seasonals. Further, rebuilding a force of seasonal employees subsequently improves the pool of knowledgeable rangers able to replace the aging workforce of the NPS.

Let’s say the NPS takes this initiative and makes as much of a success story as possible. The applicant pool for protection seasonals shows modest gains; a percentage of the applicants actually have the character and quality KSAs for the vacancies; certificates of eligibility arrive in a timely manner; medical and background checks are appropriately approved; and the Centennial seasonals partake in a productive and satisfying summer employment program.

Of course, each park's base increase portion of the \$15.6 million for Centennial protection seasonal rangers will begin to erode. For the next couple of fiscal years, however, park areas should be able to continue a positive trend. Some of the younger generational rangers may even decide to seek a career with the Service, and maybe the NPS will evaluate the best candidates to hire as permanent rangers and provide FLETC training.

## Epilogue

See Act 1. I was reading a back issue of my favorite magazine recently. In a 2005 *Ranger* article, all of the chief rangers in the Midwest Region were polled and asked what they saw as their No. 1 challenge in fulfilling their visitor and resource protection operations. Responses ranged from inadequate funding to "bone-headed superintendents." The No. 1 challenge, however, occurring more times was "retention of their protection rangers." This is a serious challenge, not only for protection supervisors and managers but for all NPS career fields. Like other issues we face, there are probably a host of root causes for not being able to retain some protection rangers, whether at a specific unit or within the NPS.

As individuals in charge of a park's protection operation, supervisors and/or managers raise due concern over retention challenges. Sometimes specific root causes may be out of our direct control, but as a protection operation leader, there may be considerable

opportunities (albeit "out-of-the-box" for some) to address the challenges and affect positive change. Successful businesses are moving away from making employees fit the job. Instead, they are moving toward making the job fit the employee. Job enrichment will not be a one-time proposition but a continuous management function. In the 21st century jobs are becoming more flexible; workplaces are becoming more responsive to workers' needs.

Consolidated from various sources, there are a variety of tried and tested qualities that keep employees with their job. Most of these retention motivators do not require rocket science and are readily adaptable to our ranger workforce: expectations that are clear and achievable (not necessarily easy); recognition for good work; responsibility that counts; being able to excel at what they do best; a caring environment; to be listened to; career and skills development; passionate mission of the company; performance feedback; committed coworkers; and equipment to do the job right.

In our final act within the Service, protection supervisors can take charge and set the stage by creating an atmosphere of learning and growth in order to keep good people. This calls for a new kind of supervisor — a protection leader who can coach, teach, lead protection rangers to new challenges, make people feel good about themselves, and keep individuals motivated and interested. 

## SUGGESTED READING

For more reading about protection rangers in the NPS, visit these articles in back issues of *Ranger* magazine (all are available for purchase on the website):

"Law Enforcement and the General Authorities Act" by Tony Sisto, Spring 1997

"Ranger Image, Ranger Realities" by Bill Halainen and "On Being a Ranger" by Jim Northup, Spring 1998

"Seasonal Rangering" by Dennis Young, Winter 1999/2000

"The National Park Service 025 Protection Ranger" by Ernie Quintana, Fall 2005

"Slippery Rock University's Integrated Academic Model" by Dr. Randy Pitstick and Dr. John Lisco, Fall 2007

*Mark Herberger joined the NPS in 1979 as a seasonal interpretive ranger at Craters of the Moon. Since then he has worked at San Antonio Missions, Big Bend, Zion, and currently is superintendent at Minuteman Missile. During his 29 years with the Service he has served as a wildland firefighter, regional instructor, curator and search-and-rescue member. He also has won a regional Freeman Tilden Award. For the past five years Mark has served as the editorial adviser for Ranger, selecting themes and topics for the quarterly magazine and drafting authors to contribute articles for each issue.*

## Small park challenges

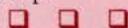
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expected to be fully competent in both fields and devote time to each, which is seldom truly possible. Usually the interpretation side gets less attention due to training requirements and emergency ops. This leads to frustrated interpreters, particularly those in GS-9 positions who want leadership in interpretive skills and the opportunity to build their capacity as potential supervisors. Protection rangers under this system also seem frustrated by having to take on more than they are ready for in the absence of a full-time chief ranger (LE). I am not an advocate of combined divisions, even in small-park situations.



This is pretty simple for the park: We do not have any LE capacity in the park, but we do employ 025 interpretive rangers.

There are no major challenges associated with the arrangement that I have faced, since we don't really have any LE need. Occasionally we will have some difficult visitors in the interpretive center, but problems are resolved by the skilled staff and I am not sure that LE presence would help.



Our protection and interp rangers are entirely separate. All of our rangers do some public education, as I hope is true in every NPS area. I think what you're asking is "what are the challenges associated with having a combined LE/interp organization structure?" Since that's not the case in our situation, it's hard to answer. I'd say my concerns for protection rangers would be maintaining qualifications, training, employee safety in the line of duty, and the ever-present possibility that a routine visitor contact could go ballistic. As for interp rangers, I worry that they are viewed as a luxury in the world of tight budgets and can therefore be cut. I also worry about how

effectively we are equipping our GS-9 interpreters with skills to move forward and effectively manage interpretive programs at a higher grade level.



1. The park has one GS-9 full-performance interpreter and one GS-9 PFT full-performance law enforcement ranger, a chief GS-11 and one project-funded ranger.
2. Challenges are burnout, retention of employees, and continuity of the entire program due to turnover and long-term lapses due in large degree to the lack of change-of-station funding from the regional office. In smaller parks, manager/front-line supervisors are often tasked with a myriad of organizational and collateral duties and are less available to carry out the field program when lapses occur. They also are often less available to mentor once lapsed positions are rehired. Small parks with small staff are also constantly facing the loss or degrada-

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tion of professional level staff due to budget erosion.



1. Two GS-9 protection rangers and a GS-9 interpretation ranger. 2. Scheduling to allow for coverage during an eight-hour workday.



1. The park does not have a permanent full-time protection or interpretation ranger. The closest we get is a permanent part-time protection ranger and he usually works the minimum six months. 2. The hardest part of him working part time is determining when he is most needed, and yet giving him the time for another job, which he needs to pay the bills. (I know that we are not supposed to worry about this issue, but how do you not?) It is hard to keep him in the loop of situations that occur when he isn't here. When he isn't here we have to take care of matters ourselves and then it is forgotten. This is not good for him and not good for the park.



1. We have one GS-12 chief ranger who is over interpretation, one GS-9 LEO position that is currently lapsed pending budget and/or a full-performance GS-9 025 interpretation ranger. 2. Trying to stay on top of meeting visitor needs. In addition to 100-plus school visits (approximately 6,500 students) we also have 250,000-plus visitors a year. We have two visitor contacts stations and go to extended hours in the summer. We simply don't have the staff to handle the visitor services at a professional level. About 95 percent of formal programs done in FY 07 were done by volunteers (minimally trained in IDP principles).



1. No. We have no interpretive staff. 2. Trying to find the time to plan interpretive exhibits. Other staff and VIPs do school programs, but making any improvements is time consuming for me. If a project requires contacting, it doesn't happen unless Harpers Ferry Center can do it.



1. No current LE position. For a couple of years, 1992-94, the chief of interpretation and resource management (GS-11) carried a protection commission. About the same time as this person moved on, Ranger Careers occurred and we made a decision that the park couldn't support a ranger position by new Ranger Careers standards and still have the time needed for interpretive duties. We decided to negotiate greater LE support from officers in the area (BIA). The GS-11, since 1995, has been dedicated to I&RM, fee collection and

## Small park challenges



visitor services. We have a FY10 OFS proposal to re-establish a GS-025-5/7/9 ranger position with LE/emergency services/fire responsibilities. The position will also work considerable hours (about one-half time) in interpretation and resource management. 2. Although we have solid informal agreements with BIA LE, we have come to learn that coverage in our area is inconsistent and may not be reliable when and if ever really needed. Other LE coverage (county/state) is sparse, at least 15-20 miles away if available. If the LE position is added, there is concern about adequate involvement and regular experiential time in LE/emergency services. With a small likelihood of LE/emergency services/fire responsibilities incidents, would the ranger get enough practice/experience? Even without regular LE/emergency services incidents at a small park, we still have functions that can put employees "in harms way" and that would in a larger park be handled only by LE personnel.



1. We employ both. We have one GS-9 protection ranger who is also involved in cultural resource management, living history and the NPS black powder program. We have one GS-9 interpretation ranger who works with teachers and school groups. 2. Right now, with the individuals we have and their broad mix of talents and skills, we do not have any serious issues. We could have a serious challenge trying to maintain what we have now if one or both of them were to leave.



1. We have no commissioned rangers. We have one, full-performance ranger GS-9 (interpretation). 2. Without onsite protection rangers, our greatest challenge is dealing with issues that

have the potential to escalate to violence or present an immediate danger to employees and visitors. Visitors who are clearly intoxicated or under

the influence of drugs may create disturbances that have demonstrated potential to become violent. No staff on site is qualified of dealing with these incidents. Local law enforcement often has an excessively long response time or may be completely unavailable. The nearest NPS enforcement rangers are a minimum of two hours away. Even when the violators are not violent, staff has no means of preventing them from entering their vehicles and driving away, sometimes impaired, thereby presenting a hazard to pedestrians and other motorists approaching the monument on the narrow and twisting primary access road. Additionally, with a full-service, commercial lodging operation on the monument, some visitors may engage in disorderly conduct at any hour of the day or night. Neither the concession nor NPS staff can respond promptly, safely and adequately.



1. The commissioned ranger (chief ranger) position was deleted in 1996; in fact, as superintendent I was the last commissioned ranger. We have an agreement with another park to supply our law enforcement needs. So far our incidents have been few and minor, but as the area population continues to increase we may have to revisit this if increased incidents occur. We do employ three full-performance GS-9 interpretation rangers. 2. Because we have been fortunate not to have many incidents, it really has not been a problem. We have good relations with the park and the sheriff's department and they have been responsive to our needs. I came up through the ranks as an 025 protection/interpretive (generalist) ranger and loved "doing it all." I guess in this complex day and age it is unrealistic to have generalist rangers, but I also think the NPS has lost some of its soul by not having these combined positions. To me that was what being a ranger was all about; the use of law enforcement and/or interpretation were the tools to be a ranger, not positions themselves. 🏠

# Happy Birthday, Theodore Roosevelt!

Oct. 27, 1858 – Jan. 6, 1919

This year we celebrate the 150th birthday of Theodore Roosevelt.

Why do we commemorate the birthday of someone who died 89 years ago? Birthdays and anniversaries give us an opportunity to reflect on our lives, accomplishments and future. Roosevelt's birthday gives us an opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of a man who became a champion of conservation, and a chance to ponder the future of our nation's resources and public lands.

In addition to his many other accomplishments as the 26th president of the United States, Roosevelt set aside 230 million acres of public land for conservation as national forests, national parks, federal bird sanctuaries, national game preserves and national monuments. Roosevelt was the first president to focus significant attention on conservation issues. He convened the first White House Governors' Conference in 1908 to begin a national dialogue on conservation.

Although Roosevelt didn't establish the National Park Service, as many people think, he did sign five national parks into law and proclaimed 18 national monuments under the Antiquities Act. In *The Outlook*, Feb. 3, 1912, Roosevelt wrote:

"The establishment of the National Park Service is justified by considerations of



good administration, of the value of natural beauty as a National asset, and of the effectiveness of outdoor life and recreation in the production of good citizenship."

Today there are six national park areas dedicated to Theodore Roosevelt: **Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site** (New York), **Theodore Roosevelt National Park** (North Dakota), **Sagamore Hill Na-**

**tional Historic Site** (New York), **Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site** (New York), **Theodore Roosevelt Island** (Washington, D.C.) and **Mount Rushmore National Memorial** (South Dakota). No other president has so many parks dedicated to him. Each of the parks highlighted on these pages preserves and interprets a different phase in the life of the man who is often called the nation's "first conservation president." □

## Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site

"AUTHOR," "BIG GAME HUNTER," "trust buster" and president are all labels bestowed upon Theodore Roosevelt. Hailed as a visionary for helping to usher America into a starring role on the world stage, he was also a conservationist, which is why people often are stunned to learn he was a New Yorker. In order to fully understand Roosevelt, one should start at the site of his childhood home, 28 E. 20th St. in New York City.

The Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace Historic Site was designed as a house museum and captures Roosevelt's early years, the ones that shaped his devotion to the strenuous life, his interest in the natural world and the beliefs that ultimately led to his presidency.

It was here that Roosevelt learned to manage his asthma. Outside the nursery there is an open air porch, which was essentially a home gym built by his parents to help him overcome his illness. This home was also where he learned about the complexities of politics. His mother,



Martha Bulloch Roosevelt, was a Southern sympathizer who would occasionally send care packages south to support the Confederate cause. His father, Theodore Roosevelt Sr., was a strong Lincoln supporter who rallied support from his social contacts in favor of the Union.

In addition, his formative years at the birthplace home exposed him to the principles of philanthropy and public service, which shaped

and reinforced the values that guided Roosevelt throughout the rest of his career, including his belief that of those to whom much is given, much is expected.

The original home, built in 1848, was demolished in 1916. The current historic site occupies two buildings, 28 E. 20th and 26 E. 20th, which originally belonged to Robert Roosevelt, Roosevelt's uncle. The house was reconstructed in 1923 by the Women's Roosevelt Memorial Association and opened on what would have been Roosevelt's 65th birthday.

The WRMA reconstructed five period rooms that reflect what upper-class living was like in America during the Victorian Age. On Robert Roosevelt's side of the site, they put in two exhibition galleries that tell Roosevelt's life story through the use of artifacts, primary source documents and political cartoons. The birthplace was maintained by the WRMA until 1962, when it was gifted to the NPS. □

*"In utilizing and conserving the natural resources of the nation, the one characteristic more essential than any other is foresight."*

— Theodore Roosevelt, 1907



### Theodore Roosevelt National Park

*"Here, the romance of my life began..."* — Theodore Roosevelt

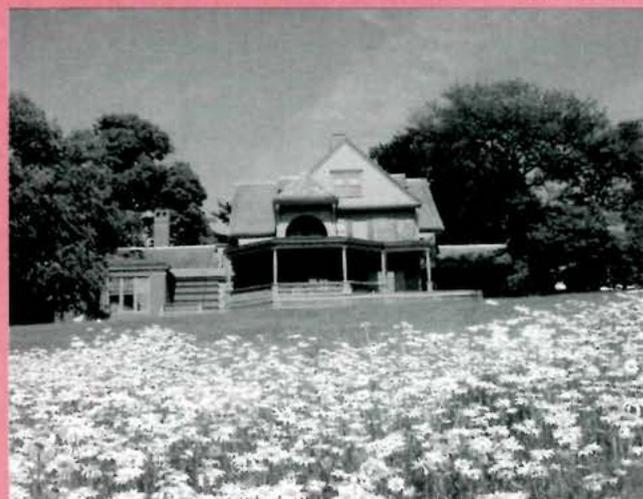
THEODORE ROOSEVELT ARRIVED to the North Dakota badlands in September 1883, at age 24, to go on a buffalo hunt. He fell in love with the rugged country during his first visit. After finally getting his buffalo, he invested \$14,000 in the Maltese Cross Ranch south of Medora. On Feb. 14, 1884, beloved wife Alice and mother Mittie died on the same day. In June, still devastated by his loss, he returned to the Dakota badlands to throw himself into the strenuous life of a rancher, hunter and cowboy, with the intention of never returning to the East. He invested in another ranch, the Elkhorn Ranch, 35 miles north of Medora, where he could find peace and solitude.

Roosevelt's time in the Dakota Territory was critical to his health and his future. It was there that many of his ideas regarding conservation were formed. Through his time in Dakota, he realized that formerly common wildlife species, such as bison and elk, were being decimated and could eventually become extinct. He came to understand the fragility of the Little Missouri River Valley and determined that the western rangelands were being grazed too heavily and the result could be disastrous. The strenuous life he lived in the badlands helped him to regain the physical and mental stamina that allowed him to resume his political career.

Roosevelt curtailed many of his ranch activities following his remarriage and the devastating winter of 1886-87, which destroyed more than half the cattle herd in the

Dakota badlands. By 1900 his experience as a western rancher was essentially over, though he returned to hunt, ride and see old friends for the rest of his life. He said, "I would not have been president had it not been for my experience in North Dakota."

Theodore Roosevelt National Park was established as a national memorial park in 1947 to honor the Roosevelt's accomplishments and to preserve a portion of the Dakota badlands that he loved. It gained national park status in 1978, and 29,920 acres of the park were designated as the Theodore Roosevelt Wilderness. Today, the 70,447-acre park protects scenic badlands, rugged wilderness, outstanding prairie wildlife, Roosevelt's Maltese Cross ranch cabin and the site of his Elkhorn Ranch. □



### Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

THEODORE ROOSEVELT FIRST traveled to Oyster Bay, Long Island, from his childhood home in New York City on summer vacations with his family in the 1870s. As a teenager, he grew to love the area's natural beauty and enjoyed the opportunities it afforded for such pastimes as hiking, rowing, swimming and riding.

In his early 20s Roosevelt graduated from Harvard University and purchased, using his inheritance, 155 acres of farmland on Cove Neck, a peninsula just east of Oyster Bay village. In 1884 he hired New York City architects Lamb and Rich to design a Queen Anne-style home based on his own sketches.

Plans for the house were nearly halted due to the sudden death of Roosevelt's young wife, Alice, in February 1884. She died just two days after giving birth to their first daughter, also named Alice. Family members convinced Roosevelt that despite the tragedy he would still need a proper home for his baby daughter, and he decided to go ahead with the house construction.

During his time ranching in the Dakota Territory, Roosevelt went East on several occasions and became reacquainted with Edith Kermit Carow, a friend he had known since he was 6. They were married in December 1886 and took up full-time residency at Sagamore Hill in 1887.

Over the next 30 years Theodore and Edith raised six children at Sagamore Hill, where they experienced some of the most memorable and cherished moments of their lives.

Sagamore Hill functioned as Roosevelt's summer White House from 1902 to 1908. In 1905 Roosevelt began the peace negotiations between Japan and Russia when he separately hosted the nations' delegations at his Oyster Bay home.

Roosevelt died Jan. 6, 1919, at Sagamore Hill at the age of 60. Edith remained at their home and watched her grandchildren grow. She died at Sagamore Hill in September 1948 at the age of 87. Within five years of Edith's death the site opened its doors to the public under the management of the Theodore Roosevelt Association. It was transferred in 1963 to the National Park Service as Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. □

◀ Sagamore Hill NHS



### Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site

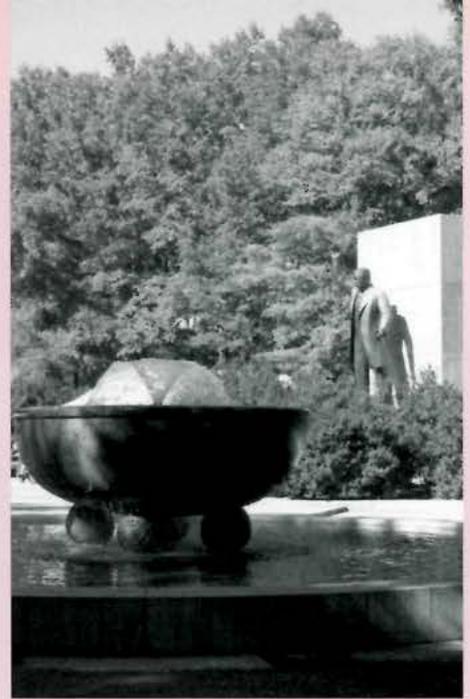
ON THE AFTERNOON of Sept. 14, 1901, Theodore Roosevelt stood in the library of a Buffalo, New York, home belonging to his friend, Ansley Wilcox. President William McKinley, shot by an assassin, had died of his wounds in the early morning hours and now Roosevelt, vice president for just over six months, was to take the oath of office and rise to the nation's highest office. One can imagine the thoughts that raced through his mind as he contemplated this opportunity to reshape the course of America. He had spent his life making the most of every circumstance and now all possibilities lay before him. That would have to wait, however, for a respectful period of mourning in McKinley's honor. Roosevelt would keep his plans to himself . . . for the moment.

Roosevelt had already forged a reputation as an independent thinker and a reformer in the New York State Assembly, as the U.S. Civil Service commissioner, as the New York City police commissioner and as New York's governor. Refusing to be beholden to party pressure, he had sought in each office to promote professionalism and serve the public welfare rather than special interests. Yet, when he became vice president to McKinley in March of 1901, he feared he had been sidelined to

a powerless post.

The following September President McKinley traveled to Buffalo to attend the international Pan-American Exposition and was shot by an anarchist. Roosevelt came to Buffalo but soon departed, assured by doctors that the president was in no danger. On Sept. 13, however, as he descended Mount Marcy in the Adirondack Mountains, a telegram from the cabinet summoned him to return to Buffalo. Arriving several hours after McKinley's death, Roosevelt and the cabinet determined that he must assume office swiftly as a demonstration of resolve. Out of respect for McKinley, a private ceremony was decided upon, and the home where Roosevelt was staying was selected as the location. At approximately 3:30 p.m. Sept. 14, 1901, Roosevelt took the oath of office and began his presidency.

Roosevelt had been acquainted with Ansley Wilcox for many years, probably having met in the 1880s when they both were involved in establishment of the Niagara Reservation, preserving Niagara Falls as a state park. Congress declared the Wilcox home a national historic site in 1966. It opened to the public in 1971 on the 70th anniversary of Roosevelt's inauguration there. □

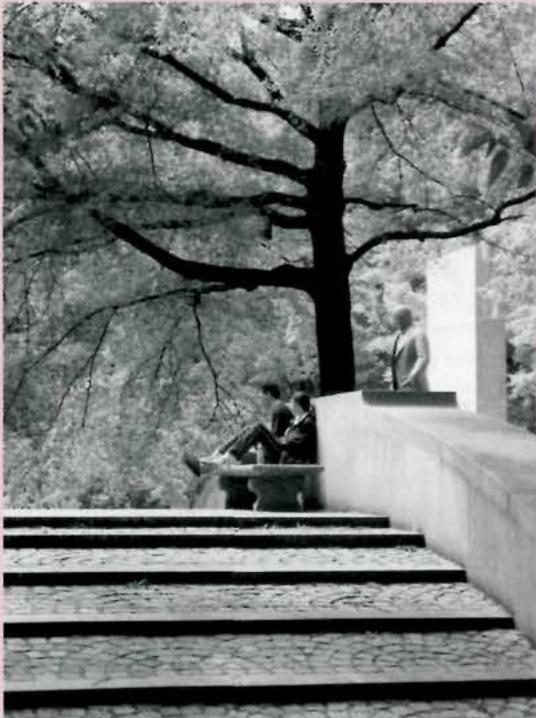


### Theodore Roosevelt Island

THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND, a peaceful oasis from the frantic pace of city life, is a fitting location to honor the conservation legacy of the 26th president of the United States. Bird songs and the rustling of squirrels on the forest floor mix with the pulse of the Potomac River. The ebb and flow of twice-daily tides surge through the marsh. The trill of the red-winged blackbird is a sign of the arrival of warm weather near the wetlands.

Visitors often stop first at the Memorial Plaza to remember Theodore Roosevelt. Standing strong and tall, a bronze figure portrays Roosevelt raising one arm in an enthusiastic stance, as if he were saying one of his best-known phrases, "Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far." Behind the statue, large tablets of stone are testaments to the Roosevelt's words about nature, manhood, youth and state. On either side of the statue in the plaza, large fountains overflow into basins from Memorial Day through the end of October. Reflecting pools and a ring of trees encircle the plaza.

This 88.5-acre island, a gift to Americans from the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Association, was intended to be maintained "as a natural park for the recreation and enjoyment of the public." Today the island is administered by the NPS at George Washington Memorial Parkway, and it includes more than 2.5 miles of trails for walkers, hikers and wildlife watchers. You can find deer munching on grasses in the woods, a turtle resting on a log or a great blue heron wading in the marsh. Yet, occasionally you hear the sounds of planes overhead or distant traffic to remind you of how special and rare natural places like this are in Washington, D.C. □



All photos courtesy of National Park Service



### Mount Rushmore National Memorial

THROUGH THE SPECTACLES etched into the granite mountain, the stone image of Theodore Roosevelt peers out onto the Dakota territory that breathed life into the persona of the famous Rough Rider. The western lands that at one time stirred Roosevelt's passion for the American landscape now enshrine his spirit forever at Mount Rushmore National Memorial. Artist Gutzon Borglum shaped the granite of the Black Hills of South Dakota into a memorial to the American story, the ideals of democracy and the national aspirations of four presidents.

Borglum presented his vision of the memorial in 1925 to the people of South Dakota. With counsel from many individuals involved in the support of the project, including Senator Peter Norbeck, Borglum chose four presidents that he believed represented the defining moments in the first 150 years of the nation's history. In explaining the importance of these four men, Borglum said, "They were the ones

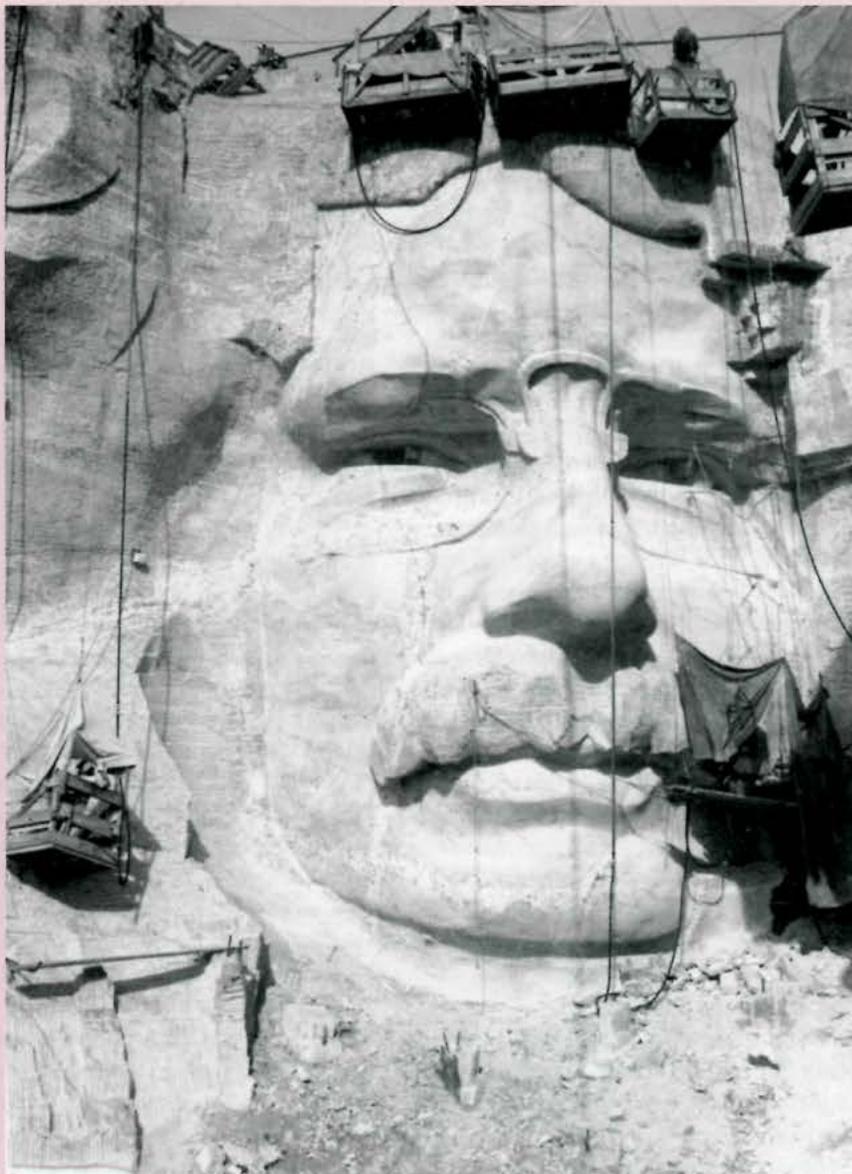
at hand when our destiny as a people was shaped. They were the ones who personified certain basic elements, crucial to our survival and growth as a nation."

With this perspective, Borglum included Roosevelt on the mountain for his contributions in developing the nation in the 20th century. Roosevelt's dedication to the improvement of life for America's labor force and his "trust-busting" policies on larger corporations brought new life to the balance of democracy. The 1906 Antiquities Act also demonstrated his devotion to the preservation of America's nationally significant resources that would

create one of his longest lasting legacies.

Transferring epic characters like Roosevelt onto a mountain would take equally epic proportions. At 60 feet tall, each head on Mount Rushmore captures the most expressive features of the presidents. Borglum's artistic details portray the age and roughness of Roosevelt's appearance through his moustache, glasses and wrinkles in his forehead. The life-like features of each face provide a testament not only to the artistic skill of Borglum and the many workers, but to the timeless American heritage that the four presidents established and bequeathed to all American citizens. □

*This special feature was a team effort of Valerie Naylor, superintendent, Theodore Roosevelt National Park; Josh Reyes, park ranger, Sagamore Hill; Mike Amato, park ranger, Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace; Mark Lozo, chief of interpretation, Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural; Dana Dierkes, park ranger, Theodore Roosevelt Island; and Amy Bracewell, education technician, Mount Rushmore.*



# New media IN THE NATIONAL PARKS

By Craig Rademacher, Amanda Gadomski,  
Zachary Gray, Matena Minard & Eric Treusch  
Northern Michigan University

New media in the national parks is not a new phenomenon. National Park Service areas have communicated with visitors using the World Wide Web for a while now. Many NPS areas publish digital brochures as PDF files. Some parks post digital video that is streamed over the Internet. Some areas also provide digital image collections for visitors to access and use. These are all forms of what is called new media.

New media is defined by its reliance on digital technology for production and distribution. In its most powerful form it permits media convergence into a new media or distribution approach. Other forms of new media include audio programs for mobile interpretive devices and cell phones, virtual worlds like Second Life, and blogs and wikis.

Not all of these forms of new media are part of the current NPS communication strategy, so they might not be familiar. One form of new media that is beginning to find a place in agency communication efforts is podcasting.

Podcasting is a way of distributing audio, video, PDF files and interactive links to visitors via digital means. The term podcast is a blending of the words iPod and broadcast and is often associated with visitors being able to play podcasts on their portable media player (such as an iPod) or their computer.

Figure 1. Screenshot of current NPS podcast offerings in iTunes (April 4, 2008)



Figure 2. Sample podcasting program opportunities for NPS managers

Management Concern	Sample Podcast Program Opportunities
Administration	area news policy reviews and announcements sharing of results of public involvement in decision making public relations statements seasonal closures and area restrictions
Interpretation	audio or video guide of visitor centers and museum • trail and road guides and tours • environmental education programs • orientation to area • special event programming • historic reenactments and performances
Protection	trail and backcountry safety • area rules and regulation presentations • wild animal safety (bear, alligator, bison, rattlesnake) • campground security and safety • backcountry permit system presentations
Resource Management	wildland fire and fire management practices and issues historical and cultural resource protection Leave No Trace practices public involvement in resource management decisions information on prevention/control of invasive species

## The Visitor Experience

From a visitor's perspective getting a favorite NPS podcast is pretty easy. Using common music and podcast directory software, like iTunes ([www.apple.com/itunes](http://www.apple.com/itunes)), visitors search for NPS-created shows that they are interested in and either download an individual episode or subscribe to the podcast show. Currently there are 15 NPS podcasts listed under the NPS banner on iTunes. See *Figure 1*.

When a visitor subscribes to a show it becomes a part of their chosen podcast collection. What is significant and makes podcasting unique is what happens next. Once a show is subscribed to, any subsequent show episodes published by the NPS area automatically download to the subscriber's computer. Subscribers can then transfer the episode files to their iPod or other device (i.e., Apple TV) for playback on the home widescreen television.

This process is much like subscribing to a magazine. Once you get a magazine subscription, the latest issue shows up in your mailbox. Each issue may have a different focus. In the case of podcasting, you subscribe to the podcast (or show) and each show has episodes. Upon subscription to a show the latest episodes of the podcast download automatically. As new episodes are published they are sent to the visitor's computer with no effort required by the visitor. A person need only open the media player (iTunes or other software) and click on the show to enjoy the latest NPS audio, video or print episode.

Podcasting brings together the attractiveness of audio or video content with the delivery mechanism of a magazine.

This is what makes podcasting so intriguing for NPS managers.

## The Manager's Experience

Imagine for a moment that your NPS unit could deliver your park brochure, newspaper and most compelling interpretive media program for free to anyone interested. All visitors would need to do is simply click a button to subscribe to it. Would you do that? The answer for most managers would probably be yes. Podcasting provides that capability. *Figure 2* provides some potential podcast programming ideas that managers might explore.

From the perspective of a manager and podcast producer, the development of a podcast occurs in five steps:

1. Develop podcasting opportunities/needs and related strategies
2. Produce media for distribution: audio, video or PDF files
3. Create a text file (i.e., XML file) used in the podcast subscription, also known as the RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed
4. Upload XML files and media files to the NPS server
5. Test the podcast with podcatcher software (e.g., iTunes)

In large NPS areas managers have technology specialists who can assist with this process. Other areas may need to depend on fostering partnerships with media production specialists in their area. Typically these individuals may be found in local public or community television and radio organizations. You also could contract with a specialist in the area to help.

Colleges and universities with interpretive programs also may be a good source of support. Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan, is working with Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore to produce podcasts. NMU's Outdoor Recreation Leadership and Management Program teaches podcasting methods in its interpretive media course. NPS managers could provide students who have new media knowledge and interpretive skills with internships or volunteer opportunities. This arrangement could benefit all parties — interns, the NPS site and park visitors.

### What Makes A Podcast Good?

As in all NPS media, production quality is an ever-present concern. Podcasting is no different. Quality audio, image and video are essential. What separates the average podcast from the good podcast is not only quality production but story development and timeliness.

Unlike the park brochure or interpretive panel the park podcast is not a one-shot ef-

fort. Podcasting, like a magazine, is a flexible media that can be published in a serial nature. It provides unique opportunities to produce seasonal and situational interpretive and administrative programming to benefit both the visitor and the park area. Podcasting can be done as a one-shot effort but is most effective when it is designed to build an audience over time. This serial component challenges managers to think creatively about how podcasts are used. How could you capitalize on a series of podcasts about your NPS area?

### Recent NPS Podcast Review

A small research group at NMU conducted a survey of 206 NPS areas to assess current involvement in podcasting and other new media. The survey was completed between January and March 2008. The survey staff reviewed each park's website and iTunes to find active podcasts. Included were national parks, monuments, recreation areas, historical parks, lakeshores and seashores. The survey

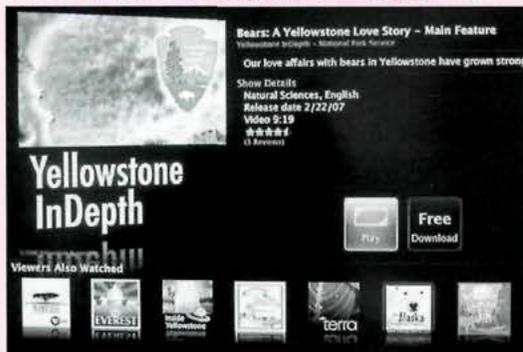
found only 10 areas currently host podcasts with accompanying RSS feeds — just 4.8 percent of NPS areas. All but two of the areas with a podcast were national parks, bringing the number of national parks with podcasts to 13.8 percent. Although podcasting is in its infancy in the NPS, it is expected to grow. Listed below are the current NPS areas with podcasting as part of their communication strategy. These podcasts have been produced by NPS personnel or partners and published under the NPS name.

1. Black Canyon of the Gunnison
2. Canyonlands
3. Curecanti
4. Everglades
5. Grand Canyon
6. Glacier
7. Katmai
8. Kenai Fjords
9. Valley Forge
10. Yellowstone

## BEST PODCASTS

In examining the presence of NPS podcasting we also reviewed each podcast episode for quality of production and story line. Here is our assessment of the best podcasts in the areas of NPS administration, resource management, interpretation and protection.

### Yellowstone InDepth podcast on Apple TV



**Management Focus:** Resource Management

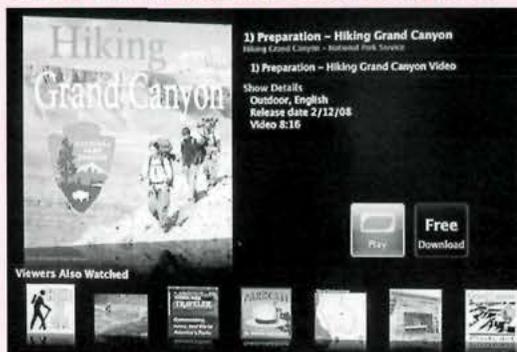
**Podcast Title:** Yellowstone InDepth

**Episode:** Bears: Yellowstone a Love Story **Format:** Video

**Length:** 09:19 min (77.4 MB) **Producer:** Jennifer Shoemaker, NPS 2006; published as podcast in February 2007

This podcast is a great example of quality videography and the ability of Yellowstone National Park to partner with the Yellowstone Association in its production. The podcast serves as a powerful management tool that describes the historical relationship between park visitors and Yellowstone's bears. Since the late 1800s the interaction between man and wild bears has been a heated management topic. Some past interactions led to the habituation of the Yellowstone bear population. Since then the NPS has spent years undoing the damage and reintroducing bears to their natural habitat. This compelling program chronicles the progress and helps the public understand this important resource management issue. Find this podcast in iTunes by searching for Yellowstone InDepth.

### Hiking Grand Canyon podcast on Apple TV



**Management Focus:** Protection

**Podcast Title:** Hiking Grand Canyon

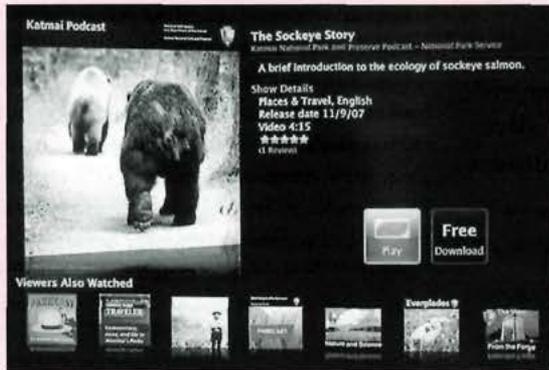
**Episode:** Preparation-Hiking Grand Canyon **Format:** Video

**Length:** 08:16 min (16 MB) **Producer:** Environmental Media Corp. for the Grand Canyon Association and the NPS, 1997

Video reformatted for podcasting 2008. The Hiking Grand Canyon podcast is a great example of how new media can be used for visitor protection. In this three-part series viewers are provided with a solid overview of how to best prepare for hiking in the rugged and fragile Grand Canyon environment. The podcast contains helpful safety information for those less experienced with outdoor adventures. Specifically, the episode touches upon important preparation tips for taking care of yourself and the environment. The information is concise and fluid in its delivery. This podcast is a reformatted park video originally produced in 1997. Find this podcast in iTunes by searching for Hiking Grand Canyon.

*(continued on next page)*

## Katmai podcast on Apple TV



**Management Focus:** Interpretation

**Podcast Title:** Katmai Podcast

**Episode:** The Sockeye Story    **Format:** Video

**Length:** 04:15 min (6.5 MB)

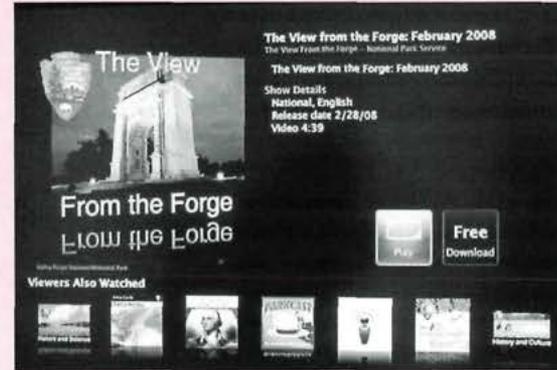
**Producer:** Michael Gloré, National Park Service, 2007

One of the best podcasts in the interpretation category, The Sockeye Story tells the story of the life cycle of the sockeye salmon. The producer (Michael Gloré) utilizes still images and music to create a strong interpretive experience. Gloré modulates his voice well and is clear in his presentation. The music chosen for the podcast is very mellow and does not overpower the interpreter. This is a very nice podcast that is thought out and communicates its interpretive message very well. It is a good example of a podcast production that does not need video elements to make it work. It can be found in iTunes simply by searching for Katmai Podcast.

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*These four podcasts provide a glimpse into the potential of NPS podcasting. They demonstrate the value of new media for the resource management, protection, interpretation and administration elements of national park management.*

## Valley Forge podcast on Apple TV



**Management Focus:** Administration

**Podcast Title:** The View From the Forge

**Episode:** February, 2008    **Format:** Video

**Length:** 04:40 min (54.9 MB)

**Producer:** Valley Forge National Historical Park, 2008

From an administrative perspective being able to get timely information to visitors about policy and programs is essential. This is what The View From the Forge is doing with its monthly podcast. It is podcasting in a serial form and takes advantage of the potential of podcast syndication to bring updated programs to the view as soon as they are available. The February, 2008 episode covers information about the park resource, upcoming events, recent additions to the encampment bookstore, and a review of significant public events that have been successfully completed. This serves as a park video magazine of sorts and is a terrific way of publishing this type of content without the actual costs of publishing a television program or paper magazine. More park areas should consider publishing this type of programming as part of their podcasting strategy. The podcast can be found in iTunes by searching for The View from the Forge.

## The Future of NPS Podcasting

Current NPS podcasts are typically experienced on personal computers or portable media players. With the steady growth of desktop technologies that enables parks to produce their own audio and video content, podcasting will continue to grow in the NPS. As that occurs, the ways in which the public engages in podcast viewing will also grow. Set-top television devices, like Apple TV, allow people in their homes to watch podcasts without a computer or iPod as an interface. Some NPS areas, like Glacier and Canyonlands, are now publishing their podcasts in Apple TV format. These parks are ahead of the pack in podcast production and publishing.

As park visitors become more aware of NPS podcasts, they will embrace the technology via their computer, iPod or Apple TV.

As a communication tool podcasting is only limited by an agency's ability to creatively use and promote this approach to new media delivery. As an outreach tool it has stagger-

## On the Web

For more information on podcasting in the NPS and other selected samples visit these websites:

[www.nps.gov/archive/yell/insidyellowstone/podcasts/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archive/yell/insidyellowstone/podcasts/index.htm)

[www.civilwartraveler.com/audio](http://www.civilwartraveler.com/audio)

[www.nps.gov/cany/photosmultimedia/insidcanyonlands.htm](http://www.nps.gov/cany/photosmultimedia/insidcanyonlands.htm)

<http://www.parkcast.com>

ing potential. Podcasting brings together the strengths of rich multimedia experiences with the ease and low cost of program syndication delivery. This is a unique combination. If properly planned and produced, NPS podcasts will reach audiences in new ways, at new times and build new valued stakeholders. We encourage you to explore the possibilities of podcasting — the new media in the national parks. 

*Craig Rademacher, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Outdoor Recreation Leadership And Management Program at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan. He is coordinator of the New Media in National Parks project. Amanda Gadomski, Zachary Gray, Matena Minard and Eric Treusch are seniors at Northern Michigan University and served as researchers for the New Media in National Parks project. Contact the authors at [crademac@nmu.edu](mailto:crademac@nmu.edu).*

# The Professional Ranger

## Administration

**A Lesson for Supervisors: The Value of Probationary/Trial Periods**—When supervisors hire new permanent and term National Park Service employees, it's important to be mindful of probationary/trial periods. Often I hear supervisors lament how hard it is to terminate "bad" employees. If the supervisors took action during the probationary or trial periods it would be less painful to terminate employees.

Here is information to let you know about probationary/trial periods ("probationary" is the term used for permanent appointments, and "trial" is used for term appointments). There are two types of probationary periods:

- Probationary/trial periods for employees who are new to the federal government
- Probationary periods for new supervisors or managers

Both probationary periods begin on the date of an employee's entry into the position and last for 12 months. The probationary period provides an opportunity to measure the new employee's actual performance on the job against the supervisor's assessment of his/her potential made at the time the employee was hired. It also provides a supervisor with the opportunity to remove the employee from a position (generally without a right to appeal the removal to the MSPB) should the employee's performance and/or conduct fall short of expectations and job performance requirements.

### Probationary Period for New Employees

The probationary period for new employees is considered an extension of the examining process. It allows the supervisor to observe an employee's performance and conduct so a final determination can be made whether the employee can meet job requirements and, therefore, should continue in the job.

A new employee serves a one-year probationary period when he/she has been selected from a certificate of eligibles and given a career-conditional or career appointment. Most reinstatement and transfer eligibles have already completed their probationary periods and aren't subject to probationary terminations.

If, during an employee's probationary period, the supervisor identifies that the employee has performance or conduct problems, the human resources office should be contacted immediately to discuss what should be done to

correct the problem or to separate the employee during the probationary period.

The HR office will help a supervisor decide whether (1) to informally assist the employee in improving his/her performance and/or conduct, or (2) to separate the employee from the Service. If the decision is to separate the employee, the HR office will assist in preparing a written notice to the employee, which will state the reasons for and the effective date of the termination.

The reasons for probationary terminations don't need to be long and involved. They simply must state a nonarbitrary, noncapricious, nondiscriminatory, legitimate reason why the employee is not suitable for retention, identifying general types of complaints and deficiencies (e.g., general failure to grasp and retain information, absenteeism, general inability to get along well with coworkers). In addition, it is important that the supervisor be able to demonstrate that he/she has treated the employee fairly during the probationary period.

Removing an employee during the probationary period is a relatively simple procedure. Unacceptable performance and adverse action procedures do not apply, and there is a very limited right of appeal to the MSPB. (However, an employee may file an EEO complaint if he/she believes that the termination was based in whole or in part on illegal discrimination.) If an employee has a performance or conduct problem, taking care of it during the probation-

ary period can save hundreds of hours in trying to rectify the problem after the probationary period has expired.

### Probationary Period for New Supervisors and Managers

Each new supervisor and manager in the competitive civil service is required to complete a one-year probationary period. During the probationary period, the new manager's or supervisor's performance is carefully monitored, with emphasis on helping the individual succeed. Appropriate training should be provided as needed. If, during the one-year probationary period, the employee is found to be unsuited to the demands of the position, the employee must be placed in a nonsupervisory (or nonmanagerial) position of no lower grade and pay than the previous position.

Adverse action or unacceptable performance procedures do not apply in these cases. Employees terminated during their supervisory or managerial probationary periods do not have the right to appeal the action to the MSPB. However, EEO complaint rights *do* apply.

My words of wisdom to *supervisors*: Probationary/trial periods are one of the most important timeframes for you to pay attention to and use to your and the Service's advantage. Please contact your HR office if you have questions or want more information. □

— Heather Whitman  
Yosemite

## Interpretation

Can interpreters show teachers a new way to teach? Politicians and voters seem to think that a good score on a child's standardized test equals an educated child. Does the regurgitation of memorized facts on a school test equal learning? This is doubtful. Interpreters have known for a long time that facts alone do not make programs successful.

The notion that correct answers on standardized tests equal learning has begun to gather criticism across the country. But many people, when weighing the problem of bad teachers, failing schools, and all of the demands being placed on students, don't yet see another option besides testing and more testing. Interpreters can weigh in on this issue not only to help students truly learn, but also validate the tenets of the interpretive profession and maintain the Service's relevance in the 21st century.

When I talk to education specialists about NPS curriculum programs, they look at me

with a jaundiced eye. It is hard to get park programs into schools, they tell me, because teachers spend all their time preparing students for tests. Many parents express concern that their kids aren't learning about the world, how to think critically or how to process information. Because there is no apparent alternative, parents resign themselves to the fact that the testing must go on. College professors complain that incoming freshmen show a declining ability to think independently and discuss concepts. Many children are transitioning to adulthood without realizing their full potential.

There is a big difference between school learning and learning from a ranger. When professional interpreters share facts with visitors, those facts are couched in a context that provides meaning. Tangible facts aren't stated in a void. Interpretive learning moments include awareness of concepts, human relationships, points of view, diverse and sometimes incompatible values, direct contact with learning moments — all to generate feelings, discus-

sions and debate. This promotes the mindset so that we can function in a healthy society.

When I talk to adults about the most memorable experiences from their time in school, invariably they cite a field trip to a park or museum where they had a formative learning experience, even if it happened 50 years ago. I talk to parents who bring their kids to programs. These parents seem to be actively engaged in their child's education. They see time spent with a ranger as a valuable investment. Rangers facilitate important learning in their children. Whether or not parents know that this is due to interpretive methods or not, they must at least think our approach is vastly different from what their kids get at school.

Humans advance by learning every day. We add to the collective knowledge of society via our shared curiosity about existence. It is a natural process to cherish meaningful places and ideas. We create national parks and protect what we think or know to be important. Education, which includes memorization, is human nature, but memorization as a sole

learning strategy is a failure. Yet for some reason, memorization has become the norm in education.

Today kids learn facts for tests. Tests generate scores that politicians use to claim children are learning. Politicians tell voters that they hear voter concerns about school failures. They demand that schools teach facts and manufacture school-ranking criteria, which maintain the façade of competency. The poorly informed voter is pacified. Politicians and voters find themselves in an unofficial and detrimental truce at the expense of our children's future.

The problem with bad schools and bad teachers is understandable and needs a solution. Low test scores allow schools to justify the culling of underperforming teachers who don't make the grade. Kids though, are the victims of this approach. They suffer through the daily class grind and begin to associate learning with punishment.

Interpretation in the National Park Service has the potential to counter these dark days. We can plant the seeds that will grow into

the next great evolution in learning. I would love to see pilot projects around the country where new methods of teaching, using interpretive concepts, are explored. If these interpretive projects are successful and vetted, progressive educators who doubt the mantra of fact memorization and testing may find in us what they have been looking for. We can help educators replace mimic-style learning with real learning. By marketing interpretive skills and exporting our methods beyond park boundaries, interpretive professionals have the opportunity to show educators how to revise their systems.

The NPS will maintain its relevance in the 21st century and we will always be worth the people's support. We can give back to America by sharing how we educate visitors. Maybe we can become the story instead of just telling the story. Are we the ones who can teach teachers to teach again? □

— Jeff Axel, Lake Roosevelt and  
Juan Bautista de Anza

## Protection

### Bigger, Badder, Smarter and Faster

— Imagine the biggest, baddest dude you know. Now, imagine attempting to arrest him and he suddenly turns noncompliant when you begin to place the cuffs on him.

Are you ready for this eventuality?

Hopefully in a situation like this, rangers will have already taken every available precaution *prior to cuffing*, such as waiting for multiple backup units, ordering the suspect into a position of disadvantage, using lighting to our advantage and more. Of course, if he does decide to throw down, we have use-of-force options including impact, chemical and electronic control weapons and firearms.

But the hard truth is this: One of these days a fight might boil down to hand-to-hand combat.

Another hard truth: No matter how big, smart and fast we are, there will *always* be somebody bigger, badder, smarter and faster. Are you ready for this fight? Physically? Mentally?

If the extent of your control tactics training is limited to what you received at your seasonal academy and/or FLETC, then the answer to this question is a definite "no."

That's not to say the training we receive is less than high quality. We get excellent training. The problem is it's *not enough*. What makes this unacceptable are the con-

sequences. When we cross paths with that really bad dude and he decides he's not going back to jail, it may be that he'll be willing to do anything to prevent it, which might include serious bodily harm or worse to the unprepared ranger.

In order to be ready for the fight of our life, we have to take things into our own hands.

- **Glove up.** Start taking some kind of martial arts lessons. Buy a pair of sparring gloves and start learning punches and kicks. Dozens of disciplines are available everywhere you look, such as karate, taekwondo, kung fu, jiu-jitsu, kickboxing, aikido and ground fighting.

- **Practice weapons retention skills.** When choosing a martial art, research them and go with one that includes techniques to help you retain control of your firearm. Many of these same arts also teach how to disarm a combatant who gets the drop on you with a knife or firearm.

- **Become a control tactics instructor.** There's no better way to stay honed at something than to teach it — and teach it often. Take the two-week FLETC course, then teach at your own park, nearby parks or ranger academies.

- **Recruit a fellow ranger into martial arts.** If you begin attending martial arts, talk a fellow ranger into going with you. Then practice ground fighting, weapons retention drills and other techniques at work NPS policy allows

participation in "non-sparring, non-impact martial arts" such as cardio kickboxing, during on-duty, physical training time.

- **Buy a punching bag.** Hang a punching bag at your ranger station, fire cache or SAR cache and incorporate kicks and punches into your physical training time. There's an incredible fitness payoff to this type of training. Spend 20 minutes hammering away at a bag, keeping your hands up to guard your face the entire time, and you'll be a believer. It's a sweet mix of technique and cardio.

- **Include control tactics in every ALERT your park hosts.** Recommend that your ALERT agenda includes a full eight hours of some type of control tactics every year. Some will complain about this type of training. If so, remind them that they might have to arrest a really bad dude some day.

- **Always push to better yourself.** Many martial arts regimens are tiered so that once you master a particular skill level, you test at that level and begin training for the next, such as belt systems. If this is the case with your chosen discipline, constantly aim for that higher belt. If yours is not so formally regimented, create your own goals and push yourself anyway.

Remember, too, that we have policy limitations on what we can and can't do during hand-to-hand control tactics. Keep

this in mind when your instructor shows the class various techniques, and be able to differentiate what is and is not authorized. Refer to the NPS' use-of-force policy and understand our parameters. But remember, if it's a deadly force encounter, anything goes.

Also, FLETC teaches the mantra that "more force applied early during a contact usually means less force applied overall." Over time, students of martial arts pick up an assertive approach to ending a conflict quickly. The more training you receive, typically the more confident you'll be in your abilities and the less hesitant you'll be to engage the threat *now*, thus gaining quick and decisive control of the situation.

Paul "Bear" Bryant, the University of Alabama's legendary football coach, knew that no matter how strong his players were they someday would have to face stronger opponents. He drilled them with his own mantra: "The will to win compares little with the will to *prepare to win*." □

— Kevin Moses  
Big South Fork

## NPS GUN REGULATIONS OPEN FOR COMMENT

As early as 1920 the national parks had systemwide regulations that restricted carrying loaded firearms in parks. For 88 years some version of this regulation has been in place, with the last revision in 1983. The current regulation allows firearms in parks as long as they are unloaded and stored in such a manner that prevents their ready use.

The current administration through the Department of the Interior has drafted revised regulations that will allow persons to carry loaded concealed weapons in parks by state laws that require a concealed carry permit and allow concealed carry firearms in state parks. ANPR is opposed to this draft regulation and our official position of opposition can be found at [www.anpr.org/guns\\_in\\_parks.htm](http://www.anpr.org/guns_in_parks.htm). We will send in our comments opposing this draft regulation.

We encourage you to also send in your personal comments regarding this draft regulation whether you oppose or support it. As NPS employees, you have been officially ordered by the DOI not to comment to the media or public concerning this issue. Now is your chance to speak from your experience and let the department know how you feel. Submit your comments on the proposed regulation change to the DOI at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) using the identification number **1024-AD70**. The deadline to submit comments is June 30, 2008.

We also encourage you to inform park visitors of their opportunity to comment. They are the main constituency that will be affected if the draft regulation is adopted as the final regulation.

— Scot McElveen  
ANPR President

## In Print

**Interpreting Our Heritage**, Freeman Tilden, The University of North Carolina Press, 2008, paperback, \$15.95, ISBN: 978-0-8078-5867-7, 212 pages; new and revised 50th anniversary edition

Every year millions of Americans visit national parks and monuments, state and municipal parks, battlefield areas, historic houses and museums. By means of guided tours, exhibits and signs, visitors receive a special kind of education through the interpretation of informative materials.

For 50 years *Interpreting Our Heritage* has been an indispensable sourcebook for those who are responsible for and who respond to such interpretive materials. This anniversary edition includes a new selection of photos, six additional essays by Freeman Tilden, a new foreword by Russell Dickenson (a former National Park Service director) and a new introduction by R. Bruce Craig. ANPR member Craig, a former park ranger and award-winning interpreter, is a history professor at the University of Prince Edward Island in Canada.

These additions help to put this classic book into perspective for present and future generations.

Whether the task is to make a prehistoric

site come to life or to explain the geological theory behind a rock formation, Tilden provides helpful principles to follow. For anyone interested in our natural and manmade heritage, this book offers guidance for exploring educational and recreational resources.

Tilden (1883-1980) was a pioneer in the field of cultural interpretation. A former journalist, playwright and novelist, he began writing about America's national parks in the 1940s with the encouragement of the NPS director. This led to four books in visiting, learning and teaching about national heritage sites, of which *Interpreting Our Heritage* remains the most influential. □

## Health insurance available

ANPR members qualify for health insurance through a special program from Aetna. The Aetna PPO Affordable Health Choices<sup>SM</sup> is particularly geared to seasonal park workers, fire crew members, volunteers, park partners and others who may not receive insurance benefits through their employers.

The limited accident and sickness insurance plan is an affordable option at \$83.52 per month. For more details, visit ANPR's website. To request an enrollment packet, send an e-mail to [fordedit@aol.com](mailto:fordedit@aol.com) or write to ANPR, 25958 Genesee Trail Road, PMB 222, Golden, CO 80401.

## Order copies for your park bookstore



Stock this popular ANPR booklet in your park bookstores — and refer prospective parks employees to this informative publication. Go to [www.anpr.org/publications.htm](http://www.anpr.org/publications.htm) for single copies or bulk ordering details.

# ANPR ACTIONS

## Personal firearms in National Park System

ANPR's president and several board members have given approximately 15 interviews in recent months to print and radio journalists from around the country on ANPR's official position in opposition to proposed regulations and laws that would relax current regulations pertaining to the possession of personal firearms inside units of the National Park System.

## Speakers invited for Ranger Rendezvous in Santa Fe

Planning for the annual Ranger Rendezvous, scheduled for Dec. 10-14 in Santa Fe, is underway. To date Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, Shawn Norton of the Climate Friendly Parks Initiative and Karen Taylor-Goodrich, WASO chief ranger, have been invited to speak. ANPR also will invite other ranking NPS officials and interesting speakers. We hope to have the Rendezvous preregistration page on our website by mid-June. We encourage you to make hotel reservations now at [www.lafondasanta.com/e-mail-group.html](http://www.lafondasanta.com/e-mail-group.html) or by calling toll-free: 1-800-523-5002. If you have specific speakers you wish us to consider, please let us know.

## ANPR official position on full utilization of Ranger Careers

ANPR has taken a position on requesting that the NPS allow parks to fully utilize all three positions descriptions found in the Ranger Careers program. The full text of that official position can be found on page 2 of this issue and on the website.

► Read text: [www.anpr.org/careers.htm](http://www.anpr.org/careers.htm)

## ANPR health insurance flyer distributed by NPS

The NPS sent an informational flyer about ANPR's health insurance program to the seven regional offices this spring. It requested offices to consider adding the insurance information to seasonal employee packets this year. If you haven't seen the information at your park, ask your administrative office about it.

► Read more: [www.anpr.org/insurance.htm](http://www.anpr.org/insurance.htm)

## ANPR contacts all expired members

We continue to contact all expired members by mail and/or telephone to encourage them to rejoin or to find out why they are not re-

joining. Unfortunately, the majority of these lapsed members indicate they will rejoin but don't follow through. In 2007 we gained 257 new members but lost 137 members who didn't renew for a net increase of 120. So far in 2008, 77 new people have joined ANPR as of mid-May.

## Board sets membership dues policy

The ANPR Board of Directors voted 6-3 to refine the annual membership dues policy so that anyone who joins prior to Oct. 1 pays for the full year. Those who join on or after Oct. 1 pay dues that will keep their membership current until Dec. 31 of the following year (12-15 months depending on the date they join).

## Working with other organizations

Board member Emily Weisner represented ANPR at the annual meeting of the National Council on Public History in Louisville, Kentucky. She made new contacts and spread the word that ANPR is an organization interested in all disciplines in the NPS including historians, cultural resource specialists and interpretive park rangers with a specific interest for interpreting history. □

## ANPR Reports

### Treasurer's Report

ANPR has completed its first full fiscal year (April 2007- March 2008) since discontinuing the services of Kansas Wealth Management as our business office. Liz Roberts, ANPR treasurer, and Teresa Ford, membership services director, have divided the duties and created a financial database in QuickBooks Online to track a full year's financial status and produce the information necessary to meet IRS reporting requirements.

Prior to establishing our accounts in QuickBooks, we had a six-month period during 2007 when our Excel spreadsheet recordkeeping did not meet acceptable accounting standards. The treasurer enlisted the services of Miller and Smith, accountants in Oakhurst, Calif., to research our financial transactions for that timeframe and produce an end-of-year financial report that could be used for tax purposes. Miller and Smith also prepared ANPR's tax statement for the fiscal

year ending March 31, 2007. Paperwork was submitted in time to meet the deadline of our second IRS extension.

To add bookkeeping and accounting experience to our recordkeeping and help ensure data accuracy, we have enlisted the services of Karen Carson, a certified public accountant in Golden, Colo. She will review our ongoing QuickBooks data input, produce accountant-certified financial reports and prepare ANPR's tax reports for the most recent fiscal year. The tax filing is due again Aug. 15.

With the increased stability of our financial situation, we invested money held in ANPR's savings accounts, including the Supernaugh Memorial Fund, in mutual funds this past quarter. With the volatility of the market, our higher-risk investments (not the Supernaugh funds) lost \$1,531.61 from November through March. "Safer" investments have experienced slight gains during the same timeframe.

In early April we invested \$25,000 of the health benefits premiums held in our checking account (pending monthly payments to Aetna) in a Wells Fargo five-month certificate of deposit. Prior to this the approximate \$35,000 in premiums held at any given time were not earning interest. Because this money is held in trust for health benefits participants, we were careful to invest it in a way that no part of the principal could be lost. We anticipate no problems tying it up in the CD and allowing it to earn interest as long as enrollment in the insurance program remains constant. The program has been available for more than one year and enrollment has continued to climb.

Although ANPR didn't experience the \$20,000-plus fiscal year shortfall for 2008 that it has over the last several years, our expenses for the past year still were slightly more than the amount taken in through membership, donations and fundraising efforts. A profit-and-loss report for the last fiscal year is posted on ANPR's website.

Membership has increased primarily due to the new health benefits program. However, ANPR still needs to focus on new fundraising opportunities if we are to remain a healthy, viable organization.

The board position for fundraising activities currently is vacant. If you are interested, or even if you just have new ideas for fundraising possibilities, contact ANPR President Scot McElveen at [ANPRScotM@aol.com](mailto:ANPRScotM@aol.com). □

— Liz Roberts  
ANPR treasurer

## Membership Services

### KUDOS LIST

These ANPR members or NPS employees have either given a gift membership to a new member in recent months or recruited a new member or an old member to return to ANPR. Thank you for your membership help.

Bob Krumenaker	Kendall Thompson
Kathy McKay	Al Blank
Heather Honnold	Steve Dodd
Mary Bomar	Olympic HR Dept.
Jennifer Champagne	Emily Weisner
Shaun Hughes	Kale Bowling

### Retirement

**Time to up your TSP contributions?** — Falling stocks are roadblocks to a comfortable retirement. At times like this when the path looks especially rocky, it's tempting to reduce

your regular contributions to your TSP portfolio or other automatic investment plan. But according to Jonathan Burton, financial planner and author, just the opposite may be true. With U.S. and international stocks both down sharply this year it's actually a prime time to boost your commitment to these all-terrain retirement vehicles. Take a bit extra from each paycheck, buy more shares at lower prices and let the market's long-term upward trend do the rest.

"It's a practice that almost all the great investors have used," says Christine Benz, director of personal finance at investment researcher Morningstar Inc. "They've taken advantage of short-term market panics. It's a sensible strategy for smaller investors to emulate."

"If you can afford to contribute more, I would tell you to increase it in any market," says Sri Reddy, head of retirement strategies

at ING. "Participate as much as the plan will allow. Stick to the plan!"

Increasing payroll contributions to a retirement plan, regardless of market conditions, will likely earn you more over time. Consider two hypothetical 401(k) investors who stashed \$1,000 in the S&P 500 index (C Fund) at the end of 1997. Initially they added \$100 — \$50 from salary and a \$50 employee match — into this all-stock portfolio. A decade later that approach brought the account's value to about \$17,000, according to investment researcher Lipper Inc.

During this period, the U.S. market went through an uplifting bull market and a punishing bear decline. Indeed, it was still a dark time for stocks at the end of 2002 when one of the workers — by now earning a bigger paycheck — upped the monthly contributions to \$75 with an equivalent employer match.

That decision would prove lucrative: At the end of 2007, this worker would have amassed a retirement portfolio worth \$21,000.

Even better, the *automatic nature* of these plans takes the emotion out of investing. Through what's known as dollar-cost averaging, you're buying more shares in down markets and fewer in up markets. The important thing is that you're in the game; once you slip out of savings mode it's hard to get back in.

"The worst thing that can happen," says David Kudia, chief investment strategist at money manager Mainstay Capital Management, "is that someone who has long-term strategy designed to meet their goals and time horizon lets short-term market volatility cause them to waver."

Yet with rising prices at the supermarket and the gas pump, and the pressure of mortgage payments on homes that have lost value, many Americans are stretched thin. The TSP or any 401(k) may be a lifetime plan, but to many people at this moment it's a piggy bank to cover bills. Focus on the big picture. Trimming retirement contributions puts more money in your pocket, but you'll have less once you stop working, and you may even have to work longer to make up the difference. Look for ways to cut spending or consult with a credit counselor before you slash savings.

Turning to 401(k) money is not a reliable long-term solution to your debt problem. By decreasing contributions now, you're giving up a long-term retirement nest egg. It's better to leave it alone and look at your other options like cutting expenses. Whether the market goes up in one year or three years, you are still better off staying invested. □

— Frank Betts, Retired

## International Ranger Federation Update



**World Ranger Day Reminder** — July 31 of each year is World Ranger Day. Last year was the first celebration around the world and it was a great success. More than 20 units of the National Park Service hosted special events in 2007, bringing an expanded interest in the NPS, world parks and protected areas, and in the jobs rangers do. In conjunction with the premier showing of Australian ranger Sean Wilmore's documentary, "The Thin Green Line," more than \$100,000 was collected for the ranger dependents' fund of the International Ranger Federation.

Please consider hosting or encouraging some

activity on July 31 this year that recognizes parks and the work that rangers do in the United States and around the world. If you have questions or want to talk about it, please e-mail me at [tsisto47@aol.com](mailto:tsisto47@aol.com).

**Bolivia World Ranger Congress 2009 Update** — As readers of this column know, the Sixth IRF World Ranger Congress is planned for Bolivia, South America, in 2009. Planning in Bolivia has been complex, with many issues still being dealt with by the Bolivian Ranger Association and others. Deanne Adams, the IRF acting president, has been working closely with the IRF board, Bolivian rangers and others to facilitate a successful plan.

Kristen Appel from Australia was in Bolivia in May to meet with the association and the parks agency to determine the capabilities and challenges, and to report back in June on how best IRF can assist in hosting a successful congress. She will work with Bolivian ranger Carola Salazar and others in getting the IRF-Bolivia Ranger Association agreement signed, the contract with the Congress organizer finalized and a website launched.

Yvette Ruan, chief ranger at Golden Gate, traveled to Bolivia last year and also is a key member of the U.S. planning team. In the next issue of *Ranger* I will let everyone know the results and where we stand.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, let me know. Travel well. □

— Tony Sisto, International Affairs

### Give a Gift Membership Today

It's time to introduce some talented new NPS employees or partners to ANPR with a gift membership! Though many ANPR members regularly give memberships to friends and co-workers as gifts or awards, this category gives the added incentive of a reduced rate: \$35 for one year.

While this category is intended only for single-time gifts to new members (no renewals or lapsed members, please, or "gifting yourself"), imagine the possibility of enlarging and diversifying the ANPR membership if every member gave just one gift membership. We would instantly double our membership!

# Call for Papers at 31st Ranger Rendezvous in Santa Fe

**E**nvironmental stewardship and global climate change are topics of much discussion in society today. Many look to the National Park Service to be a model for society in displaying and promoting successful environmental stewardship techniques.

Since 1977 the Association of National Park Rangers has held an annual forum to exchange ideas that further the preservation and management of the National Park Service and the National Park System. This professional conference, known as the Ranger Rendezvous, brings together people from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines to exchange ideas, provide training, and listen to operational or political updates from agency leaders.

Participants include representatives from NPS national and regional directorate, volunteers, superintendents, interpretive rangers, administrative employees, natural and cultural resource managers, maintenance employees, retirees, protection rangers, historians, planners, visitor use assistants, rangers from other countries, members of academia, environmental organization members, representatives of parks' friends groups, other professional

societies' members and supporters of the National Park System. Appropriate parts of the conference agenda will be submitted to the NPS for recognition as an official training or professional conference opportunity.

The 31st Ranger Rendezvous, to be held Dec. 10-14, 2008, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, will explore "Being Green Means More Than Just Wearing Green." This theme is meant to be both reflective and forward thinking. We are interested in park applications of green technology or systems that have worked and/or are currently working, as well as models and techniques that are still conceptual.

Proposed papers may address any topic pertaining to green park operations models in the National Park System or similar lands.

Abstracts should be 750 words or less and must be submitted **no later than Aug. 1**. Abstracts should contain the authors' names,

postal and e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers at the top of the page. Papers will be selected based on how well they address the focus of the conference, organization and potential for presentation at the conference. The selection committee reserves the right to request modification to the proposals. Authors will be notified by Sept. 15 whether their paper has been selected.

Complete drafts of papers, not to exceed 20 pages, will be due Oct. 15 for review by the selection committee. The committee reserves the right to request modification to the drafts. Final papers, to be made available to attendees at the conference, will be due Nov. 20. Selected papers will be presented at the conference during breakout sessions on Dec. 12 or 13. It is the intention of the committee to publish revised and expanded papers on the ANPR website ([www.anpr.org](http://www.anpr.org)) after the conference.

Abstracts may be submitted electronically or on paper. Abstracts and any inquiries should be sent to Scot McElveen, ANPR President, 288 Letner Road, Helenwood, TN 37755; 423-286-8644, [ANPRScotM@aol.com](mailto:ANPRScotM@aol.com). □

## Cooking Outdoors



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## Scholarships offered to first-time attendees of Ranger Rendezvous

If you've never been to a Ranger Rendezvous, now is your chance. Apply for a scholarship through the William Supernaugh Rendezvous Scholarship Fund.

To be eligible you must be either an ANPR member or an NPS employee, never have attended a Rendezvous, and able to stay for the entire conference. The scholarship will pay for registration fees, lodging and up to \$500 for transportation to and from the Rendezvous.

Details about the Rendezvous are on the next page.

You can nominate yourself or an ANPR member may nominate you. For more details and to apply, go to [www.anpr.org/scholarship](http://www.anpr.org/scholarship). The deadline is Oct. 10. □



**Share your news!**  
We want to hear from you. Take a minute to tell others your news. Use the form on the inside back cover, send an e-mail to [fordedit@aol.com](mailto:fordedit@aol.com) or visit the ANPR website: [www.anpr.org/family.htm](http://www.anpr.org/family.htm)

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SANTA FE  
NEW MEXICO

# RANGER RENDZVOUS XXXI

DECEMBER 10-14, 2008



## ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL PARK RANGERS

**T**his year's Rendezvous is scheduled for Dec. 10-14 at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The hotel on the renowned plaza in Santa Fe is one of the finest facilities to host a Rendezvous. Its historic location at the end of the Santa Fe Trail has welcomed travelers for almost 400 years.

ANPR has secured a rate of \$89 a night during this holiday season (typical daily rates are \$159 to \$549). For more information about the La Fonda, go to [www.lafondasantafe.com](http://www.lafondasantafe.com)

Individual reservations should be made by calling La Fonda's Reservations Department toll free at 1-800-523-5002, option #1. Deposits are fully refundable as long as you cancel prior to 48 hours of the first night's reservation. To fax your reservation dial 505-954-3599. To make reservations online go to [www.lafondasantafe.com/e-mail-group.html](http://www.lafondasantafe.com/e-mail-group.html). Please ensure that you identify yourself as part of ANPR to reserve the \$89 rate.

Most major airlines fly into Albuquerque's international airport (54 miles away), and several national airlines (American and Delta) are planning to fly nonstop to the Santa Fe Regional Airport from several cities in 2008.

Watch for program details posted on the website at [www.anpr.org](http://www.anpr.org) 

▲ Above, Rendezvous logo courtesy of Judy and Jeni Chetwin

## Good Value for the Money

**A**ll of us today are looking to stretch our money; to find *the best* value for each dollar. Well, look no further than **Ranger Rendezvous**. For a week-long conference you will not find a better bang for your buck anywhere.

First of all, ANPR has found the most exciting venue for this year's **Rendezvous**. The La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe is loaded with ambiance, culture and history. The Southwest's Spanish and Mexican cultures come alive in the La Fonda and the adjacent Santa Fe Plaza. There are few other places in the United States that you can experience 400 years of Hispanic and American traditions than in the heart of the Inland Empire (read Stewart Udall's book). If it weren't for the modern vehicles on the plaza, you can imagine that you are strolling Santa Fe's streets in the 18th century. (Perhaps by the time we arrive for Ranger Rendezvous, Dec. 10-14, there will be fewer vehicles?) And that is just *in town*. Within an hour, you can experience Native American pueblos that are over 1,000 years old (bring your checkbook; the arts and crafts are world renowned), and the birthplace of the atomic age — the laboratories at Los Alamos. Four NPS units are within an hour's drive; four to six more can be explored in a day's time.

If there's inclement weather, walking around the La Fonda is an experience in culture itself. The restaurants, shops and lobby offer almost as many experiences as the rest of Santa Fe (a slight exaggeration perhaps). Your room continues that experience. For many hotels, the rooms are just four walls that become boring after a day or so. Not so in the La Fonda. ANPR has negotiated the best room rate ever for this classic hotel. We are getting these rooms at slightly more than half their normal rate. Want to combine a romantic get-away with cutting-edge career enhancement?

The hotel venue is just the start. Is there any other Servicewide conference today that is developed, coordinated and presented entirely by field employees, addressing field employee issues? Ranger Rendezvous continues to be driven by field needs and offers unparalleled opportunities to hear and be heard. In this small and relaxed setting, it is not uncommon for GS-5s to talk with SES leaders (and vice versa), for new employees to bounce ideas off of senior employees and set up mentoring relationships, and for every discipline in the Service to be able to interact with every other discipline — from parks as diverse as Alaska to the smallest historic site.

The Rendezvous theme, "Being Green Means More Than Wearing Green," is as timely as it is cutting edge. This brings me back to the beginning premise that you aren't likely to find a better value for your dollar than this Rendezvous. Today we must all find ways to live and work more in harmony with our planet. Everywhere we turn we find emerging social needs and technologies to "green" our planet. The Children in Nature initiative, fuel efficiencies, less reliance on the power grid, better recycling practices, effects of climate change and educational outreach are part of this theme. Every discipline in the National Park Service and our lives has a stake in this. 

— Ken Mabery  
ANPR board member



◀ Vendors on the plaza; image courtesy of Santa Fe Convention & Visitors Bureau, Mark Kane

## All in the Family

Please send news about you and your family. All submissions should include the author's return address and phone number.

Send via e-mail to [fordedit@aol.com](mailto:fordedit@aol.com) or write to Teresa Ford, Editor, 26 S. Mt. Vernon Club Road, Golden, CO 80401. You also can send your news and/or update your address/home phone/personal e-mail by visiting ANPR's website: [www.anpr.org](http://www.anpr.org) Go to **Member Services**.

**Marcia Blaszak** (WRO 68,69,70-74, GOGA 74-76, PORE 76-78, SEKI 78-87, LAVO 87-90, SHEN 90-92, YELL 92-94, ARO/AKSO/ARO 94-08) retired May 3. She served as regional director in Alaska from 2004-08. She writes that it was a "wonderful 39 years — my best memories are about the people I have had the honor to work with." She and **Bob** plan to stay in Alaska and enjoy all it has to offer. Their first plans are building a new home and hangar near Wasilla. She adds, "Don't hesitate to look us up. Hope to see folks at a future Rendezvous." Address/phone by late 2008: 4770 W. Airpark Drive, June Lake, Wasilla, AK 99654; [rcntent@alaska.net](mailto:rcntent@alaska.net)

**Craig Ackerman** is the new superintendent at Crater Lake. Previously he was superintendent at Oregon Caves.

**Allen Brookshire** now works as a contract specialist at the DOI National Business Center in Denver. Formerly he was administrative officer at Great Sand Dunes. Address/phone: 4210 W. Belleview Place, Littleton, CO 80123-1723; home, 303-798-5402; [abrookshire@member.afa.org](mailto:abrookshire@member.afa.org)

**Cathy Buckingham** (BLRI, GLAC, EVER, INDE, GRSM), after five years in the Great Smokies, has relocated to the West. She now works at Great Basin. Address: #7 Great Basin NP, Baker, NV 89311; [mntnlover@netzero.net](mailto:mntnlover@netzero.net). She hopes to see everyone at the Rendezvous.

**Tammi Corchero** now is a supervisory park ranger in interpretation at Yellowstone. Formerly she was an administrative assistant at Mesa Verde. Address/phone: P.O. Box 4002, Yellowstone NP, WY 82190; home, 307-242-7257; [mtngirl@ecoisp.com](mailto:mtngirl@ecoisp.com)

**Kathy Eissinger** is the new director of the Park Ranger Training Program at Northern Arizona University. She has served as program coordinator there for more than a year. She graduated from NAU's 11th PRTP, taking top honors in academics and physical fitness. For the third summer she is a law enforcement ranger at

## Welcome to the ANPR family!

Here are the newest members of the Association of National Park Rangers:

Necia Alexander .....	Carlisle, OH	Timothy O'Brien .....	Lee, MA
Scott Babinowich .....	Pennington, NJ	Justin Pugh.....	Parma, OH
Jill Beckmann.....	Tulelake, CA	David Rambow .....	Pipestone, MN
Amy Brown.....	Dunkirk, MD	Jordan Raphael.....	Haddonfield, NJ
Christopher Buczko .....	Pasadena, CA	Kris Ratzlaff .....	Tucson, AZ
Alicia Carswell.....	Denali Park, AK	James Reagan .....	West Yellowstone, MT
Jim Dahlstrom &		Kay Rohde .....	Casper, WY
Christy Baker .....	Bayfield, WI	Nicholas Roll.....	Cortez, CO
Liz Davis .....	Berlin, MD	Shawn Ruefer .....	Arlington, VA
Paul Fodor.....	Honolulu, HI	Sara Schilke.....	Van Buren, MO
Laura Soulliere Gates.....	Pineville, LA	Jeffrey Singer .....	Delafield, WI
Donna Grabow .....	Hawaii NP, HI	Victoria Sonne .....	Portland, OR
Sujata Gupta .....	Birch Harbor, ME	Brian Spang.....	Port Angeles, WA
Allison Herrmann .....	Vernon, CT	Phil Strehle.....	Browning, MT
Bradley Heyrman .....	Munising, MI	Wendy Swee.....	Crater Lake, OR
* Devon Ray Johnson.....	Bellefontaine, OH	Giovanni Tabacchi.....	Vernal, UT
Micki Kennedy.....	Lake Charles, LA	Connie Vogel-Brown.....	Woodstock, GA
Lindsey Lennek.....	Centennial, CO	Joanne Welch	
Scott Longert .....	Beachwood, OH	& Chris Smith.....	Anchorage, AK
Magda Margulies.....	Lakewood, OH	Laurel Weller.....	Alexandria, VA
Ian Massy .....	Henderson, NV	Erin Whittaker .....	Boston, MA
Megan McFarland .....	Keystone, SD	Linda Willis .....	Mancos, CO
Virginia Moyers.....	Carlsbad, NM	Benjamin Zumeta .....	Paicines, CA
Sarah Needs.....	Bridgewater, MA	* new life member	

Glacier. Previous work experience includes head archery coach at Texas A&M, where she managed a Division 1 varsity archery team and traveled worldwide competing in archery tournaments. She also taught at Texas A&M and a satellite campus in Japan for 10 years prior to coaching. [Kathy.Eissinger@nau.edu](mailto:Kathy.Eissinger@nau.edu)

**Jan Kirwan** retired from the NPS Jan. 30, 2008. Currently she is a senior environmental specialist for Florida Power and Light Co. She wants to return to an active role in ANPR and writes: "I now can take the time to attend the Rendezvous and give back to an organization that made up over 25 years of my life." She is looking forward to attending the Rendezvous in Santa Fe. Address/phone: P.O. Box 8023, Hobe Sound, FL 33475; phone 772-463-5874; [kirwanja@yahoo.com](mailto:kirwanja@yahoo.com).

**John Krambrink**, a life member of ANPR and previously reported missing on these pages for at least a year, was out of touch while consulting on homeland security, resource management and park development issues in Russia and Siberia. He now works as assistant region manager for resource stewardship, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Northwest Region, in Burlington. He lives in Snohomish. [John\\_Krambrink@comcast.net](mailto:John_Krambrink@comcast.net).

ANPR life member **Gary Moses** of Glacier is this year's recipient of the Harry Yount National

Park Ranger Award for excellence in the field of rangeling. The Lake McDonald Subdistrict ranger since 1991, he has made countless contributions benefitting park visitors, employees, partners and resources throughout his 24-year NPS career. He is a law enforcement officer, bear management coordinator, park medic, structural and wildland firefighter, SCUBA diver, mountaineer and college wildlife management instructor. He has extensive experience with special event and tactical teams, backcountry operations, concession relations, and search and rescues.

**Sean Perchalski** recently graduated from Southwestern Community College Seasonal Law Enforcement Training Program in Franklin, N.C., and headed for a new job at the Grand Canyon. He writes that 30 members of Class 80 learned such subjects as firearms training, defensive tactics, emergency vehicle operations, constitutional law, natural and cultural resource protection, Leave No Trace principles and woodland tracking. All 30 had either accepted positions or had interviews scheduled by graduation. In addition to Grand Canyon, other class members headed to Olympic, Glacier, Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, Mesa Verde, Rocky Mountains, Yosemite, Wind Cave, Pearl Harbor and Independence. □

## The late Horace Albright was an ANPR member

In the early years of ANPR our organization was definitely focused on commissioned park rangers as its members. As time went by we broadened our scope and sought NPS employees of all disciplines to join and become active ANPR members. Recruiting NPS employees in job titles other than park ranger frequently is a struggle. Sometimes the response offered is, "I'm not a ranger. Why would I want to be a member of ANPR?"

While ANPR seeks to advocate for NPS employees of all disciplines, the "park ranger" in our title has sometimes been a high mental hurdle to overcome. Here's one recognizable NPS employee who thought ANPR membership was a good idea even though he had never served in a park ranger position.



Sept. 10, 1984

My dear Jim Tuck:

First, I want to thank you again for visiting me...and leaving me a considerable number of issues of the NEWSLETTER of the Rangers' organization. I have found them most interesting, informative and inspiring. They have given me much pleasure in reading them.

I'm sending you an application for membership in the Association of National Park Rangers. I don't think I'm eligible for membership as a ranger; for I have never been a ranger. However, I have been with rangers - early forest rangers before the Forest Service was created, forest rangers, park rangers, Texas rangers, and have ridden hundreds of miles with rangers over a period of a half a century. I have hired rangers, promoted park rangers, even "fired" a few in my time.

Technically, I might be called a ranger and I hope you and your associates may think so. At a banquet in Washington, D.C., in the spring of 1984, Ronald Walker, who was Director, paid a tribute to me, and commissioned me "Honorary Chief Ranger of the National Park Service." I appreciated his thought of me, and I sometimes add that title to my normal designation of "Former Director of the National Park Service!"

I enclose my check for \$10.00 for a year's membership. If I'm accepted, any further payments will be promptly taken care of if they are required.

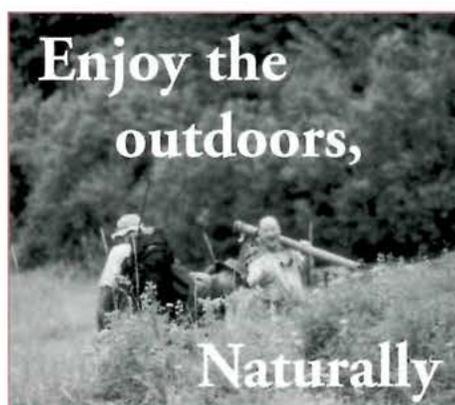
I am glad the next meeting of the Park Rangers' Association will be held in Acadia National Park, a beautiful area which I had much to do with establishing. I spent many happy days there when I was in the National Park Service and after I retired.

...and my greetings to the Rangers and former rangers assembled in Maine.

Sincerely yours,

*Horace M. Albright*

*This letter is from the files of former ANPR President Dick Martin. Jim Tuck also was an ANPR president. Horace M. Albright, the second director of the National Park Service, served from Jan. 12, 1929, to Aug. 9, 1933. He retained close ties to the NPS until his death in 1987.*



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