NPS Training: Sufficient or Deficient?
Letters

Work group should form

We read with interest the comments in the summer issue of Ranger regarding Ranger Careers and uses of the various park ranger position descriptions. We are the core team that was heavily involved in the multiyear effort to develop Ranger Careers. It is our collective view that Ranger Careers was a great leap forward for NPS, parks and all rangers, although its implementation has not been perfect.

As retired, longtime rangers, we still have a love and dedication to rangering that we are certain to take to our graves. Since there is obviously more to do regarding Ranger Careers, we would like to pose the following questions:

1. Would ANPR be interested in putting together a work group to delve into the details and craft strategies that will be necessary if ANPR is to lobby NPS successfully for more and better use of all Ranger Careers positions? (The P/I positions were designed to be largely transitional positions. Benchmark positions above the journeyman level were drafted but never implemented).

2. Since NPS is using only Volume I of Ranger Careers, and Volume II (Career Management) and Volume III (untitled, describing occupational replenishment and individual development) were also drafted, would ANPR be interested in pursuing an effort to complete Ranger Careers by reinvigorating II and III?

It seems to us that a work group made up largely of persons in the middle of their careers would be most effective in this effort.

We retirees are amenable to serving in resource and information capacities to any group that ANPR may develop.

Bill Sanders, Birdstown, Pennsylvania
Dick Martin, Palo Cedro, California
Jim Brady, Durango, Colorado
President's Message

In 2007 ANPR undertook a survey of NPS employees, with funding from Mike Finley and the Turner Foundation and expertise from Mark Saferstein and the American Park Network. When respondents were asked which of the following factors would encourage you to join an NPS employee support organization? training programs were rated second highest.

ANPR is proud to announce at least two training programs — Situational Leadership and Introduction to Resource Stewardship — will be offered in conjunction with Ranger Rendezvous in Santa Fe this December.

ANPR's survey found that leadership training was one of the highest-ranked factors in the respondents' NPS jobs. If you are having difficulty successfully competing for work leader or supervisory jobs because you don't have any experience or training in supervision, understanding Situational Leadership is a good place to start building your résumé.

This 16-hour training course is a current, comprehensive and practical method for effectively managing and developing people, time and resources. The instructor, Art Eck, teaches from first-hand experience as an NPS supervisor and manager for more than 24 years. He retired as the deputy regional director for NPS history, strategic plan and goals, current management policies, principles and practices. The course will begin with an introduction to resource stewardship mission of the NPS and on resource protection by employees.

It begins a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of all employees in carrying out the fundamental purpose of the agency. NPS history, strategic plan and goals, current management policies, principles and practices are covered through lectures, group discussions, case studies and field exercises.

If you are hoping to become a career NPS employee, it will help you be more competitive to understand some of the inner workings and priorities of the agency. If you are already a career NPS employee, understanding the agency you work in can have positive impacts on your career satisfaction and advancement.

Introduction to Resource Stewardship will be coordinated and instructed by a team from the Horace Albright Training Center led by Jeri Hall, NPS training manager for natural and cultural resources. This course is the first in a four-part curriculum that "projects a philosophy of protection and interdisciplined collaboration for enhanced resource protection." It is meant for employees in all disciplines, not just those with park ranger or resource manager in their job title. The subsequent courses can be completed as one's career progresses.

In 2007 the Office of Personnel Management surveyed federal employees and found that NPS employees' satisfaction with their training and development programs ranked 203rd of 222 federal agencies surveyed.

This issue of Ranger sheds light on the state of training in the NPS, why NPS employees seem to perceive their training programs less favorably than other federal employees, and what the NPS intends to do about it.

ANPR seeks a formal relationship with the NPS to attempt to rectify this perceived and/or real training deficiency. Please do your part to support this effort by registering yourself or someone you supervise for training during the Rendezvous. For additional information turn to page 20.
Whither National Park Service Training?

Article and photos by Costa Dillon
Indiana Dunes

Change is coming to National Park Service training and it is change for the good. Training is now titled learning and development and it is more than just a name change. The change in title denotes a change in how we will approach training.

In the 2007 “Best Places to Work in the Federal Government” survey, the NPS ranked 203rd of 222 federal agencies in employee perceptions on training and development. There is obviously room for improvement.

It is critical that we recognize that employee training and development is a profession. That is not to say that subject-matter experts cannot or should not be the teachers of what they know. It means that the development and management of training is a skill itself.

Professional training is more than just giving classroom instruction. It means assessing workforce needs, determining the desired outcome of training, developing training using the most suitable and cost-effective means, ensuring the capability and credentials of instructors, understanding the various ways in which individuals learn, developing systems that respond to those differences, preparing accredited and peer-reviewed content, and implementing processes that measure results.

For example, most learning and development positions are now being filled in the GS-1712 series and other human resources series that recognize employee development as a distinct field. More and more NPS training meets third-party standards for such things as awarding continuing education units. As of December 2007, Albright Training Center instructors are adjunct faculty at Indiana University and by next year hope to award college credits for some NPS training.

Part and parcel with these certifications is the measurement of results. For many of us, the criterion used to measure the successful completion of training was the ability to sit in the chair for a week. No more. Testing and other measurements will become standards for NPS training.

When written tests were first implemented at the NPS Fundamentals course five years ago, I heard a lot of distress and worry from employees. That we would implement testing at NPS courses is not new. Classes like CPR and first aid have always had tests. FLETC has tests that have to be passed to graduate. Testing measures whether or not there has been a transfer of learning in the course, and it is a mark of good training to have testing.

Testing alone will not tell you if training is accomplishing its goals. Training and employee development are expensive in time and money. It is appropriate that we have accountability for those expenditures. Written tests, follow-up interviews with employees and their supervisors, focus group analyses, and other means of accountability and return-on-investment measurement should be expected as hallmarks of good training.

If we are going to spend millions of dollars and hours on, say, safety training, shouldn't we be able to measure if safety is improved as a result? If it is not, then either the training needs to change or we have some other reason why safety is not improving that we need to address.

We should know what we have and then adjust our operations to reach the desired outcomes. For years training has been measured in inputs: how many hours of training given. We have all become used to GPRA and other systems that show us the need to measure results, not just input. Training should be no exception to this approach.

You will also see a change in how training is delivered. Flying to a one-week course with a room full of people is becoming rarer. Individualized training and training by alternative means will be the norm. Classroom learning continues to diminish due to travel ceilings, costs and the sheer size of the agency. Online learning and satellite courses will continue to increase. Certainly, there are times when classroom learning and hands-on training are the best methods. (What visitor wants to be rescued off a cliff by a ranger who learned knots from an online course?)

The best training is developed by first determining the desired results, then determining the best method. Not everyone can learn off a computer, but not all classes are best suited for a classroom. Expanding our capabilities to develop a variety of delivery systems and/or identify quality training offered by others will increase the reach of learning and decrease the cost per student.

Training is not a reward; it is a means of accomplishing goals through skilled employees. It should be available to all who need it. When I was a younger ranger I attended Ranger Skills. Many rangers fought hard to get into that training program with the belief that it got "your ticket punched" and would lead to promotion. Yet, there are no data that
Academy a basic premise was that the learning opportunities from outside and inside the NPS wherever most appropriate and most cost-effective. Training as a one-time event is rarely as successful as training that includes continual reinforcement and follow-up.

Key to that is the involvement of the supervisor in an employee's development. In fact, much of the NPS employee development system is built on the model that a supervisor's involvement is essential. It is the supervisor who determines whether or not an employee has achieved the identified competencies, and it is the supervisor who should work with the employee to find means of achieving those missing competencies.

Time after time at Albright I would hear stories from employees who lamented that they never met with their supervisor, never got the feedback (good and bad) they valued, and could not get approval for training they needed. Employees understand that spending time and money to do something before it is the supervisor who should work with the employee to find means of achieving those missing competencies.

I have heard supervisors say they can't afford for someone to be away from work for training. In how many ways is that a fallacy? Employees will be away for annual leave or illness. What about when the position is vacant? Can we afford to have a job done wrong or an employee injured because they didn't have the proper training? Can we afford a lawsuit or tort claim because an employee did something that could have been prevented by good training? We cannot afford not to train employees. Training is not an expenditure, it is an investment. It makes the employee more valuable and a more useful part of the team when they are trained and confident in their jobs. Surveys in both the public and private sectors show that employees who feel valued by their organizations become more dedicated to their organization's mission and stay in their organizations longer.

The concepts were that we could take training in which the NPS had already made a substantial investment and make it available to more people. This also alleviates the time and cost parks spend in developing this kind of training in-house and ensures the same content is available nationwide. For the first time we can say that all who work with the NPS can get the same introductory training. Currently the site has an adaptation of the NPS mission and history content from NPS Fundamentals I and basic interpretation training. This was designed for seasonal employees, volunteers, concession employees, cooperating association employees, partners, stakeholders and anyone who might benefit from learning more about the NPS.

Expect to see more classes on this website in the future. NPS learning and employee development have never been bad, but they haven't always risen to the levels we should desire. We have some of the most talented and dedicated
employees in the federal work force. It is our
certainty to foster that talent and feed
that energy by making sure our employees get
the best learning possible. Investing in their
learning and development is one of the best
ways we can ensure they are valued. It returns
benefits well beyond the costs. Managing a
quality learning and development program so
that employees have opportunities to meet their
development needs are critical to the future of the
NPS.

Constantine "Costa" J. Dillon is the superinten
dent of Indiana Dunes. A 29-year National Park
Service veteran, he has served as the superinten
dent at the Horace Albright Training Center, Fire
Island and Homestead National Monument of
America. Other assignments have included service
as a park ranger at Santa Monica Mountains,
Hubbell Trading Post, Gettysburg, Eisenhower
and Carlsbad Caverns. He is a recipient of the
DOI Superior Performance Award, the NPS
Sequoia Award for Excellence in Interpretation
and the Secretary of the Interior's Award for
Long Term Achievement in Diversity. In 1999
he received the Stephen Mather Award from
the National Parks Conservation Association
for outstanding resource stewardship. He has
published articles in National Parks Magazine,
The George Wright Forum and NPS publica-
tions, and his work has been excerpted in many
textbooks on history and interpretation.

Dillon's NPS career has coexisted with a career
in feature film production. He created the
concept and wrote the original feature motion
picture, Attack of the Killer Tomatoes (NAI
Entertainment, 1978). Among his other films as
author/actor are: Killer Tomatoes Eat France
(20th Century Fox, 1992), Killer Tomatoes
Strike Back (20th Century Fox, 1990), Return of
the Killer Tomatoes (New World Pictures,
1988), and Sour Grapes (TMSPictures, 1986).
Rhino Home Video released a 25th anniversary
DVD of the original Attack of the Killer Tomatoes in 2003.

A winter class at Albright groups up for a formal photo. In front
with the arrowhead is lead instructor Richard Ullmann.

**A Quality Change**

**in**

**NPS Training and Development**

By Jerry Simpson

WASO

As Mary Bomar assumed the role of
National Park Service director in the
fall of 2006, she established a trifecta
of goals for her tenure, one of which is to
"develop the next generation of leaders for
the Park Service."

In January 2007, Director Bomar commis-
sioned a team from across the Service to con-
duct a study of the training and development
function of the NPS in order to recommend
actions to the National Leadership Council that
would improve the management and delivery
of training and development services to the
NPS and the achievement of the trifecta goal.
She charged the team to think boldly and to
challenge the accepted ways of doing things
in the Service, ways that had resulted in the
NPS being ranked 203 of 222 federal agencies
and offices in 2006 in the area of employee
satisfaction with training and development.
Clearly we had a mandate from the work force
for improvement and plenty of opportunity
for improvement ahead of us.

The team was constructed to ensure bal-
cialed perspectives in several dimensions,
including field/regional/WASO, program
offices/operational units, large/medium/small
cities, superintendents/line supervisors/employ-
ees, individuals with training expertise/
customers of training services. In addition,
all seven regions and WASO were represented
among those members.

Some of the results
of that "Learning and
Development" study,
presented to the NLC in January 2008 and be-
ing implemented as you read this, are described
elsewhere in this edition of Ranger. This ar-
ticle focuses on three key
"foundation findings" of
the team that we intend
will serve as touchstones
for every implementation
action that comes out of
the Learning and Developmen report.

1. First is the Desired Future for NPS Learn-
ing and Development. One key attribute of
this Desired Future state is equality of
access to learning and development by
all NPS employees. We heard often that
employees are not allowed to go to training
because they can't be spared from work, or
because travel funds are not available to
allow them to get to the training, or because
different managers place varying levels of
priority on assuring the development of
their employees. In addition, even when
attending, the content and quality may
vary between parks or regions. Some of
the most admired NPS training offerings
are only available to the region or program
that developed and sponsors them. To have
a truly first-class learning and development
program worthy of the NPS mission and the
work force that carries it out, our redesigns
in the learning and development function
must address an approach to training de-
ivery that:

a. expands the use of distance learning
technologies so that overall training is
available where and when it's needed
and travel costs and away time are
decreased (while also recognizing
that not all training is amenable to
distance learning);

b. assures that those who deliver train-
ing, many times our own local experts
within the NPS staff, are themselves
skilled in the delivery of effective
training to others, through a dis-
ciplined "train-the-trainer" system;

and

c. disseminates information about those
high-quality courses and practices
that exist around the Service so that
employees in other regions and
programs can know about them and
participate in them.

2. The importance of communication, col-
larization and accountability. It is said that
when everyone is responsible, no one is
accountable. For a number of reasons over
a period of years, what the team found is
that there has existed in the Park Service
no clear, agreed-upon roles and responsibility for learning and development that could assure accountability for a good program of learning. One of the contributing reasons may have been a long-held philosophy of training as a luxury option, not a necessity. By that I mean, when budgets are tight, training (like maintenance) can be deferred for another time, and the operation will seemingly go on as before, in the short run. When funds then become available, time to spend them is usually short before the opportunity evaporates. The prevailing mode becomes to grab something quick and easy, do it, and then move on. Quick and easy often led to localized solutions (e.g., Park A has money, so develop and deliver a course onsite at Park A) for which there was no support system to assure quality, sustainability for the next time, or exportability to other parks and regions who may have the same training need. Over time, the situation became “every-unit-for-itself,” and the organizational critical mass required to not only deliver training but to understand underlying needs, design efficient and effective solutions, and ensure continuity and quality were lost.

The Learning and Development study team recognized that for things to change for the better, mechanisms for collaboration and communication across the Service have to be put in place. While local action has an upside in terms of relevance, timeliness and control, local action also has a downside in the cost of duplicate courses, suboptimized quality and availability, and loss of the advantages of economy of scale and repeatability.

Honoring the strengths of the NPS’ highly decentralized organization and management style is important; so is functioning within today’s “business model” (just-in-time delivery, economies of scale, continuous improvement, re-use where possible, and helping keep managers and employees focused on performing the mission). The study endorsed the notion that, without consolidating everything, we still must pull together more within the NPS to redefine roles and responsibilities for the training function and then adhere to them.

Two recommended collaboration/communication mechanisms are:

- the establishment of a Leadership Development Advisory Council, consisting of deputy regional directors and deputy associate directors, a representative ARD for administration, a representative senior park manager, and the chief of learning and development, to provide continuing Service-wide oversight of our leadership development programs. This will help ensure relevance and local support while helping to keep a nationwide focus in how we develop our next generation of leaders.

- establishment of an Employee Development Working Group of regional employee development officers and WASO to assure that in other areas of learning beyond the leadership development area, such as career fields training, we are also assuring that what is done in certain regions and parks or in WASO is made known among all regions and exported across the Service to fill training needs without the proverbial “reinventing the wheel.” Both groups can also become homes for corporate memory and advocacy for learning and development within the Park Service.

3. Ultimately, to really make sure that our NPS learning and development programs achieve their full potential, make the greatest contribution to successful mission accomplishment, and become recognized as a critical investment in our work force rather than a luxury or afterthought, it is critical to embed our learning and development efforts within the overall work force management strategies and efforts for managing our most important resource — people. Current NPS employees can find the newly published NPS Workforce Management Plan for 2008-2013, “Developing, Valuing and Sustaining a World Class Workforce,” on InsideNPS. Check it and you will find that learning and development-focused strategies infuse three of the five work force management goals addressed in the plan.

When we see learning and development as a critical component of organizational performance and individual performance, we prioritize it in a different light. When we see developing our work force as a means to achieving today’s required performance and also as a way to nurture and develop talent for tasks we don’t even see coming yet, we can shift our thinking from training as a cost to training as an investment. Our employees recognize that as an organization we are investing to increase their value as individuals and help them to achieve their personal aspirations along with the organization’s aspirations. The result can be a step forward toward becoming one of the best places to work in America, a goal of the Centennial Initiative’s Professional Excellence theme.

Jerry Simpson is the NPS assistant director for work force management in Washington, D.C. He is the NPS’ senior executive for learning and development, human resources and equal opportunity. He joined the NPS in July 2006 after many years at NASA in human resources. He also is a member of ANPR.
Although I'm fairly new to the National Park Service, I know there have been multiple overall training and development strategies presented in the recent past. Understandably, many of you might be skeptical about any claims of “new training efforts” or “new directions in training and development.”

Frankly, I don’t blame you for your wariness because not all of these earlier efforts fully took seed and grew as planned. The Training and Development Division of NPS has been renamed the Learning and Development Division because this title more accurately reflects the wide gamut of services provided. We aren’t simply providers of functional or technical training, but also the source of significant and successful leadership and management programs, from entry level through mid-level and beyond.

This new moniker reflects NPS Director Mary Bomar’s commitment to refocusing our employee learning and development efforts, and it represents the first step toward a revitalized program.

Jerry Simpson, assistant director of workforce management, earlier shared his vision (see page 4) of how the NPS can achieve the ambitious professional development goals set forth by Director Bomar in her 2007 Centennial Initiative Report to the president. Also in this issue (page 7) is an overview of an important new Learning and Development program, the New Superintendent Academy. I hope these articles help you understand the exciting direction in which learning and development is headed, and that they pique your curiosity to learn more about this journey.

As the new chief of learning and development, I am fortunate to have these goals so clearly stated by the director, and the path to our success so carefully outlined by Simpson, our chief human capital officer. In fact, one might argue that in terms of communicating our L & D strategies, my work has been done for me. However, there is an important aspect to the success of our L & D programs and initiatives not yet discussed in Ranger, and that is the heart and soul of any successful education and training effort — the people.

From the first (of many) interviews I encountered en route to accepting the opportunity to join the NPS, I was clear that one of my main focuses would be to build relationships between WASO and our field employees. I was honest about my desire to include our NPS leaders who have so much practical experience and knowledge to offer to any of our curricular design work.

Who better to know what a ranger, mechanic, maintenance worker or superintendent needs to know and learn than those who have actually held those jobs? Moreover, how can we expect our leadership to support courses with their human capital, and often their training dollars, if they don't believe in what we are providing?

The New Superintendent Academy is an excellent example of that type of collaboration because it represents the input and guidance of many senior leaders Service-wide, from many other regions and WASO. Not only did we seek the advice of these content experts, but we also incorporated this valuable knowledge and made the necessary adjustments to our curriculum to produce an academy representative of the realistic developmental needs of NPS superintendents.

Another L & D effort currently being rolled out is our Train-the-Trainer curriculum. It is aimed at allowing our programs to reach a greater segment of NPS employees by preparing NPS leaders outside of L & D to deliver consistent, high-quality training experiences when and where they are needed most. Additionally, we are convening a Leadership Roundtable of academic institution partners, scholars and NPS thought leaders to help us unify our L & D efforts. We also hope to take advantage of services our partners can provide through collaborative efforts.

In his article Simpson stressed communication along with collaboration. To me, this means that there must be an open and active avenue of communication between those who design the training and those who use it. Just because we build it doesn’t mean they will come. By encouraging all NPS employees to share their ideas, concerns, criticisms and suggestions, we will create a culture that provides useful training and educational opportunities. Therefore, the responsibility for success in the area of L & D is a shared burden. You must reach out to us with feedback and we must be receptive. I can assure you that participant feedback is taken seriously and content will be adjusted accordingly when appropriate.

We have shared several highlights of emerging efforts in our division, most of which were borne of the yearlong Learning and Development Report recently endorsed by the National Leadership Council and posted on the Internet at The Learning Place: www.nps.gov/training/NPS_LDeport1R.pdf or on the NPS Intranet at inside.nps.gov/waso/waso.cfm?prg=634p=2.

Please take some time to review this document and let us know what you think of our recommended actions. Spend some time talking with your employee development officer about things you want to see offered in the future. Most importantly, become involved in this process so that we can serve you most effectively and efficiently.

We are committed to preparing the NPS workforce to meet the challenges of our next 100 years.

Photo above: fire training outside Albright Training Center, by Margaret Hodgkins

Kathy Hanson is the chief of learning and development for the NPS. She has served in senior positions in the education and training divisions of such federal agencies as USDA, OPM and Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. She is a member of ANPR.
New Superintendent Academy Debuts

By Maia Browning and Sandy Taylor

Nearly 62 percent of National Park Service superintendents will be eligible for retirement within the next five years. With that in mind, NPS Director Mary Bomar has launched the New Superintendent Academy to help secure future leadership needs of the organization. The academy provides a platform for the self-discovery and re-creation necessary for first-time superintendents to transition to their new leadership role.

Studies indicate that many employees beginning a new job fail to transition to the behaviors, skills and perspectives they need to excel in their new position. Instead, they adapt techniques that served them in the past, attempting to apply what they already know to a much different situation. The academy provides a structure for expanding their frames of reference; accessing support from peers, coaches, mentors, regional and Washington Office staff; and to address competency gaps unique to each individual. Participants are challenged to create a new leadership presence commensurate with their new position. This initiative is fully funded by the Servicewide Learning And Development Program.

The 18-month training program uses a multitude of approaches to draw learning from within a superintendent's current workload. Online discussion boards, web seminars and TEL (technology-enhanced learning) courses expose trainees to national and globally recognized leaders and thinkers, and provide continuity among participants between classroom sessions.

General classroom courses address leadership, communication, self-awareness, working with the media and policy implementation. Specific exercises help with the intentional designing of a superintendent's first interactions with park staff and partners to smooth the transition for all involved. Special emphasis learning tracks address current critical issues. The learning track for the 2008-09 academy is “Partnering,” and it is being developed in collaboration with the WASO Partnership Office and the Conservation Study Institute.

Coaching and mentoring are linchpins of this curriculum. Superintendents come from many backgrounds and have individual competency gaps that are the target of their learning contract. Educational experiences to address these are underwritten by a stipend. Learning contracts require the participant to establish the criteria against which their performance will be evaluated, and to nominate individuals who will form an evaluation panel.

Servicewide and regional programs dovetail to enhance the employee's learning and personal emergence during his or her first 18 months as a Servicewide superintendent. Regional programs offer orientation to the regional office, with a focus on crucial regional contacts and initiatives.

The academy was developed in recognition of the ongoing developmental needs of first-time superintendents, needs that supersede traditional, short-term training programs. Many of the best practices of earlier programs have been incorporated into the academy. A key feature of this program is its “rolling enrollment,” which requires newly appointed superintendents to begin the program as soon as they are appointed. This immediately opens opportunities for them to work with coaches, mentors and their peer network, engage in activities that shift their focus, and allow their leadership presence to evolve. Participants enter a program in progress and ultimately will complete all activities in an order unique to each individual.

The academy launched this past June 1 with 24 full-time enrolees. Superintendents appointed since the beginning of the program are currently enrolling. An auxiliary group of 27 longer-term superintendents will be able to select components of the academy, such as the web seminars, that remain pertinent to them. Participation in activities is self-selecting, and in part, dependent upon benefiting accounts and space availability. Following an introductory orientation by academy staff, participants are largely self-managing. Their experiences will aid the evolution of the academy into a learning ground for employees who aspire to the superintendent role.

As a starting point for the development of the academy, a broad-based interview process was conducted in fall 2007. Former directors, field staff, partners, current superintendents (new and experienced) and central office staff were questioned on the competencies needed by a first-time superintendent. Ten key learning outcomes were revealed. The academy is based on these outcomes or business needs, and on OPM's Executive Core Qualifications. Additionally, the academy will be adapted to incorporate the feedback from participants and NPS leaders as the process unfolds.

More information about the interview process and the program design is available from program managers and project co-leads Sandy Taylor, 202-354-1413, and Maia Browning, 202-354-1903.

Maia Browning is a 32-year NPS veteran. Following a career as an interpreter, museum curator and manager, she moved to full-time training. As the Servicewide training manager for universal competencies, she created the Compass and NPS Fundamentals training programs for new employees. She has taught and coached Japanese park rangers in interpretation and environmental education, and assisted the Republic of Georgia in establishing its national park system.

Sandy Taylor is an NPS program manager for the Supervision, Management and Leadership Program. She began her NPS career at Grand Canyon as a staffing, recruitment and classification specialist.
Addressing the Challenges of National Park Service Culture

By Mary Hinson
Lake Mead

As a National Park Service employee with more than 15 years of service, I will confess that I have witnessed and performed numerous unsafe acts in the line of duty, all for the sake of accomplishing "the mission.

Like so many other dedicated fellow employees who are drawn to this proud and noble organization, I often believed so much in the cause that my own health, safety and well-being took a back seat. I've always been proud of my can-do attitude and my ability to do more with less.

As I navigate through this specialized culture I've refined my perspective on the work. I've become uneasily aware that the NPS has a rich history of unintentionally rewarding risky behavior. Some would say that risky behavior is what defines a heroic act.

Like so many of my peers, I truly wanted to be a hero, to make a difference, and I chose to do what was necessary with little thought of the risk involved. This is, after all, the kind of performance that bestselling books are made of — Death, Daring & Disaster: Search and Rescue in the National Parks and Over the Edge: Death in Grand Canyon.

In one of our first Operational Leadership classes, park ranger Lance Mattson, emergency services coordinator at Glen Canyon, said it best: "Good luck reinforces bad behavior.

So how did I evolve from being just another darned lucky ranger to being part of a search and destroy team whose new mission is to predict, identify and manage risk at all levels of the organization? The answer is Operational Leadership.

Below is an introduction to Operational Leadership, as seen through the eyes of Lena Boesser-Koschmann, a supervisory park ranger. She has worked for the NPS for nine years and is currently stationed at Lake Mead. She is an original member of the NPS Honor Guard, and her testament to the program speaks volumes to what it may be capable of providing for a new generation of park employees.

I stand motionless in the dwindling light, shivering with the chill of the occasion, as the sun sets over the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. Beside me are three fellow members of the NPS Honor Guard. We solemnly wait as the crowd stills, and then we march forward, carefully posting the colors of our flags, both the U.S. and the NPS. We salute in tribute to Eric York, a dedicated biologist who died in the line of duty.

I joined the Ranger Honor Guard upon its formation in 2003. Since then I have attended nine such line-of-duty fatality ceremonies. It saddens me to realize that I now excel at performing the duties surrounding these tragedies. In 21 years the NPS has had 21 line-of-duty fatalities, and we lead many government agencies in mishap statistics.

Dan Madrid, Joe Sordi, Marina Giggleman, Jeff Christensen, These are not just numbers or names listed on a wall in the Main Interior Building. They were friends. They were family. They were co-workers and heroes. The NPS ranks ninth on the "Most Dangerous Occupations" list; NPS employees are almost six times more likely to die in the line of duty than other government employees, and protection rangers are nearly 22 times as likely.

In a 2006 survey of all government employees, NPS employees ranked themselves 218th of 222 federal agencies in "Work Life Balance," 195th in "Teamwork" and 191st in "Effective Leadership." It is no coincidence that agencies with higher-reported rankings in these categories also have fewer line-of-duty deaths and mishaps.

I was a supervisor at Lake Mead in the spring of 2007 and attended a briefing about what I thought was a new "safety program." My initial skepticism quickly turned to enthusiasm as David Horne, deputy chief ranger, introduced the basic principles of a program he called "Operational Risk Management and Team Coordination Training." It was based on a U.S. Coast Guard risk management model, which had been developed for that organization by Craig E. Geis.

Horne introduced the key principles: 1. Accept no unnecessary risk. 2. Make risk decisions at the appropriate level. 3. Accept risk only when the benefits outweigh the cost. 4. Integrate ORM into doctrine and planning at all levels.

Operational Risk Management is at its core a systematic process that assists individuals in making informed decisions. In the briefing, I learned that by following the principles of Operational Leadership we could actually increase mission success while reducing risk to personnel and equipment to an acceptable level.

I left the conference room that day with my eyes wide open. "This is it," I thought to myself. "This is what we need.

Shortly after that meeting, a small group of Lake Mead employees began meeting to develop a parkwide training program, taking the principles of the Coast Guard course and transforming them into a Park Service-oriented course. With cooperation from the Pacific West Region, we developed a comprehensive, eight-hour training course and began teaching it to all divisions within the park. We eventually presented our course to regional leadership, including Jon Jarvis, regional director. Soon after we contracted with the California Training Institute to begin implementing an expanded, standardized program on a larger scale.

Written and developed by Craig E. Geis of CTI, Operational Leadership focuses on reducing human error, the cause of the majority of NPS mishaps, mostly due to inattention, ineffective supervision or poor judgment. Operational Leadership is a life-saving program that focuses on predicting the probability of error and reducing occurrences while improving individual and team effectiveness.

Operational Leadership course work introduces seven critical skills necessary to reduce the probability of human error. The training focuses on each of these skills over a two-day, interactive course.

1. Leadership
Not in the traditional sense, leadership here refers to individual and team leadership qualities. In the workplace each of us must be a leader in order to create a safer environment.

2. Human Error and Accident Causation
In order to reduce the probability of human error, we must first understand how and why human error occurs, and how human error leads to accidents.

3. Mission Analysis
Everything we do in life is a "mission;" as leaders we must be able to analyze each mission, assess its risks, mitigate those risks, and plan and act accordingly.

4. Stress and Performance
Once we begin the mission-analysis process, we must be able to continually monitor our situation and be flexible to changing
Volcanoes during an Operational Leadership class in March 2008.

conditions. In order to do this, we must understand how stress, fatigue, and morale affect our performance.

5. Situational Awareness

Meeting mission demands and monitoring our mission success requires constant awareness of our surroundings, and the ability to recognize potential hazards.

6. Decision Making

The backbone of Operational Leadership is good decision making, and the fortitude to make those decisions and stand behind those who make them.

7. Effective Communication and Assertiveness

Each of the first six skills requires team members to communicate effectively and to be assertive about their involvement in the risk management process. Each employee is responsible for speaking up about potential hazards to the team.

So it turns out that Operational Leadership is not a safety program as I’d first assumed, but it is an integral part of the “Safety System.” It’s also not a traditional leadership program. Instead, Operational Leadership is about each individual employee becoming a leader within his or her own job description, taking responsibility for your own safety and the safety of co-workers, and learning to work effectively in a team environment. It is about changing the culture of how we look at ourselves, our job, our team and our organization.

The term “operation” refers to each and every job we do in each of our diverse workplaces, whether you are plowing snow at Glacier Bay, building fences at Hawaii Volcanoes, leading walks on the National Mall, making traffic stops on the Blue Ridge Parkway or simply driving to work in the morning.

Everything we do involves some amount of risk. Leadership refers to everyone’s ability to direct and guide the activities of themselves and other team members, stimulating personnel to work together as a team, and providing feedback to team members regarding their performance.

The seven critical team skills presented in the course help employees identify hazards in the workplace, and provide the tools necessary to assess and mitigate those risks. Operational Leadership empowers employees to be assertive about the safety of their team, and encourages them to participate in the decision-making and risk management process. By fostering an environment that values input, Operational Leadership facilitates safe decision making, and most importantly, it demands that we stand behind those who make those decisions.

Hawaii Volcanoes has used the principles of Operational Leadership to conduct a risk assessment of sulfur dioxide concentrations in the park. Organ Pipe Cactus used the principles to determine the risk of restarting the Quitobaquito Interpretive Tours. There are many more success stories.

Just over a year after our first meeting, the face of Lake Mead is changing for the better. While many program improvements had been in progress already, a significant drive toward, and support for, these changes can be directly attributed to the implementation of Operational Leadership. Risk management is not a new concept, and much of the training fleshes out skills we already possess. However, Operational Leadership provides a common language, a format for articulating our decision-making process and a structure to our planning process.

Parkwide acceptance of Operational Leadership at Lake Mead has initiated a focus on current and relevant operational guidelines, an overhaul of the ranger division boating program, an initiative toward leadership succession and a move toward a team-driven environment. Employees work in pairs, schedules have been improved, work-rest ratios have been implemented, and words like “safety” and “risk mitigation” have become commonplace among the staff.

This grassroots initiative already has succeeded beyond initial expectations, and it has done so because the people on the ground, in the field, know and understand the risks they take on a daily basis. We are best equipped to speak to the risks and mitigations in our workplaces and in our lives, and to participate in the decision making that affects us every day. In fact, we are all responsible for our own safety, and must take responsibility for the direction we take from here.

By Mary Hinson
Lake Mead

What’s in store for the NPS, for me and Operational Leadership over the next six months? I have recently been detailed as the first Servicewide program coordinator for Operational Leadership. I have been heavily involved in the implementation process at Lake Mead and see firsthand what it can do for our organization. I accept this detail with enthusiasm and pride. There’s no doubt that this program will change the culture of the NPS.

To date there have been five facilitator courses and many basic courses held within five of our seven regions. I hope to expand on that over the next six months and to coordinate the facilitation of basic and instructor classes throughout the NPS. I am working on an Operational Leadership share point and website, standardization of course content and student texts, and Servicewide integration of Operational Leadership into planning and doctrine at all levels.

For more information contact mary_hinson@nps.gov.
NAU and Seasonal Law Enforcement Training

By Kathy Eissinger and Charles H. Hammersley
Northern Arizona University

The Seasonal Law Enforcement Training Program was developed in 1977 to prepare seasonal rangers to perform law enforcement in areas administered by the National Park Service.

The initial core program consisted of 200 (currently 324) class hours. A successful graduate was eligible to receive a Type II law enforcement commission once a background investigation was completed. This type of commission enables the bearer to carry firearms, make arrests, investigate violations of the Code of Federal Regulations and assist in the execution of warrants. It does not authorize the seasonal ranger to investigate felonious crimes.

Currently, there are nine colleges or universities offering the SLETP and recognized by the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. These programs are offered in a variety of formats. Depending on the program, students may select college credit or noncredit alternatives, continuing education units and/or certificate of completion. The diversity of offerings is reflected in the varying lengths of classes:

- Straight Academy (40 hours or more/week)
- Peace Officer Standard Training with NPS add-on or add-in
- One session per academic year (one or two semesters) to full-time students
- One session over two academic years to full-time students
- Combination of weekends and semester breaks

The NPS Seasonal Law Enforcement Ranger Training Program at Northern Arizona University is entering its 10th year. The program has evolved into a 450-plus hour course held over a 10-week period in the fall and a 13-week program in the spring.

Recent changes to the program include the addition of mandatory fitness training three days a week for 1 1/2 hours each day. The fitness component prepares students to set up their own workout program to maintain or improve their fitness level and to pass the physical efficiency battery.

Students receive specific training in defensive and pursuit driving at the Phoenix Police Department's emergency vehicle driving track. They are qualified in handgun and shotgun skills and get exposure to the use of the M16. They also get defensive tactics training.

Another addition, which has been a key to the program's success in preparing graduates for the work force, is 45 contact hours in resource protection. This includes an introduction to cutting edge materials being used in the field. Students conduct research about resource protection issues in a park of their choice and present their research findings in class.

Yet another key to the success of the program has been the wide variety and number of adjunct faculty who teach the coursework. NAU has more than 60 instructors, many of whom currently work for the NPS, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Game and Fish and other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. NAU's proximity to several NPS units and Forest Service and BLM lands ensures exposure of students to the resources and people from those agencies.

The program at NAU has enjoyed excellent success rates of its graduates obtaining jobs with the NPS and other land management agencies. Almost 100 percent of recent graduates who sought employment with the NPS were hired. This success is due in part to screening prior to entry into the program, which includes an interview with the director to discuss possible medical issues, background issues, EMS training and other requirements to be employable. This process often screens out people who would not be employable after completion of the program.

Almost 100 percent of the recent graduates who sought employment with the NPS were hired.

The NAU program has recently moved its coursework further into the computer age by placing most of the course materials into an online format. Students are encouraged to bring laptops to class, and much of the lecture material is found on a class website that students can access at any time. Standardized tests are now taken online in a computer lab, with students receiving instant results. Future changes include the development of additional online training modules designed to better prepare students for their campus experiences. These modules, taken online and at their homes or work locations, will shorten the time on campus and should help reduce student costs to attend the training.

The academic preparation of tomorrow's resource stewards has long been the theme behind NAU's parks and recreation management degree and of its park ranger training program. This theme has continued with the addition of some 35 hours of natural resource training beyond the 10 hours required by the NPS SLETP curriculum.

The curriculum includes classes on natural...
resource protection taught by several of the most forward-thinking individuals in the profession. Students are encouraged to think proactively rather than reactively, look at the global picture of resource threats and seek ways to respond to those threats.

Students also get the opportunity to use and become familiar with a new program currently being developed to help parks identify resources at risk and patterns of activity in their area.

Due to the multiuse and resource protection issues of our society, ranger training programs and curriculums continue to evolve in complexity and sophistication since the time of Stephen Mather, the first director of the National Park Service. One of his famous quotes is:

"If a trail is to be blazed, send a ranger, if an animal is floundering in the snow, send a ranger, if a bear is in a hotel, send a ranger, if a fire threatens a forest, send a ranger, and if someone needs to be saved, send a ranger." 

Kathy Eissinger is the director of Northern Arizona University's Park Ranger Training Program. Previously she was the program coordinator for two years. For three summers she has worked seasonally (one summer backcountry and two summers frontcountry road patrol) as a law enforcement park ranger in Glacier. She holds a master's in physical education from Texas A&M, and has 20 years teaching and coaching experience at the college level.

Charles H. Hammersley, Ph.D., is an associate professor of parks and recreation management at NAU. He also is program coordinator for the parks and recreation degree and developer of NAU's online degree program in parks and recreation.

Scene 1: Day, exterior shot of an entrance station to a national park. Cars and buses line the roads approaching the station. Cut to an interior shot, looking over the shoulder of a uniformed employee frantically punching buttons on a cash register whose display shows a flashing ERR08431. The visitor waiting at the window appears to be getting increasingly impatient.

Scene 2: Cut to an interior shot of a typical office. An employee is working on a computer, and mutters with frustration as he tries to use the help feature of the word processing program so he can reformat the page into two uneven columns.

Scene 3: Cut to exterior, day. An employee is studying a large tree and the surrounding area. A chain saw and personal protective equipment are nearby. A supervisor approaches and reminds the employee not to fell the tree on top of the historic spring house nearby. The employee looks puzzled and continues to walk around the site.

What do these three scenarios have in common? Each shows an employee who has been formally trained but now can't make effective use of that training on the work site. It could be a case where the original training was sufficiently detailed, but the tasks haven't been performed routinely since the learning event, and the employee no longer remembers how to apply the knowledge. It could be a case where the original training covered only the basic tasks typically performed, and the employee was given a detailed reference manual to use to determine how to accomplish tasks not covered in the learning event. Or it could be a case where the original training gave the employee the ability to perform the basic tasks, assuming he or she would be able to independently adapt that knowledge later to meet the needs of more advanced or unusual situations.

The Need for Knowledge

We often find ourselves needing to learn (or remember) how to perform specific tasks on the job site. We may take a few moments to try to use support systems (such as the help feature on the word processing program), but if that doesn't meet our "knowledge need," then we quickly will move on and seek that information from other sources. This typically will be someone who has the knowledge, whom we see as a "go-to" person or expert in the subject.

We all know people we consider experts in specific areas—the one who can always unjam
the copier, start the chain saw or quickly get the information we want out of the Access database. These sources of knowledge are the backbone of informal learning, the learning that occurs outside of a formal class, learning event or system.

**Informal Learning**
Informal learning makes use of knowledge that has not been “captured” and often exists only inside someone’s head. To access that knowledge, you have to locate and communicate with the “owner.” As examples, we may use instant messaging, talk with someone in the office, phone someone at another location or use e-mail to communicate and learn informally.

A Bureau of Labor Statistics report (see graph at right) shows that we learn more than 70 percent of what we know about our jobs through these informal processes and contacts. The people from whom we learn informally are usually present in real time, although not always in the same physical location. We each need access to experts who can answer our questions and with whom we can explore the information, practice applying it, make mistakes and practice some more.

**Seven Principles of Learning**
From extensive fieldwork, the Institute for Research on Learning developed seven principles of learning that provide important guideposts. Can you relate them to your own experience in learning?

1. **Learning is fundamentally social.** While learning seems to be simply about the process of acquiring knowledge, it actually encompasses a lot more. Successful learning is often socially constructed, which can make the process both challenging and powerful.

2. **Knowledge is integrated in the lives of communities.** When we develop and share values, perspectives and ways of doing things, we create a community of practice.

3. **Learning is a participatory act.** The desire to participate in a community of practice, to become and remain a member, is a motivator to learning. This is a key dynamic that helps explain the power of apprenticeship and the success of mentoring and peer coaching.

4. **Knowing depends on engaging in practice.** We gain knowledge from observing and participating in situations and activities. The depth of our knowledge depends on the level of our engagement.

5. **Engagement is inseparable from empowerment.** We perceive our identities in terms of our ability to contribute and to affect the life of communities in which we are or want to be a part.

6. **Failure to learn is often the result of failure to participate.** Learning requires access to information and the opportunity to contribute our own knowledge or experience.

7. **We are all natural lifelong learners.** Learning is a natural part of being human. We all learn what enables us to participate in the communities of practice of which we wish to be a part.

**Performance Support through Communities of Practice**
How can we begin to capture that informal knowledge of “village wisdom” and make it more accessible to all employees? Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and they learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

Three characteristics are crucial:
- **The domain:** A community of practice is not just a network of connections between people. It has an identity defined by a shared area of interest. Membership includes a commitment to that area, and competence in that area that distinguishes community members from nonmembers.
- **The community:** Within their domain, members engage in activities and discussions, help each other and share information. They build relationships that help them learn from one another. While members must interact and learn together, they do not necessarily work together or at the same site.
- **The practice:** A community of practice is not a community of interest — people who like old cars, for instance. Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared menu of resources — experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems — a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction. The development of a shared practice may be conscious or seemingly coincidental. Community members may make a concerted effort to collect and document the techniques and lessons they have learned into an accessible knowledge base. By contrast, clerks who meet regularly for lunch may not realize that their lunch discussions may be one of their main sources of knowledge about how to perform their jobs. Still, in the course of all these conversations, they likely will have developed a set of stories and tools that are used in their shared practice.

These three characteristics, combined, constitute a community of practice. If we can develop, support and improve all three at the same time we can sustain the community as a venue for developing and sharing knowledge.

**What Does a Community of Practice Do?**
Communities develop their practice through a variety of activities. Some typical examples are shown on the next page.
In communities of practice:
- Practitioners (community members) have collective responsibility for managing the knowledge they need, recognizing that they are in the best position to do this.
- There is a direct link between informal learning and workplace performance.
- There aren't formal structural limitations; there are connections between people that bridge organizational and geographic boundaries.

What Does the Future Hold?
The NPS Servicewide Learning and Development Division is developing additional ways to help support employee performance through traditional formal learning events, processes and programs, and through the exploration and implementation of performance support and informal learning processes. Helping to establish and support communities of practice where there is sufficient interest and participation from community members is one area for exploration. Expect to see small-scale or “pilot” communities of practice rolled out initially. Consider beginning to develop these kinds of relationships locally; they can help build an effective base for expansion or merger with other similar communities of practice.

Informal Learning in Action
da uniformed employee who is frantically punching buttons on a cash register whose display shows a flashing ERR09431. The visitor waiting at the window appears to be getting increasingly impatient. The employee turns to the person working the other window in the station who quickly shares the procedure for clearing the malfunction. The register returns to service, and the visitors start moving again.

. . . he tries to use the help feature of the word processing program so he can reformats the page into two uneven columns. He picks up the phone and calls a friend who is the “word processing guru.” He gets step-by-step instructions over the phone and soon has the document modified.

. . . supervisor approaches and reminds the employee not to fell the tree on top of the historic spring house nearby. The employee looks puzzled and continues to walk around the site. The employee asks the supervisor for advice, and the two collaborate and reach a decision on the best way to place the cuts and bring the tree down safely.

John Arata joined the NPS in 2002 with more than 22 years of government service and private-sector employment. He has a wide range of experience, including operational, supervisory and senior management assignments both in the United States and abroad. He taught leadership and management at Purdue University and the University of Notre Dame, and was the lead training instructor for NPS Fundamentals V from 2002-05. In 2006 he became one of the first 270 training professionals in the nation and the first Department of the Interior employee to achieve credentialing through the American Society for Training and Development as a certified professional in learning and performance. He has a bachelor’s degree in natural resources from The Ohio State University and a master’s in human resources from Central Michigan University.
Developing NPS Leaders

Facility Management: A Priority and a Profession

Facility management today has become a significant focus in the federal sector. Executive orders, legislation, reports, human capital strategic plans and in-depth studies all have focused on the need to improve the effectiveness of park facility management in the National Park Service. The NPS has embraced changes necessary in facility management through Director’s Order #80, NPS real property asset management policy, and various strategies to implement the requirements of Executive Order No. 13327.

These directives, along with other NPS plans, articulate the need for a new cohort of facility managers who understand the values, priorities and mandates for stewardship through facility management in the NPS and can also apply industry standards to the constructed resources of the NPS. The result is the development of a facility manager development program that is competency based, with a focus on improving NPS stewardship of constructed, natural and cultural resources of the nation.

Road Map to Creating a Course of Study and Certificate

Many different sources have established requirements and set goals related to NPS facility management, including agency policy, Department of Interior, Office of Budget and Management, Office of Personnel Management, Government Accounting Office and industry standards. The Facility Manager Leaders Program meets or contributes to the following requirements in order to improve the stewardship of built resources, and through these built resources, the natural and cultural resources of the nation.

- Facility Management for the 21st Century
- DOI Strategic Human Capital Plan
- NPS Director’s Order No. 80
- GAO Recommendations on Human Capital Planning
- OPM Report on Strategic Planning for Training
- Industry recommendations and standards for certification, training, higher education, and government executive publications and facility management organizations

Facility management reference materials

Competency-Based Program

Recognizing that the NPS uses the Office of Personnel Management competency approach to career fields and disciplines, an intensive study of competencies for facility managers in both the public and private sectors was undertaken. The resulting competency analysis identified the following parent competencies for NPS facility managers.

- Asset Management
- Business Management
- Resource Protection
- Operations and Maintenance
- Supervision and Leadership
- Project Management

Program Overview

NPS Park Facility Management Division, in partnership with the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at Indiana University, has designed a yearlong course of study. It consists of three residential classes, more than 500 hours of distributed education and training, and various developmental assignments. This has resulted in the award of a joint certificate in facility management from the NPS and IU. This partnership includes continuing education units and is anticipated to include the approval of college credits for Facility Manager Leaders Program participants.
in Facility Management

Facility management project at Minuteman Missile

Program Mission and Philosophy
The mission of the Facility Manager Leaders Program is to develop and strengthen the knowledge and competencies of select NPS employees in facility management and to further their development as leaders through a yearlong education and training course. The FMLP is focused on "deep learning," which promotes critical analysis of ideas in order to produce a greater understanding and long-term retention of concepts. This leads to a greater capacity in the FMLP students to analyze new and changing situations or scenarios, and to problem-solve by applying concepts using data, observations and principles relevant to the issue.

Leadership Skill Development
The FMLP uses the benchmark competencies adopted by the NPS Learning and Development vision for leadership development. The FMLP employs different activities in and outside the classroom to provide training in leadership, supervision and management including:
- NPS supervision manuals
- Guest lectures by NPS leaders
- Scenario analysis

Using these methods and best practices from leading leadership programs, the FMLP students gain an understanding of the science of leadership. Development assignments provide a positive and relatively risk-free atmosphere for the students to practice the art of leadership.

On assignment during a facility management training course

Facility Operations Specialist John Black, Minuteman Missile

Accessing the Program
The FMLP is posted in DOI Learn with an application period from Oct. 1 to mid-January each year. Course work begins in May and concludes the following April. The application rating criteria's goal is to reach a target audience of first-line supervisors and new chiefs of maintenance. If a candidate is selected, the costs are covered by the Washington Office or the region. The WASO Park Facility Management Division supports up to eight candidates' travel and per diem costs, with the regional offices supporting at least one additional candidate per region. Educational standards for the FMLP are rigorous and meet the International Association of Continuing Education and Training requirements for continuing education units. They also meet minimum standards for supervisory credit as it relates to federal government requirements for annual supervisor refresher training.

In addition to the students' benefit, there is a companion course, FMLP Mentors Program—Supervision Practices in Facility Management. Through this course a cadre of mentors provides direction and encouragement to the students. The mentors meet minimum standards for supervisory credit as it relates to federal government requirements for annual supervisor refresher training.

Elizabeth Dodson is training manager of the Facility Management Program. Her work experience includes more than 18 years with the National Park Service, where she has worked in most disciplines. A majority of her experience has been at the field level in seven parks. Her responsibilities have included development and presentation of interpretive programs, surveys of exotic plant species, administrative tasks such as payroll, workers' compensation and labor relations, curatorial administration, and facility management tasks such as custodial, grounds, and general maintenance.
High school is supposed to equip people with the tools to succeed in college. College is supposed to prepare the student to succeed in the workplace — unless you major in philosophy. Although a variety of major courses of study can adequately prepare you for a career with the National Park Service, if I had it to do all over again, I would have sought a specialized degree at National Park Service University.

NPS University is the only bachelor’s degree program in the country sponsored by the NPS. The program specifically trains and equips college students with the skills needed to succeed in the NPS workplace. Whether you are seeking a career in resource management, park administration, law enforcement, interpretation or facility management, NPS University has the focused training that gets new NPS careers off on the right foot. The coursework is designed to teach students to all aspects of park operations. People who are the most effective in the workplace have a broad understanding of how other divisions work. This is critical for working together in a park. Therefore, all students are expected to understand how other divisions work. To accomplish this, all students the first quarter are required to take the NPS history and mission course, which places the national parks and the NPS into historical perspective and outlines the evolution of the Service and conservation practices.

Students also take a course that explains the basics of park administration, including budget formulation and tracking, human resource management, purchasing and contracting, and information technology. Students receive hands-on training in the use of various government-mandated software programs. Students learn about natural and cultural resource law and enforcement in a class about the basics of law enforcement.

In the second quarter, students study the fundamentals of interpretation and learn how to connect visitors with resource meanings. They gain exposure to facility management techniques and funding sources in an introduction to facilities management. Experts in respective fields teach all courses. The curriculum includes a comprehensive overview of NPS policies, requirements and software systems, and practical exercises and case studies such as the legendary “Year-End Budget Closeout,” “PMIS Comprehensive Call Deadline” and “GPRA Reporting” simulations.

In the third quarter of year one and throughout the second year, students begin to specialize. Students focusing in law enforcement attend the law enforcement ranger academy to earn their seasonal law enforcement certificate. Students in park administration begin to dig deeper into federal government administrative requirements and computer programs. Interpreters take classes to develop their skills in a variety of interpretive topics and support functions. Maintenance students begin to practice their project management and planning skills. Resource management students begin to develop their compliance and resource management skills.

Since NPS University is located adjacent to a major state university, students in all subject areas are encouraged to take courses from university professors who are experts in their respective fields. Resource management, law enforcement and interpretation students are encouraged to take advanced-level ecology, wildlife biology and anthropology courses to strengthen their resource knowledge. Administration students are welcomed into business school classes, and maintenance students often take engineering and architecture coursework. Students not only are cutting their NPS teeth, they are gaining significant knowledge of the latest research in their respective fields.

NPS University also provides on-the-job training opportunities. During the summer months when class is not in session, students are sent to work in parks at jobs that develop their skills. Students are hired under the authority of the Student Career Experience Program. Parks provide these students with developmental assignments that expose them to real-world park issues and practices. Park project assignments often become senior thesis projects, the results benefiting both the student and the park.

As students at NPS University graduate, under the auspices of the SCEP program, they have three months of noncompetitive appointment eligibility during which they may be hired into a permanent NPS position, effectively placing highly qualified future NPS leaders into vacant positions.

So, where is this NPS University located? Sadly, it only exists in the above paragraphs. With time, directed effort and broad support from the Service, perhaps it could one day exist adjacent to a large college or university campus near a cluster of NPS units. Such a program could prove to be the single greatest recruiting tool available to the Service.

How often does the opportunity arise to fill a vacant position with a young person who is not only competent and driven but also fully trained? How many opportunities exist for a seasoned NPS veteran to spend two years teaching and mentoring new employees from a career’s worth of experiences?

The NPS University would ensure that all of the collected knowledge and experience in the NPS isn’t lost with retirements. Instead, it is passed on to the next generation of NPS leaders through an intensive, rigorous program that goes many steps beyond the three weeks of introductory training currently required of new hires. As the NPS seeks to build lifelong park advocates starting in elementary school (continued on next page)
Interpretation
Enhanced Interpretive Techniques and Opportunities — More than ever before interpreters are in a great position to take advantage of possibilities in progressive interpretive development. Our individual styles and techniques thrive within the professional tenets of interpretation. I've come to think of this time in interpretive history as the Model T stage.

While Model T cars may seem antiquated today, at the time they debuted they were a profound revolution and revelation in transportation and personal freedom. While more sophisticated today, the car's foundation has not changed since the Model T. Now that the interpretive profession is established, we are set for similar progress in the years to come with our metaphorical four wheels, vehicle frame and motor.

The Model T was an effective conveyance. It was simple, utilitarian and affordable. Many interpreters seem to take that same approach when creating programs. Simple, practical and easy-to-develop programs are everywhere. Yet, if you put yourself in the shoes of a car buyer, would you choose a Model T over other cars available today? You probably would want something a bit more sophisticated. Model T's were all the same — seats, wheels, average propulsion, black paint. Want some options? Nope. The Model T got people from point A to B, but without flair or individuality. So I ask: are you providing Model T programs? If you supervise interpreters, are you encouraging innovation in programming? Do your interpreters know enough about their craft to intentionally innovate? Are they given the time to do this?

When interpretive certifiers review products, we first document the tangible and intangible meanings found in the program.

NPS University
(continued from previous page)

and continuing through high school, an NPS University has the potential to fill an important training and recruitment niche that could help today's young stewards become tomorrow's rangers.

Rick Kendall works in the Washington office of the National Park Service. He has worked previously at Death Valley, the USS Arizona Memorial and Lake Roosevelt in a variety of interpretation and education positions. He is a life member of ANPR.

After that it's time to get opportunities. What opportunities did the interpreter intentionally use to connect audience members with resource meanings? Opportunities start with techniques. A small sampling of techniques include activities, games, irony, paradox, living history, word play or photographs. The best single list of techniques I've seen described comes from Peggy Ann Scherbaum's book, *Handles*, published by Eastern National. It's a must-have in any interpreter's library.

Looking back on the programs I've created, supervised and evaluated, I find that interpreters aren't always stretching to use the techniques available to them. I can't tell you the number of times I've seen interpreters use either the *description or explanation* (D or E) technique as their weapon of choice when they present tangible and intangible meanings. Why do we do this when there are so many other techniques available? We rely on D or E too much.

Just as interpreters seem to use D or E as a crutch, there is another Model T-style program mechanism we've worn down to the nub. What often goes hand in hand with D or E is intellectual understanding. I suspect Ds or Es lend themselves to intellectual connections over emotional ones. All of us have seen or used the formulaic *Describe or Explain* so visitors *Understand* (D or E = U).

Of course, any program needs some emotional connection, so interpreters create an intellectual D or E = U program and then attach one or two emotional components to the program to pass the IDP threshold. It's simple and effective, but not particularly glamorous or progressive. It limits the richness that we can provide to the public. Understanding is just one way to connect to the resource. For example, other intellectual connections include awareness, discernment, reasoning or wisdom. Emotional connections include anguish, bewilderment, gratitude, terror, sympathy and tranquility. With so much to work with why would anyone stick with D or E = U?

I recommend that interpreters assess their programs, write an outline articulating the techniques used to connect visitors to the relevant idea, then decide if those techniques are the best ways to achieve program objectives. If the program relies mostly on D or E to accomplish U, it is time to innovate. Visitors have been exposed to and by now are bored with the D or E = U approach to information sharing. It's how we were taught at school, and I think we as a society have developed a resistance to this technique. Less common methods will make your program more effective because of the surprise factor.

Unanticipated techniques cut through the visitor experience of perfunctory absorption of information. Using diverse techniques will ensure the vitality of the profession and the relevance of national parks. We should strive to transport visitors not from place to place in a basic way, but take them on a journey to places in their hearts and minds in ways D or E = U can't.

Jeff Axel is transferring to Big Bend this fall. As always, he is available for comments or questions at iceagecaver@yahoo.com.

Ranger Audie Critchley, Obed Wild and Scenic River, powers through Class IV Rions Eddy Rapids while patrolling on the Big South Fork Gorge.

Protection
Patrolling in the Extreme — We all know that ranger work often means police work. We also know that it sometimes means so much more, and that even the police work we do frequently carries with it a flavor all its own.

For so many police officers, day-to-day patrol typically means covering a beat — district or precinct — via patrol car. Some of the lucky ones get to ride horses, drive patrol boats or fly in helicopters. If they're really lucky, they get to do it in some pretty cool places.

Rangers, though, are the true lucky ones. We are charged with patrolling some of the wildest, most remote, most exquisite landscapes — and harshest environments — on earth. To do so, we sometimes have to possess a specialized skill set that allows us to traverse such country successfully and safely.

Whether on the vertical big walls of Yosemite and Zion, the violent whitewater of the New and Gauley Rivers, the ocean swells of Assateague and Padre, or the snowy peaks of Rainier and Denali, park rangers travel those parts with fervor and courage.

Our reasons are manifold, visitor protection being paramount among them. As long as private citizens choose to enter the realm of
Advocacy for the environment in the National Park System
ANPR submitted six pages of comments in opposition to a proposed regulation that would allow loaded, concealed carry firearms inside units of the National Park System. Our comments are centered on the historical purpose of the system as strict sanctuaries for wildlife except where otherwise specifically directed by Congress. In many units of the system wildlife is a central feature of environmental health and a large component of visitor enjoyment. Advocating for regulations that protect park resources is among ANPR's top priorities.

Planning for Ranger Rendezvous in Santa Fe (Dec. 10-14)

The Rendezvous preregistration page and a working agenda are on our website: www.anpr.org/santafe-rr.htm. Forty-eight percent of the room block was reserved by early August. We encourage you to make hotel reservations soon at www.lafondasanta.com/mile-mail-group.html or by calling 1-800-523-5002. If we get to 85 percent the hotel will release more rooms for our use. Confirmed speakers include Rep. Raul M. Grijalva, D-Ariz., chair of the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands (subject to change for U.S. House of Representatives business); and Stewart Udall, former secretary of the Interior (1961-69).

Training sessions planned during Rendezvous

We have scheduled two training courses to run in conjunction with Ranger Rendezvous — Situational Leadership and Introduction to Resource Stewardship. If either of these courses interests you we encourage you to register now. The sessions are in response to what surveyed NPS employees told us may encourage them to join NPS employee support organizations like ANPR. (See pages 1 and 20 for more details.)

Board of Directors vote

The ANPR Board of Directors voted 10-0 to increase registration fees by $15 for all categories of attendees at the Rendezvous.

ANPR Reports

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.

Matt Graves
Richard Zahm
Jan Kirwan
Rick Gale
Meg Weesner
Pat Grediagin
Matthew Bolin
Jay Wells
Wendy Swee
Eric Pelletier
Carol Hegeman
Jim & Vicki Webster
Jordan Raphael
Heather Honnold
Cheryl Evans
Laurene Brady
Amie Ten Brink
Anne Finney
Dick Martin

ANPR Road Map for My Heirs

This ANPR-produced "Road Map" can assist family or friends in handling details when a spouse or loved one dies.

A notebook has fill-in-the blank forms about:
- your desires about final arrangements
- civil service, military & Social Security details
- insurance facts, bank accounts and more
- synopsis of life, obituary & family history
- list of disposition of personal items
- anatomical gift wishes
- examples of durable power of attorney

$10 per book, plus $4 for shipping and handling.
U.S. currency only.

Make check payable to ANPR.
Send to: Frank Retts, 1326 Catalpa Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Retirement

A Family Affair — The key to many successful marriages is a division of labor. Often one spouse assumes the role of the financially knowledgeable partner, responsible for investments, bill paying and recordkeeping. More often than not, especially among couples 55 and over, it's the husband who manages the family finances.

That isn't the way it works in my household. My wife, Kathy, handles the bill paying and recordkeeping. However, we make the investment decisions together. For some time now we have used Fidelity as the storehouse for our investments, and we use their brokerage to buy and sell, although on a limited basis. We have found them to be the easiest to talk to, and they have an office in Broomfield, Colorado, within an easy driving distance of our home.

Occasionally they invite their customers to the office for talks on the status of the current market and other topics. Because we are good customers, we are charged only $8 per trade. We also get periodic printouts of our investments and can use the Fidelity website to get a printout at any time. So we both are up to speed on our financial affairs most of the time.

Various companies, such as Vanguard, T. Rowe Price and others, are equally helpful. In the case of one spouse doing everything by his or herself, it is a disservice if that person doesn't explain the kinds of investments they have, the intricacies of retirement plans, and when and how bills are paid and income checks are due to arrive. A couple's carefully constructed plan could unravel if the financially astute spouse is not prepared to take over. Financial planners and estate-planning lawyers can share scenarios involving financial ignorance. For instance, when a husband retired he took a higher monthly pension payment that ended at his death five years later. If he had taken a lower payout, his wife would have been covered for life. Preparing an information binder may be the greatest gift you could leave your spouse.

This is a good time to suggest you get a copy of ANPR's Road Map for My Heirs and fill it out together with your spouse or family members (see ad on this page). Financial planners also recommend dividing the information into several categories. Here are suggestions:

Assets: This category covers all investment amounts, owners and locations, such as banks and brokerage firms. Information on real estate holdings, their worth and the beneficiaries fall into this category. Also include a schedule of
payments from annuities and passwords to web-based accounts.

**Liabilities:** List all debts, such as mortgage and car loans. The list could include the start date, the term of the loan, the interest rate, the size of monthly payments and when they are due, how the payment is made and the balance.

**Insurance:** List all policies, including medical, life, homeowners and disability. Include beneficiaries, premiums and their due dates.

**Estate Plan:** This includes the location of wills, trusts, powers of attorney and advanced medical directive, along with contact information for the estate lawyer, executors and trustees.

**Other relevant information:** Note the location of the safe-deposit box and keys, and the contact information for any advisers. Include Social Security statements, tax returns, birth certificates and a description of the pension benefits. Record any monthly income. List the monthly bills and whether they are paid automatically, online or by check.

This list is just a starting point. Sit down with your spouse and discuss what he or she needs to know. For example, the spouse should know how to go about claiming federal spousal death benefits, insurance and Social Security continuance. Discuss the calendar of important financial dates, such as providing tax information to an account in February, filing estimated taxes by the quarterly due dates, and taking the minimum-required distribution from an IRA if you are over age 70.5 by Dec. 31.

The nonfinancial spouse should practice paying bills alone for a few months and reviewing statements from brokerage houses. Consider also involving your grown children so that there is family backup for questions.

If appropriate, name a person in your brokerage firm or your financial planner in your will or trust to help in the continuation of your investments.

We advise everyone, married or single, to have revocable living trusts. The word “revocable” means the trust can be changed, added to or torn up. The word “living” means you do not have to die for it to go into effect. If something happens and you become incapacitated, through your trust you have named a trustee or trustees to handle your finances, health and well-being without a court decree. Beneficiaries are also named in your trust who, without probate court, receive the money, home and whatever else you have mentioned in your trust.

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**Mentoring Program**

*Passing of a legendary mentor — Retired Glacier ranger Bob Frauson passed away June 20, 2008, and we lost one of the best mentors we ever had. Bob was the Hudson Bay district ranger for 20 years, and during that time he helped hundreds of seasonal and permanent rangers develop into excellent rangers. He had outstanding skills in climbing, search and rescue, wilderness travel and survival, EMS, fire, wildlife management, skiing and other field abilities. He also was a consummate instructor who had humility, patience and humor in quantities not found in most of us. He and his wife, Ann, went far beyond the call of duty to welcome all newcomers, make them feel at home in a very isolated assignment and show them the “ropes” to survive and thrive on the east side of Glacier and in the NPS. We owe Bob and Ann a debt of gratitude for developing rangers like Oakley Blair, Ben Ladd, Terry Pentilla, Jerry Ryder, Willie Colony, Roger Shewmake, Larry Williams, Tom Tsholl, Greg Moss, Roger Moder, Doug Erskine, Dick Mattson, Bob Wood and many others.

Bob and Ann mentored my wife, Nadine, and me in 1972. We had the honor of attending his celebration of life on July 19. More than 200 friends of Bob and Ann were there to wish him God’s speed as he heads down the trail one more time.

If you want to learn more about ANPR’s mentoring program, please contact me at flamingo12az@aim.com.

— Bill Pierce

**IRF Update**

*World Commission on Protected Areas — The WCPA, as one of seven commissions of the IUCN, is meeting in Barcelona, Spain, in late September. I will attend this conference along with Deanne Adams, acting president of the International Ranger Federation. The purpose is to continue to present the issues of rangers to this important world body, and to remind IUCN and WCPA members of the importance of ranger field work in the protection of park areas worldwide. I will give a full report of these proceedings in the next Ranger.*

*— The Bolivian Ranger Association (ABOLAC) recently held its 13th anniversary and mentoring program, please contact me at flamingo12az@aim.com.*

*— Retired

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Training courses set for Rendezvous XXXI
 YOU ASKED FOR IT, YOU GOT IT!

Situational Leadership • Dec. 10-11

If you are having difficulty successfully competing for work leader or supervisory jobs because you don't have experience or training in supervision, then understanding Situational Leadership is a good place to start building your résumé.

Developed and distributed by the Ken Blanchard Companies, Situational Leadership provides leaders with a model and the tools for creating open communication and developing self-reliance in those they manage. It is designed to increase the frequency and quality of conversations about performance and development. As a result, competence is developed, commitment is gained and talented individuals are retained. The foundation lies in teaching leaders to diagnose the needs of an individual or a team and then use the appropriate leadership style to respond to the needs of the person and the situation.

The National Park Service has used the Situational Leadership course since the mid-1980s as a training standard in preparing supervisors and managers for the responsibility of leading people. The system is readily mastered and highly adaptable to everyday work situations that leaders face. Instructor Art Eck teaches from first-hand experience as a park supervisor and manager of more than 24 years. He has been a certified NPS Situational Leadership instructor since 1986, and has shared this training with more than 3,000 national and state park employees.

The course is scheduled for Dec. 10-11 in Santa Fe; the $235 tuition includes full registration for the Ranger Rendezvous. For first-time Rendezvous attendees, registration includes a one-year ANPR membership. Go to www.anpr.org to register.

Introduction to Resource Stewardship • Dec. 10-12

The Horace Albright Training Center and ANPR will host the first course of the Resource Stewardship and Protection curriculum, Introduction to Resource Stewardship, Dec. 10-12 in Santa Fe.

This 24-hour course focuses participants on the natural and cultural resource stewardship mission of the NPS. Participants will develop an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of employees in carrying out the agency's fundamental purpose. NPS history, laws, management policies, principles and practices are covered through lectures, group discussions, case studies and field exercises.

This course can benefit those in all disciplines, job classifications, grades and lengths of service, including park partners. If you hope to become a career NPS employee, participation may help you be more competitive. Current career employees can gain a better understanding of the NPS mission, and this can impact career satisfaction and advancement.

Participants will learn how interdisciplin ary approaches to resource protection and stewardship benefit the NPS; be able to define how each of their jobs contributes to resource stewardship; and display a broader appreciation of the range of resources associated with our nation's heritage.

Participants also will gain a better understanding of how working beyond park boundaries promotes resource stewardship.

The three-day class will run concurrently with the Rendezvous. A minimum of 24 participants are needed; the tuition cost hasn't been determined yet. NPS participants will receive official credit on their training transcripts.

More information on how to apply for the course and about the Resource Stewardship and Protection Curriculum courses and can be found on a link at the ANPR website or at www.nps.gov/training/hrshome.htm.

Questions can be e-mailed to jeri_hall@nps.gov.

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CANON PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE PARKS PHOTO CONTEST

Turn nature's wonders into inspirational photos and you could WIN

a grand prize trip for two to your favorite National or State Park along with...

* A Canon EOS 5D EF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM Kit
* A PIXMA Pro9500 Photo Printer

Share a piece of the world's natural beauty by submitting your favorite inspirational park photo and you could win an exciting trip for two to a National or State park, renowned Canon camera gear, and the opportunity to have your photo featured in future Canon advertising endeavors like previous contest winners showcased here.

For Details and Official Rules visit www.usa.canon.com/parks

April 22 to September 30, 2008

Canon is committed to building a better world through our environmental conservation efforts. To learn more about how we protect and preserve our precious natural resources, visit us online at www.usa.canon.com/parks.

From first-hand experience as a park supervisor and manager of more than 24 years. He has been a certified NPS Situational Leadership instructor since 1986, and has shared this training with more than 3,000 national and state park employees.

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Questions can be e-mailed to jeri_hall@nps.gov.
Rendezvous XXXI will kick off Dec. 10 at the historic La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with an evening reception.

Prior to that, the ANPR Board of Directors meets all day Wednesday, Dec. 10, and the meeting is open to anyone. The initial Rendezvous session will begin Thursday, Dec. 11, and meetings and workshops will run until Sunday afternoon, Dec. 14.

A draft program agenda now is posted on ANPR’s website, www.anpr.org. Go to the Rendezvous link periodically for updates and to register for the gathering.

In addition, don’t forget to make a hotel reservation while rooms are still available. 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.

Make reservations by calling the La Fonda 1-800-523-5002, option #1. Deposits are fully refundable as long as you cancel at least 48 hours before the first night’s reservation. To fax your reservation dial 505-954-3599. To make reservations online go to www.lafondasantafe.com/daily-mail-group.html. Please ensure that you identify yourself as part of ANPR to reserve the $89 nightly rate.

Transportation and Travel: Most major airlines serve Albuquerque International Airport about 58 miles southwest of Santa Fe. Limited air service also is available to Santa Fe Municipal Airport. Hotel parking currently is $10 a day, but is subject to increase.

Newcomers Welcome: A special continental breakfast with the board will be held for “newcomers,” those attending their first Rendezvous, on Friday morning, Dec. 12.

Raffle Prizes and Auction Items: Daily raffles and silent auctions are scheduled, so be sure to bring items to donate. If you can’t attend the Rendezvous you may mail raffle items to Rick Smith, 2 Roadrunner Trail, Placitas, NM 87043; rsmith0921@earthlink.net. Please include ANPR Ranger Rendezvous on your mailing label.

Trade show and Receptions: Exhibitors are planning to display products, equipment and services of interest to parks employees. The exhibit hall will open Thursday morning, Dec. 11, and close after the morning break on Friday, Dec. 12. A reception hosted by VF Solutions is planned on Thursday evening. If you know of a potential exhibitor, please contact Warren Bielenberg, web9272@msn.com or 865-681-7884, or Rick Jones at ictstructor57@yahoo.com.

Hospitality: The hotel will provide a suite, open each evening, to serve as our hospitality room. ANPR will provide refreshments.

Friday and Saturday evening: Organizers are looking at options. Sign-ups and any additional fees will be collected during registration on a first-come, first-served basis. Otherwise, these evenings will provide free time for attendees to enjoy the shopping and sites of the Santa Fe holiday season.

Miscellaneous: Rendezvous T-shirts and sweatshirts with the official Rendezvous logo are available now for pre-ordering. Check the website for ordering instructions.

Rendezvous Scholarships

Last call to apply for a scholarship to the upcoming Ranger Rendezvous in Santa Fe. If you’ve never been to the gathering, now is your chance to get your way paid. The William Supernau Rendezvous Scholarship Fund has money available to fund several people.

You must be either an ANPR member or an NPS employee, never have attended a Rendezvous, and able to stay for the entire conference (Dec. 10-14). The scholarship will pay for registration fees, lodging and up to $500 for transportation to and from the Rendezvous.

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

ANPR’s Annual Photography Contest

ANPR members once again are encouraged to enter their best park-related photos in the annual photography contest at the Rendezvous. As in previous years all entries will be posted at the Rendezvous, and conference attendees will have the opportunity to view them and vote for their favorites. Prizes donated for the winning photos to date include Leki Super Makalu hiking poles and a photon micro light, both courtesy of the American Park Network.

Contest images traditionally have been taken inside a unit of the National Park System or a park in another country, but this is not a submission requirement. Submissions should have some connection to parks, natural resources, cultural resources and/or ANPR.

Tony Bonanno, an ANPR life member and a retired regional chief ranger, will organize and run the contest. He also is a professional photographer in Santa Fe (Tony Bonanno Photography). If you’re coming to the Rendezvous, bring your photos with you and submit them to Tony in person. If you can’t make it to the Rendezvous, mail your photos to Tony to arrive no later than Dec. 10: 7 Avenida Vista Grande, #330, Santa Fe, NM 87505; ranger@bonanno.net.
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 foundedr@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. Go to Member Services.

Lance Baker is serving as acting chief of the national Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Services Division in WASO. She has 20 years of NPS experience and has been the deputy division chief of LESES for the past year and a half. Her past job assignments have included deputy chief ranger, subdistrict ranger, and special agent in Yellowstone, subdistrict ranger for a year and a half. Her past job assignments have included deputy chief ranger, subdistrict ranger, and special agent in Yellowstone, subdistrict ranger in Everglades and supervisory ranger in Yosemite. As the acting division chief she oversees national law enforcement policy and operations, security and intelligence, emergency services, investigative services and other national programs.

Lisa Eckert (seasonal 1979-86 YELL, EVER, COLM, HALE; permanent SHEN 87-88, GRCA 88-89, COLM 90-92, GWMP 92-94, DENA 94-98, KNRI 99-02, DETO 02-05, GATE 05-08) returns to Grand Canyon exactly 20 years later in her new job as superintendent of the Horace Albright Training Center. She is thrilled to be a part of the Learning and Development Team in WASO and to be able to meet and greet all new employees to the National Park Service. Address: P.O. Box 1456, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

Eric Leonard (FOLS, FOSM, ARPO, BIBE) has moved to Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Previously he was at Big Bend. After four years in the desert, his family is enjoying green grass and water again! Address/phone: Route 1, Box 222A, Wynnewood, OK 73098-6531; eleonard@itlnet.net

Kevin Moses is the district ranger at Buffalo National River in the Lower Buffalo District. Previously he was a ranger at Big South Fork. Address: 13980 Highway 14 South, Yellville, AR 72687.

Liam Strain and wife Mary are the proud parents of Colm Hugh Strain who weighed in at 7 pounds, 15 ounces, on April 29, about two weeks early. All are doing well, and Mary is taking a couple of months leave from her career, though she sneaked in phone calls, e-mails and an occasional business trip (with Grammy in tow) this past summer. Big brother Liam is remarkably happy with his new sibling, protective and sometimes a little too demonstrative in his affection. The family moved to different park quarters in April: 107A Mont Sec Ave., Fort Wadsworth, NY 10305-5004; lianstrain@yahoo.com

Blanca Alvarez Stransky is the new superintendent at Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial. Previously she was superintendent at Agate Fossil Beds. She began her NPS career in 1984 as a seasonal park ranger at Grand Canyon. She then served as a park ranger, primarily focusing on public affairs, at the USS Arizona Memorial. Other assignments have included supervisory park ranger at Women's Rights, chief of arts and education at Chantilz and chief of interpretation at Denali.

Welcome to the ANPR family!

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

- Emma Andrews.................. Annapolis, MD
- Jeremy Anhalt..................... Longmire, WA
- Sarah Arpin......................... Mesa Verde, CO
- Mindy Bogue....................... Watford City, ND
- Matthew Bolin...................... Annapolis, MD
- Andrew Brady....................... Lithicum, MD
- Jonathan Brotzman................. Johnson City, TX
- Sheryl Buchanan.................... Dallas, TX
- Patrick Buller...................... Marblemount, WA
- Alexandra Bullis................... Eugene, OR
- Melissa Cobern..................... Rangely, CO
- Colin Cook......................... Southwest Harbor, ME
- Michael Donnachie............... Westfield, MA
- Marianne Duvendack.............. Swanton, OH
- Dianne Ellis-Smith............... Sequoia NP, CA
- Brian Ettling....................... Crater Lake, OR
- Kevin Evans....................... Livingston, TX
- Jim & Leslie Faggard............ Red Bluff, CA
- Anne Finney....................... New Orleans, LA
- William Finney.................... River Ridge, LA
- Shane Frazier...................... Spring Lake, MI
- Ashley Green...................... Washington, DC
- Carolyn Hackebart............... Page, AZ
- David Hanna....................... York, SC
- Kevin Hansen...................... Las Cruces, NM
- Kathy Hanson...................... Jammsville, MD
- Karin Harmon...................... Park City, UT
- Jamie Hart......................... St. Mary, MT
- Wesley Heyser...................... Gettysburg, PA
- Drew Hughes....................... Cheyenne, OK
- Matthew Jatovsky............... San Francisco, CA
- Sarah Jensen...................... Corbett, OR
- Lauren Jones....................... Crater Lake, OR
- Alex Kidwell...................... Thumard, MD
- Patrick & Tina Krause.......... Yellowstone, WY
- Joel Lipscomb..................... Zeublon, NC
- Steven McAllister............... Chesterton, IN
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- Jim Milestone..................... Whiskeytown, CA
- Sarah Moddel...................... Quincy, MA
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- Cindy Orlando..................... Naalehu, HI
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- Dawn Sierer....................... Biggerville, PA
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- Sally Webster..................... Moab, UT
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- Erik Wiita......................... Longmire, WA
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Stock ANPR's popular booklet in your park bookstores—and refer visitors and prospective park employees to this informative publication. Go to www.anpr.org/publications.htm for single copies or bulk ordering details.

Here are the newest members of the Association of National Park Rangers:
ANPR's new fundraising efforts

ANPR has signed up for a few fundraising programs — and you can help. Don't worry, it's easy!

If you already shop online, this is an appealing offer. Just link to Amazon, for instance, through ANPR's home page (www.anpr.org) and click on the link at the bottom to begin shopping for books, CDs, DVDs and more. A portion of every purchase goes to ANPR through Amazon's Associates Program. Remember, you must link through ANPR's website for our organization to get credit for your purchase (approximately 4 percent).

Also on ANPR's home page is an iGive link. This program asks you to sign up as a member (it's free, no obligation). You then designate ANPR as the beneficiary of your shopping efforts. When you shop at the more than 680 brand-name online retailers, a percentage automatically goes to ANPR. Many merchants typically donate 2 to 5 percent of the purchase to a designated group, but some donate as high as 26 percent. In these financially challenging times, every bit of support to ANPR is greatly appreciated.

A third partnership program is through Expedia, the No. 1 online U.S. and Canadian travel agency. We have joined as an Affiliate Partner, and if you link to Expedia through ANPR's website, a portion of your travel purchases (2 - 5.5 percent) will go to ANPR. What could be easier? This shows promise of paying good dividends to ANPR.

Please take a look at the ANPR website, www.anpr.org, and begin a renewed support of ANPR now! Thanks for your continued help to further the mission of ANPR — the association for all National Park Service employees and partners.

Send your e-mail address

LIFE MEMBERS, we need your e-mail addresses for the ANPR database. In December ANPR again will hold electronic elections for new board members, but we can only send an electronic ballot if we have your e-mail on record.

Please help us save postage and printing costs. Send your e-mail address to fordellis@aol.com and label your subject line “ANPR elections.” While we have e-mails for nearly all annual members, we only have e-mails for about half of the 500 life members. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

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Former Director Hartzog leaves legacy

Former NPS Director George B. Hartzog, who headed the National Park Service from January 1964 to December 1972, died June 27. He was 88.

Hartzog was born in Colleton County, South Carolina, the eldest of three children in an impoverished family. He was a Methodist minister by the age of 17. He left college after one year to support his family, but studied law on his own and was admitted to the South Carolina Bar in 1942.

Hartzog attained the rank of captain in World War II, then took a job as an attorney for the precursor to the Bureau of Land Management in 1945. Six months later he moved to the NPS. Under his watch the agency expanded quickly, adding 69 park properties. He prodded Congress to approve the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, which allowed 80 million acres of Alaskan land to be set aside for national parks, wildlife refuges and wilderness areas.

George Hartzog, right front, poses with five other NPS directors. In the back row is, left to right, Gary Everhardt, Mary Bomar, Jim Ridenour and Bob Stanton; front row, left, is Roger Kennedy.

He also made news in 1968 by appointing Grant Wright to head the U.S. Park Police, the first black man to head a major police force in the United States.

Hartzog had a private law practice after leaving the NPS. He was a longtime member of ANPR. He is survived by Helen, his wife of 60 years, and three children.

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Professional Ranger
(from page 17)

extreme environments, rangers will roam there, too.

We can't wait for the rescue call to initiate such patrols, either. We need to go now, before the May Day rings in, so that we'll know our walls, peaks and rivers in all their varied moods. An old river proverb states it well: "One cannot paddle the same river twice, for new waters are always pouring into it."

We make dangerous patrols, too, because they make us stronger.

Maybe another force that compels rangers to tread where the fainthearted won't is the simple knowledge that the public expects it of us. We are national park rangers, and with our job comes a weighty responsibility to carry on the traditions of excellence of rangers who entered the mountains, rivers, deserts and oceans before us.

Parks with extreme patrol operations must continue to advertise ranger positions with KSAs that require the specialized skill sets pertinent to that park's environment. We can't staff these parks with cops. We have to provide rangers — rangers who will climb, paddle, dive, cave and trek into the wild.

We can live up to this reputation so long as we continue to attract and recruit generations of skilled rangers who aren't afraid of the big bad wolf, or if they are, who are willing to accept their fear, embrace it and allow it to make them stronger.

— Kevin Moses, Buffalo National River

IRF Update
(from page 19)

signed the agreement with the IRF regarding the specifics of hosting the next World Ranger Congress. The date is now the first of November 2009. Two contractors have applied to organize and select the venue for the congress, one of which will be chosen shortly. To facilitate the organization, as in past congresses, the IRF loaned ABOLAC $5,000 USD (this is in addition to the $2,000 USD loaned to them from ANPR for website development). Registration information should be on the website before the end of this year. I will continue to provide updates on the congress in future issues.

Thin Green Line Foundation — The three-way agreement between the Thin Green Line Foundation, IUCN/WCPA and IRF will be signed in Barcelona this fall. The foundation, through last year's release of the ranger documentary film, "The Thin Green Line," and other activities, continues to raise money in support of families of rangers killed in the line of duty. Recent recognitions were presented in the Democratic Republic of Congo by filmmaker Sean Wilmore on behalf of the foundation and IRF. For a good report of this and other TGL activities, check out the recent TGL newsletter on the foundation website at www.thingreenline.org.

— Tony Sisto, International Affairs

Health insurance plan available to members

ANPR members qualify for health insurance through a special program from Aetna. The Aetna PPO Affordable Health Choices 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 download and information and enrollment forms. Alternatively, you may request paper copies from fordedit@aol.com or write to ANPR, 25958 Genesee Trail Road, PMB 222, Golden, CO 80401.

Missing Members

Please help us locate these members! Send information to fordedit@aol.com.

Chad Hunter...............Page, AZ
William Gibson...........Kerrville, TX
Shawn Ruefer.............Arlington, VA

Whether you’re at the bottom of the ladder or climbing to the top . . . you’re welcome to join ANPR’s mentoring program.

If you’re serious about advancing your career or have knowledge to impart to a younger employee, the first step is filling out an application as a protégé or a mentor. It’s easy — you will find the forms on ANPR’s website at www.anpr.org. Go to the link under Membership Services. It’s easy to sign up online — and could make a difference in your career.

For more information contact, ANPR’s mentoring coordinator, Bill Pierce, at flamingo12az@aol.com.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION — Association of National Park Rangers

Name(s) ______________________________________ 4-letter code of park / office where you work ___ ___ ___ ___
(Retiree=RETI, Former NPS Employee=XNPS, Student/Educator=EDUC, Park Supporter=PART)

Address ______________________________________ Home phone _____________________
City _______ State _______ Zip+4 _______ Personal e-mail address ________________________

ANPR will use e-mail as an occasional — but critical — communication tool. We will not share your information with any other organization. It is our policy not to conduct ANPR business via NPS e-mail or phone.

Type of Membership (check one)

NOTE: The annual membership renewal notification is each fall with an annual membership period of Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Membership for those who join Oct. 1 or after will last the entire next year.

Active Members
current & former NPS employees or volunteers

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<th>Joint</th>
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<td>Seasonal/Intern/Volunteer</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>$85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanent or Retiree</td>
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Associate Members
not an NPS employee or representative of another organization

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<tr>
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Life Members (lump sum payment)

ACTIVE (all NPS employees/retirees) ASSOCIATE (other than NPS employees)

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OR life payments made be made in three installments over a three-year period. Rates are $850 per year for individual or $1,025 for joint. If full payment isn't received by the third installment due date, the amount paid shall be applied at the current annual membership rates until exhausted. At that point the membership will be lapsed. Check here if you want to make payments in three installments ______.

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$35 (please gift only a new member other than yourself, one year only)

Name of person giving gift ___________________

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(two copies of each issue of Ranger sent quarterly) $100

It costs ANPR $45 a year to service a membership. If you are able to add an additional donation, please consider doing so. Thank you!

$10  $25  $50  $100  Other ______

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _______________

Membership dues in excess of $45 a year may be tax deductible. Consult your tax adviser.

Share your news with others!

Ranger will publish your job or family news in the All in the Family section.

Name __________________________

Past Parks — Use four-letter acronym/years at each park, field area, cluster (YELL 88-90, GRCA 91-94)

New Position (title and area) ____________________________________________

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Address/phone number (optional — provide if you want it listed in Ranger) ____________________________________________

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___ Mentoring
___ Other (list: ________________________)

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Return membership form and check payable to ANPR to:

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Send news to:
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