

The Signpost

September–October, 2017



2018 California Parks Training and Conference

Coming March 4 through Mar 8, 2018
At Tenaya Lodge, Fish Camp, CA



The Park Rangers Association of California's 2018 California Parks Training and Conference will be returning to the Tenaya Lodge, just outside the south entrance to Yosemite National Park. The conference will be held March 4 through March 8. Look for more information in the coming months. If you are interested in presenting at the conference in our Public Safety, Interpretation or Park Operations/Resource Management Tracks please contact me at matt@calranger.org and I will put you in touch with respective track chair.

For reservations follow the link or call the 800 number.

[Click Here to Make an Online Reservation](#)

Guests unable to use our online reservation system can make their reservation by calling (800) 635-5807, Option #1 and identify they are with the PRAC 2018 Conference, or using the group code 3199G4 to receive the group rate.



Under the Flat Hat

by Matt Cerkel

Recently I was having a conversation with a coworker, who works at my agency's headquarters, about park housing provided to some of our park rangers. He wanted to know if it was ever considered to provide housing to park stewards, who in exchange would take care of a given area. I was somewhat taken aback by the question and explained that the rangers living in park housing should be the stewards of the area or park they live in. That besides providing law enforcement and public safety services park rangers should also provide stewardship to their parks by picking up litter and removing graffiti, removing or monitoring for invasive species, keeping the trails clear, educating the visitors, knowing the trails, and having at least a basic understanding of the flora and fauna of their park. This raises a question; has the park ranger profession lost its stewardship role in the public's mind?

To at least a portion of the public it has. A few months ago, while I was on patrol, I came across a visitor at the side of the road looking at a plant. I asked what he was looking at and he turned to me and asked me if I knew what type of plant he was looking at. I looked at it closely and identified it as ceanothus. We then started talking native plants and I identified that type of manzanita that was nearby. He then stated, without sarcasm, "wow, a ranger who actually knows something!" Have we become so concerned about our law enforcement and public safety duties that we have forgotten our other roles?

I've always supported the park ranger's role in law enforcement and public safety. It's been a core duty of California park rangers since 1866, when Galen Clark was named the Guardian of the Yosemite Grant, but the park ranger profession has always been more than just law enforcement and public safety. If we lose track of that, we lose what makes us park rangers.

I just found a blog post by North Carolina State Parks called "Things to know about park rangers" <https://ncstateparks.wordpress.com/2017/08/11/things-to-know-about-park-rangers/> It explains what their park rangers do. It should be noted that they are armed peace officers. Here is a modified version of that post for California:

"What do park rangers really do? It's more than you think. Yes, they do get to wear a cool ranger hat and spend a lot of time outdoors. But what you may not know is it is a position held by highly-educated and trained individuals. Men and women who are passionate about their parks and are selfless in their quest to maintain and preserve the naturally wonderful spaces in California.

- Park rangers see, hear, smell and sense all manner of wildlife and the environment. They get to know the park up close and personal over extended periods of time. They teach people about and manage the natural resources with this knowledge and experience.
- Park rangers are trained in search and rescue and wildfire management as well as being sworn peace officers. They also perform park maintenance tasks such as restroom cleaning, lawn mowing, snow plowing, tractor driving, and boundary management.

Under the Flat Hat

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- Park rangers do regular hazard tree assessments. They locate trees that will potentially fall and then remove them safely. They are trained in chainsaw usage.
- Park rangers clean roadsides and pick up trash so the park stays clean. On busy weekends and holidays, they direct traffic and park cars.
- Park rangers go to local schools to present educational programs.
- Park rangers do not hibernate in the winter. They work on many important projects such as building and repairing trails and improving campsites and picnic areas when there are fewer people in the parks.
- Park rangers do get to take long walks in the woods and hike for miles. But usually, these journeys include bringing along hole diggers, paint cans, hammers, and saws to install and touch up directional signs, mend boardwalks and clear trails.
- Park rangers get involved with scientific research to assist in inventory of threatened and endangered species. They count bats, flowers, trees, fish and all types of naturally wonderful things.
- Park rangers do spend time inside too. They still must check email, write reports, and update databases along with planning events and programs.
- Park rangers are the first responders in a park for any emergency. They communicate with local fire, EMS, and police when there is an emergency in or near the park. Since many parks are more than 30 minutes from the closest town or hospital, many rangers are also trained Emergency Medical Technicians.
- Park rangers are always training to learn more and do more to protect the park resources and park visitors. This could mean attending workshops to learn about amphibians, classes to learn about DUI detection, or invasive species management seminars to learn how to manage invasive plant species.
- Park rangers are certified as Environmental Educators, Emergency Medical Technicians, Peace Officers, Wildland Firefighters, Pesticide Applicators, Wastewater Treatment Operators and many other things."

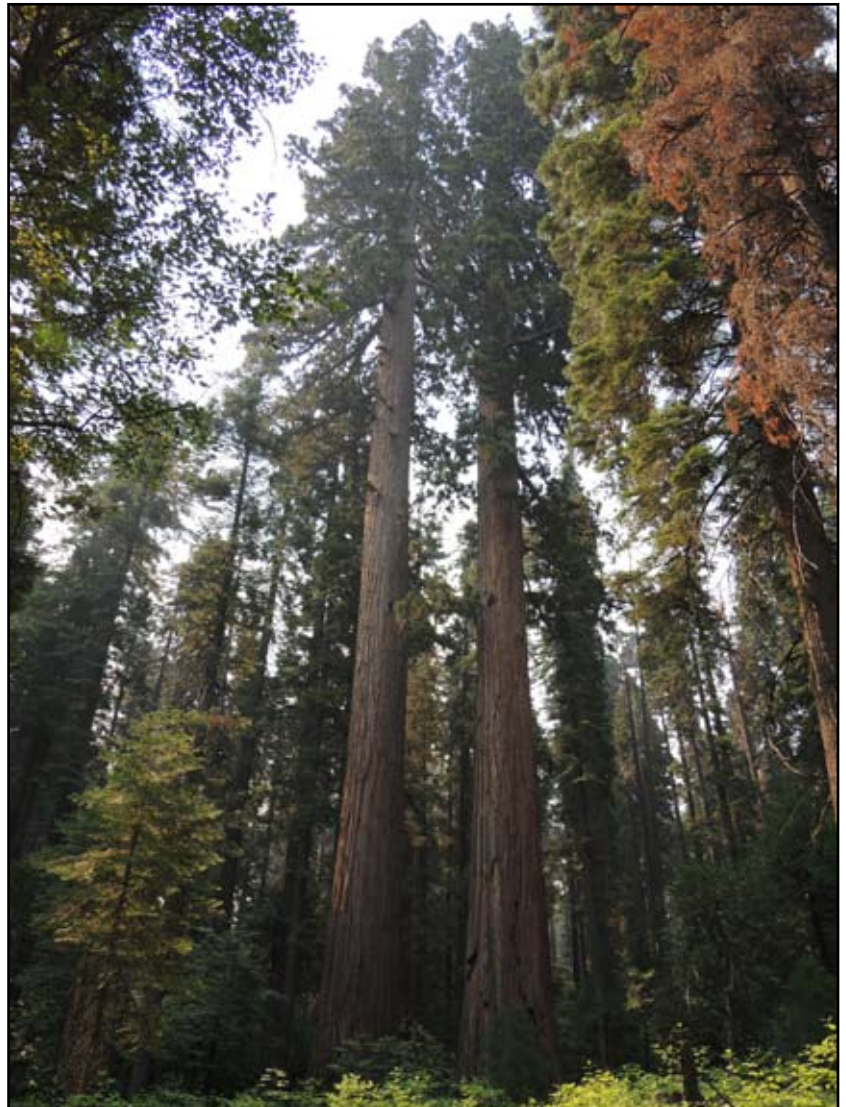
When I was at the State Park Leadership School earlier this year and met several North Carolina State Park Rangers. Getting to know some of them I came away impressed with them and their program. In my opinion North Carolina State Parks is getting it right with their park ranger program. Perhaps, we should take a lesson from them and embrace the multi-faceted role of the park ranger, or as one North Carolina park ranger described it the "multi-specialist" role of the park ranger. This multi-specialist approach to being a park ranger allows us to be professional public safety and professional stewards of our parks.

Smallest National Forest in California

by Jeff Ohlfs

photos by Mike Lynch, CSPRA President

Not many people are aware that the smallest national forest was once only a mere 379 acres and was a national forest within a national forest! On May 7, 1912, Congress authorized the acquisition of a large grove of old growth Sugar Pines called Calaveras Big Trees National Forest. The forest name still referred to the giant Sequoia and not the Sugar Pine. There are a few Sequoias in the grove (see photo). The national forest was administered by the Calaveras Ranger District of the Stanislaus National Forest and was adjacent to Calaveras Big Trees State Park. On October 17, 1990, to improve management, Congress authorized a land exchange with the State of California to include the national forest in Calaveras Big Trees State Park. So, the next time you are visiting Yosemite also head north to Calaveras Big Trees to see some spectacular Sequoias and the once smallest national forest. However, on my recent trip, I found I stumped the state park staff!



Park Partnerships

by Candi Hubert, Region 5 Director

Orange County public Libraries and OC Parks celebrated the opening of the new Library of the Canyons, formerly the Silverado Library.

Silverado nearly a decade after the Orange Unified School District shut down Silverado Elementary School, residents in the canyons can rest assured that the site will continue to provide education for the community.

OC Parks and OC Public Libraries shared a project cost of \$3.6 million to restore the old elementary school into a new library with parks having two multipurpose rooms for workshops, classes, meetings and special events for both departments. The project took more than two years to complete. The new location will provide easier access to more residents and coincides well with a growing population of young children in the community. The site also offers connections to trail systems with will be enjoyed by park visitors.

Formerly known as the Silverado Library, the newly opened library of the canyons hosted a grand celebration this last month. Representatives from the Board of Supervisors, OC public libraries, OC parks, the Inter-Canyon League and the Silverado Modjeska Recreation & Park District were on hand to participate in the library's ribbon cutting. The Orange County Bird of Prey Center, a local raptor rehabilitation organization also

added to the day's festivities.

First opened in 1930, in a log cabin it shared with the post office, the library has served as an important part of the community in its various locations through the past 87 years. In addition to the many traditional library services offered, the library has served as an emergency command Post during natural disasters such as the 1984 brush fire on Modjeska Grade, the 1987 Silverado fire, the 2007 Santiago fire and the 2010 mudslides.

The grand opening event celebrated the effort, dedication and cooperation of the community, OC Public Libraries and OC Parks that resulted in producing the new Library of the Canyons, which will provide outstanding library and park services now and for future generations of canyon residents.



Signpost eLibrary

I hope everyone is having a good summer. In my retirement, I have volunteered to scan all the *Signpost* issues. With David's help and my older issues, I can say we have most of them. However, I am missing a few. So, Smitty, Bill, Bill, Raleigh, Pam and others please check your old issues and see if you have any of these. I'll pay for the mailing both ways. This is the history of our Association. We want to preserve it!

Anything before 1986 (I have many but not sure what might be missing)

Jan-May 1986

May-June 1990

Nov-Dec 1990

Jan-Feb 1993

Sept-Oct 1996

Let me know, Jeff Ohlfs

deserttraveler2@roadrunner.com



In Memoriam of Robert Donohue

“Ranger Bob”

by Shane Romain

“ I look forward to going to work everyday! I have the best office in the world!” Those were the first words I heard come out of the mouth of the Ranger with the grey beard and warm smile. I was a student at California State University, Chico when Ranger Bob came and spoke in my Natural Resources Interpretation class. Ranger Bob’s excitement and love of the park ranger profession radiated from him. I wanted so bad to work with this guy and was lucky to do just that. Ranger Bob was my mentor for 2 years before at Bidwell Park before he retired after nearly 20 years as a Park Ranger for the City of Chico in 2009. Ranger Bob will be missed by so many. It is with a heavy heart I share his obituary with you.

Obituary for Robert Donohue

Bob Donohue

Bob was born on February 1, 1947 and passed away unexpectedly on July 21, 2017. He was raised in Auburn and graduated from Placer High School. Bob graduated from San Jose State University with a degree in parks management and was employed as a park ranger in Santa Clara County.

Bob moved to Chico in 1980. He was hired as the first park ranger in Bidwell Park in 1989 having retired after close to 20 years in that position. During his career as Bidwell Park’s beloved “Ranger Bob” he loved sharing the treasures that could be discovered in the park. He proudly served as president of the Park Rangers Association of California and was instrumental in training park rangers during his successful career. Bob was a kind-hearted man who was a friend to thousands of visitors of the park and served as Chico’s local ambassador of the community, and most of all, Bidwell Park. Ranger Bob loved his job and living in Chico and Durham for close to 40 years.

His dedication to the local communities of Chico and Durham was evident in his willingness

to serve on many boards including Durham Recreation & Parks District, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Bob was an avid golfer and a beloved Patrick Ranch Museum volunteer who never hesitated to lend a helping hand, even when museum events interfered with his tee times. He was a member of the Exchange Club of Durham and was serving as the Sierra Pacific District President. Bob was chair and in the process of planning the National Exchange Club Convention scheduled to take place in Reno, Nevada in 2018.

Bob is survived by his lovely wife of 20 years, Susan, son Bill and four grandsons; Brian (Jen), Nathan, Austyn and Devyn of Sacramento, his brother Jim of Auburn and sister-in-law Carole of Hilo and Sandra of Oahu.

Friends and colleagues are invited to attend a celebration of life in honor of Bob at 11:00 am on Saturday, August 26, 2017 at the Patrick Ranch Museum, 10381 Midway, Durham, CA. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations be made in Bob’s memory to Exchange Club of Durham, Patrick Ranch Museum or the National Exchange Club Foundation.

Another Famous Ranger!

by Jeff Ohls

Recently, Deb and I visited the Museum of Western Film History in Lone Pine, California. While watching one of the interpretive clips, I heard “Christopher Colt” was a park ranger before becoming an actor. I’d never heard of Colt so off to Internet Movie Database website I went. Colt was the lead character in a TV show called Colt .45 from 1957-1959. Colt was played by Wayde Preston (1929-1992), born William Erksine Strange. 1st Lt. Preston was a Korean War Veteran who became a park ranger at Grand Teton National Park following his military service.

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Submission deadlines ARE THE 15th of FEBRUARY, April, JUNE, AUGUST, OCTOBER, AND DECEMBER.

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