

RANGER

The Journal of the Association of National Park Rangers

Stewards for parks, visitors & each other

Vol. 28, No. 4 | Fall 2012

Technology in the National Parks





Share your views

Do you have a comment on a particular topic featured in this issue? Or about anything related to national parks? Send your views to *Ranger*: fordedit@aol.com or to the address on the back cover. Your views count! Send them.

Valuable content in *Ranger*

The recent two issues of *Ranger* magazine were exceptionally meaningful to me since I had attended the Ranger Rendezvous at Gettysburg where my wife and I took extra days to visit several national parks, historic sites and battlefields. These visits made it easier to visualize the places and actions that took place during those battles. Reading Tracy Evans' and Stacy Allen's articles (*Ranger*, Spring 2012), I could relate to the places I had been.

Ed Quiroz's article (*Ranger*, Summer 2012) reinforced my images of the Manassas Battlefield and the photos and drawings depicting both Union and Confederate soldiers beside split-rail fences. This article should be a helpful guideline document for all national parks that have historic split-rail fences.

I am disturbed, as are many of us, after reading Rick Smith's review of Robert Danno's book, *Worth Fighting For: A Park Rangers Unexpected Battle against Federal Bureaucrats and Redskins owner Dan Snyder*, (page 13, *Ranger*, Summer 2012).

I have volunteered and worked in many national parks and have never met anyone who more exemplifies the ideal ranger than Danno. I recall on one occasion, while I was campground host at Chiricahua, we were missing a visitor who had driven up to Masai Point (mountain) and hadn't returned as a blizzard struck. In spite of the heavy snowfall and blizzard conditions, Danno instructed me to secure the gate to the mountain road and he proceeded at his own risk to find the missing visitors. Thankfully, he found the visitors who had become disoriented in the blizzard and returned them safely.

John Ott
Layton, Utah



Share your news!

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Excellent book review

Rick Smith wrote a good review of Robert Danno's *Worth Fighting For*, as did P.J. Ryan in his Thunderbear commentary (www.workingnet.com/thunderbear). They point to the same conclusion: the NPS WASO office has some serious internal problems and has taken the often-typical NPS step of killing the messenger of bad news and either rewarding or ignoring the illegal or improper actions of leadership.

If a supervisor did in fact "plant" evidence, that is both improper and illegal. In other law enforcement agencies that would be, at worst, formal charges and dismissal, or, at least, a demotion and suspension. Another supervisor apparently was looking out for himself and may have a bad case of dishonesty, weak character and poor morals/ethics.

In 30 years with the NPS I saw this type of action repeated too often. It is demoralizing to employees and rewards bad behavior. I arrested a drunk administrative officer of a large park operating a government vehicle during work hours. Per policy, I at once notified my supervisor. He took custody and told me to forget it ever happened. Upon notifying others up the chain of command I got the same instructions.

One supervisor has been promoted and another will be. Danno? He is screwed for doing the right thing. Wonder how the director of the NPS will respond?

Ben Morgan
Homestead, Florida



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ANPR Calendar

Annual Professional Conference & Ranger
Rendezvous XXXV Oct. 28 – Nov. 1
Miramonte Resort & Spa
Indian Wells, California

Ranger (Winter issue)
deadline..... Nov. 15
Theme: Roundup of Rendezvous XXXV

Ranger (Spring issue)
deadline..... Jan. 31

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

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

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

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Submissions

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 Fall issue July 31
 Winter issue Nov. 15

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Interactive inspiration at Fire Island
 Children at the Watch Hill Visitor Center gather around a tablet with the Sibley eGuide app and are enthralled with the bird song feature. National Park Service photo

President's Message

Many of our members will gather in Indian Wells, California, in late October to participate in the 35th Ranger Rendezvous at the Miramonte Resort & Spa. (See more details on page 16 and www.anpr.org)

I warmly invite your participation in all the activities. The theme of our gathering is “Enhancing the Green & Gray,” with discussions and presentations concerning the future of the National Park Service, particularly in relation to enhancing workforce diversity and workplace enrichment. These topics will undoubtedly produce great discussion. Daunting issues and program challenges confront our ability to attain practical goals and objectives in enriching our Service. As annual budgets are projected to get tighter and park workforce levels face potential stagnation and possibly even reduction – via attrition. This may adversely affect the public services our agency provides for the nation.

With each passing year pressures mount that interfere with being able to arrange for and afford travel to our organization's annual Rendezvous. This is particularly true for retirees on fixed incomes, and for those still employed, the ever-present issue of being absent from daily responsibilities of caring for the national parks — and often taking valuable leave time away from our families.

Please know the issues that conflict with Rendezvous attendance are fully understood. Those who are able to gather meet in the spirit of all. Should you be unable to attend but desire

some issue or topic to be raised on the floor and discussed by those in attendance, please forward your ideas and thoughts either to me, a fellow board member or any of the social media avenues sponsored by ANPR.



In addition to the Rendezvous, several members will journey overseas to participate in the Seventh World Ranger Congress hosted by the International Ranger Federation at the Ngurdoto Mountain Lodge, near Arusha, Tanzania. It will run from Nov. 4-9.

The theme is “Healthy Parks, Hungry People: Working toward Healthy Parks, Dealing with Hungry People.” Indeed, the daunting nature of the theme reflects the stark realities confronting the health of parks and protected areas, and park employees and their families across the globe.

Attendees hope the gathering will be an important step forward in the longer-term process of better supporting the needs of park employees and protected areas in East Africa and elsewhere around the world.

For me and other ANPR members attending the congress, the opportunity to engage with fellow park employees worldwide will assist in formulating plans to successfully fulfill the challenges ANPR has assumed by hosting the Eighth World Ranger Congress. That gathering will occur in the United States in 2016 during the centennial year of the NPS.

To develop and effectively implement a thoughtful and provocative program agenda will take a supreme effort on behalf of the entire Association. Effective partnerships and proactive participation by ANPR members will be necessary in both our preparations and implementation. Therefore, all members are invited to take an active role in this endeavor.

I look forward to reporting back on the World Ranger Congress, and I am excited about attending our Rendezvous and sharing our collective passion for the national parks and our Service. Until then, please enjoy this latest issue of your *Ranger* magazine. 🇺🇸

Stacy D. Allen

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iRanger

iPads as interpretive tools



While mobile devices will never replace the hands-on experiences and solitude available to us in the natural world, they can be a valuable asset to interpreters and can serve to enhance the visitor experience.

By Elizabeth Rogers, Fire Island

We live in a time when mobile technology is a staple in our daily lives. Our cellphones serve as our alarm clock, our newspapers come in digital form, and we check our emails, texts and tweets as we travel to work.

Mobile devices put information, connectivity and entertainment at our fingertips no matter the time or place. By integrating this technology into national park programming, we can expand interpretive tools and extend the visitor experience beyond park boundaries.

A virtual “iRanger” should never take the place of park staff, but smartphones and tablets can complement ranger-led programs and engage visitors in a fun and familiar way — a way that allows them to experience and share their national park on their own terms.

The best way to engage visitors with this technology is not always clear, however, and integrating mobile devices into park programming can be overwhelming. I found this to be the case when tasked with incorporating iPads into a program geared toward young audiences.

I developed a program called Old School vs. New School to compare ease of use and interest in print and digital field guides. Two field guides with easy-to-use, color-coded tab indices, the Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America and Stokes Field Guide to Birds: Eastern Region, served as the “old school” identification tools. The Sibley eGuide iPad application was the “new school” identification tool. I spent time teaching participants to use both the book and iPad app, and then split the group into teams to compare how quickly they could use each guide to identify common birds in printed photographs.

Participants were equally successful with both identification tools. For example, they took about 52 seconds to use the Kaufman Guide and only 43 to use the iPad. Another team took just over a minute with the Stokes Guide and 1 minute and 14 seconds with the iPad. Both the book and iPad app held their interest but they were truly captivated by the bird songs on the Sibley eGuide and continued to explore the app even after the program was finished. While the speed and ease with which participants took to the digital field guide wasn't surprising, their enthusiasm for learning more about the park's bird inhabitants certainly was.

I've since incorporated the iPad into just about every program or

▲ The iPad can become a portable prop. Elizabeth Rogers is using the Sibley eGuide app to show examples of warblers that would occupy this backdune forest habitat at Watch Hill. *Fire Island photo*

activity I can think of, admittedly lured by its novelty but also seeking the perfect setting for iPad interpretation.

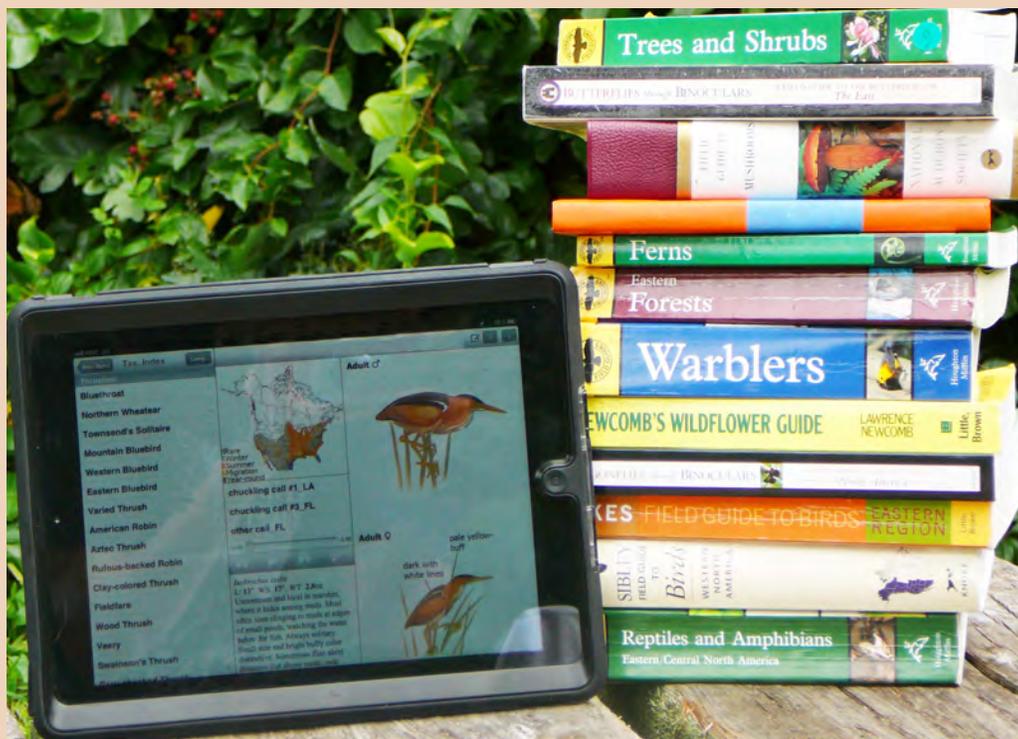
On guided tours the iPad is simultaneously a library of field guides, a mobile PowerPoint and a photo album of park resources. On informal roves, the iPad is a camera, a field log and an instant connection to the park's social media platforms. The iPad's wireless connection also allows me to keep up on office work while working in the field.

Interpretive program possibilities are endless with this technology. Visitors can use the iPad's camera, along with reference and photo album apps, to create their own site-specific field guide. Compass and GPS apps can be used in hands-on, outdoor learning programs like orienteering or a scavenger hunt. Story creation and movie making apps allow visitors of all ages to interpret the park in their own words. User-friendly mobile technology can help us meet our audience at their level of interest and incorporate the virtual experience to which they've grown accustomed into their actual park experience.

Still, we must guard against relying solely on mobile technology to connect with park visitors, whether during or in place of interpersonal interaction. Some visitors just aren't interested and others may not have access to such technology, rendering it all but irrelevant to their park experience. In addition, formal program participation should be limited to two users per device, especially for children's programs. And, until Apple unveils a Rite in the Rain tablet, this technology simply can't take the place of field guides and laminated photos.

While mobile devices will never replace the hands-on experiences and solitude available to us in the natural world, they can be a valuable asset to interpreters and can serve to enhance the visitor experience. Used properly, mobile technology can help us engage tech-savvy visitors and usher in a new era of national park stewardship — albeit very different from what we have traditionally known. 🏠

Elizabeth Rogers is the science communications park ranger at Fire Island. She enjoys spending time with her family and finds peace in the forest. She plans to retire when she convinces her father that mosquitoes and other biting insects have an important place in the natural world.



Here's how the iPad stacks up with field guides and other books. *Fire Island photo*

Utah developer creates app about national parks

National Geographic partners with company for guide to sites in 20 locations. Similar apps: *Oh, Ranger!* and *Passport to Your National Parks*

While it might seem counter-intuitive to bring a high-tech gadget on a trip through a national park, several popular apps encourage people to do just that.

For instance, a Utah digital media company has developed an iPhone and iPad app in partnership with National Geographic to display colorful guides to 20 of the national parks. The app was created to inspire people to visit these grand vistas, said Thomas Cooke, managing partner of Rally Interactive, with offices in Salt Lake City and Park City, Utah.

The National Parks by National Geographic app is on sale through the iTunes App Store and has sold more than 650,000 copies. The main app is free and comes with one national park guide of your choice. Additional guides can be downloaded into the app for 99 cents or \$1.99, depending on the park.

The app contains information about the park, including lists of what to do and see, park statistics, and camping and lodging information. The information is tied to maps that add pin drops to points of interest. The app also features access to instant weather reports. A social networking component allows users to read tweets from park officials and share park info through email and Facebook.

High-resolution photos from National Geographic showcase a park's majestic scenery. The app also has a digital spin on a park tradition — the National Park Passport Stamp program. Parks sell passport-styled books to visitors that can be filled with stamps at each park visit. The

National Geographic app automatically receives virtual stamps when a device is carried into or near a park visitor's center.

National Geographic plans to put out guides for the remaining national parks, with another three to five released later this year.

Other national park apps include *Oh, Ranger!*™ ParkFinder from American Park Network and *Passport to Your National Parks*® from Eastern National.

Do you know of other mobile apps related to national parks?

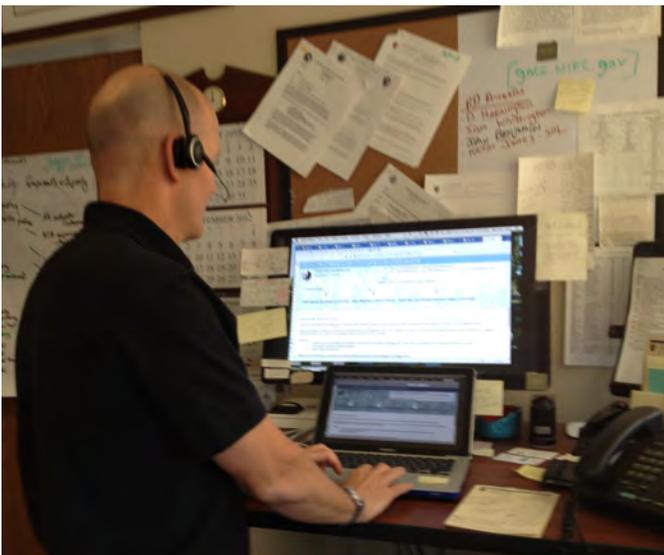
Send your comments to *Ranger* magazine (fordedit@aol.com) or ANPR's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/parkrangers. 🏠

Technology is crucial for park administration

By Michelle Torok, Saguaro

When I think of all the daily things we do in administration, the bulk of it relies on technology. I am not sure we could completely support a park without the technology we have come to rely on. New programs come online at a rapid rate sometimes, and we must keep up. When interviewing candidates for an administrative position, inquiries on knowledge of computer skills and data entry are likely routine now. Administrative staff are tied to their computers today as we keep the administrative side of the park running as smoothly as possible.

A behind-the-scenes look in administration would reveal why we are tied to our computers all day. The assortment of online programs associated with park administration is staggering. We input payroll, travel, project planning, funding requests, budget, procurement, housing, injuries, fleet, maintenance work orders and even order uniforms online. We receive emails and faxes, scan documents, download digital photos, post to sharepoint sites, and even update the park's Facebook page as a part of our daily operating routine. We tote laptops, Blackberries, iPads, and iPhones and treat them as lifelines, all the time knowing that these devices will soon be passé at the rate new technology is developed. I can remember just a few years ago there was controversy on enabling the wireless network on our government-issued laptops. Today it is a standard tool.



Intermountain Regional Director John Wessels uses a variety of technology every day in the office. Photo by Dawn Bosh, NPS

Technology has become a part of our daily life in the NPS.

Technology is so integrated into our daily work life that the entire Department of the Interior is now undergoing an initiative called IT Transformation as outlined in Secretarial Order 3309. The priority is to establish enterprise level services for core IT infrastructure in order to deliver improved technology and IT services to all DOI employees while reducing the overall IT spending by 2016.

Many key IT Transformation projects are being developed and worked on by IT employees. Included are flattening DOI's network, consolidating data centers, and delivering the department's new cloud-based email and collaboration system.

The working group is comprised of members of the Office of the Chief Information Officer; senior leadership in the Office of Policy, Management and Budget, or PMB, bureau and office deputy directors, information technology leads and bureau business leadership. The technology and bureau business leadership are working with PMB to develop a plan to implement IT Transformation in phases. Different areas of IT Transformation, such as IT services and workforce, will each have a phased approach implemented over the next three years.

As new technology is introduced, policy must keep up as needed. The advances in technology over the past few years alone have caused new policy to be issued. A very recent example is that iPads and iPhones are now approved for purchase and use to conduct government business. The NPS policy on motor vehicle safety was updated to include a ban on the use of cellular and car telephones except in an emergency while driving a government vehicle or even a private motor

vehicle during official NPS business or travel. In addition, NPS employees are not authorized to read, compose or send text messages or emails while operating a vehicle. The only exception applies to the older technology of two-way radios when used by NPS employees for government purposes.

The newest policy was issued in July regarding the requirement of using the DOI Access cards, also called Smartcards or Personal Identity cards. As of the end of July NPS employees are required to sign on to the DOI Virtual Private Network using their DOI Access card or obtain a waiver. The use of the DOI Access card provides for a more secure form of logging on called Two-Factor Authentication.

I am looking forward to the next round of technology, including the migration to the new finance system called the Financial and Business Management System. It will be implemented in November and convert to the new email program. Just as we weathered the conversion from WordPerfect to Word we shall prevail and learn to use these new programs to carry out our jobs.

I had to smile the other day when I found an electric typewriter in one of the park storage sheds. I now wonder how it will fare in the property disposal process. I am guessing there will be no takers in the governmentwide posting or on the government excess posting.

Technology has become a part of our daily life in the NPS. In the event of a power failure, for a moment we may be stumped on what to do next. I have learned to catch up on filing but even that involved technology while I reached for the labelmaker! 🖨️

Michelle Torok is the administrative office at Saguaro. She is a life member of ANPR and a regular contributor to Ranger. This article takes the place of her quarterly column, Administration.



Tradition meets technology: Ranger Billy Bell rides his horse while on the phone at Buffalo National River. Photo by Kevin Moses, NPS

Changing Times

Technology's great but
no substitute for traditional ranger skills.

By Kevin Moses, Buffalo National River

As young infantry soldiers who relied heavily on our land navigation skills, my platoon buddies and I had a running joke about trying to locate our position on a map. We'd tell one of the new guys to go shake a tree so that when we saw it move on the map, we'd know where we were.

As silly as that sounds—being able to see something move on a map—that's precisely what today's technology allows us to do. My handheld GPS unit, with my park's topography maps uploaded onto it, displays an arrow that moves along the map as I move along the ground.

If we had that technology back in my infantry unit, we probably would have gotten lost less often. We also might not have developed our land navigation skills as strongly as we did because we might have ended up leaning on the GPS technology as a crutch. Who needs to terrain associate, a critical component of land navigation, when one can simply walk until his GPS tells him to stop?

In the end, we were better soldiers because we had developed solid, basic soldiering skills. Technology is constantly moving forward, and it always will be. No matter how cutting-edge the military's technology becomes, the worth of the humble foot soldier will never be eclipsed. All soldiers entering the service, regardless of their occupational specialty, must learn to shoot, move and communicate.

Author Robert A. Heinlein nails this truth in his classic military tale of futuristic warfare, *Starship Troopers*. Fast-forwarding to a time centuries from now, Heinlein describes the experiences of a company of infantrymen more akin to something out of *Star Wars* than any soldiering I ever knew. Yet, despite all the ultra-high-tech weaponry, vehicles and equipment, the company's most valuable asset is the foot soldier: boots on the ground. Heinlein says it best: "To the everlasting glory of the infantry."

This same concept holds true for NPS rangers. No amount of high-tech gadgetry will replace the worth of highly skilled, traditional

rangers. I am thankful to have my GPS unit when I'm in the backcountry. I'm also confident that if I lose it, the batteries die or it just quits working, I'll still be able to navigate with my "old school" map and compass.

This principle can be applied to all facets of the rangers profession — anywhere one might see a progression of technology, whether in the SAR, fire, EMS, law enforcement or resource management arena.

Today's young firefighters can pull a Kestrel out of their pack and within two minutes know the RH, temperature, wind speed and direction. That's a useful capability, but they still need to know to "look up, look down, look all around." Helicopter-mounted plastic sphere dispensers are awesome machines, but every firefighter still needs to understand basic ignition principles and how to use a simple drip torch.

In SAR, aviation and EMS, technological advances are almost limitless. Open a climbing magazine and you'll be greeted by glossy images of the newest, latest, greatest gadgets, many of which have outstanding applications in technical rescue. No matter how many gizmos a rescuer carries on her harness, though, she still has to know her knots and other basic rescue tenets. An EMT can use a blood glucose monitor, pulse oximeter and other devices to learn about his patient's condition, but none of these can replace good, strong patient assessment skills.

Technology has improved law enforcement,

too. I researched a motion-activated game camera that sends a real-time text message, accompanied by a photo, to a prerecorded phone number. These were developed for hunters but are terrific tools for a ranger trying to monitor an archeological site that's being looted or an illegal bait site. I wonder what ol' Harry Yount would've thought about that?

Many other scientific advances in equipment, procedures and tactics are available to help us perform our work. Included are night-vision goggles, remote sensors (magnetic, seismic and motion-detecting), radar and lidar units, computer-assisted dispatch, laser sights, thermal imagery, infrared scopes, Google Earth, the Internet and its boundless information, cruiser-mounted laptops, NLTA, encrypted digital radios, remote-controlled wildlife decoys and portable breath testers.

Compare today's duty belt with that of 10 years ago. Many rangers have replaced their pepper spray with a taser or electronic control device. Regardless of how advanced these impressive devices are, they're still not fail safe. Rangers must remain proficient in the full spectrum of control tactics and use of force. We can never become complacent simply because we have technology on our side.

We must use new technology with caution, allow ourselves an appropriate learning curve and never forget to rely mostly on our own set of time-proven, good old-fashioned rangers skills. If we don't, an emerging technology might sometimes make our jobs more difficult, or at the very least, get in the way.

Recently I launched the initial steps of a search because the reporting party advised that her husband was carrying a SPOT personal tracking device, had failed to report in, and her latest virtual, online fix on his position showed that he hadn't moved from his previous night's campsite. The man finally checked in with his wife after he'd reached an area where he acquired cell service. While he was speaking with her, his position was updated on the computer via his SPOT device because it, too, had acquired satellite reception. The man was never overdue, lost or in distress, but his SPOT's inability to update his position had caused his wife to report him as such.

Even Harry Yount used "technology," albeit probably unaware he was doing so. Perhaps his rifle, winter clothing, snowshoes and shelter were the best the 1870s had available. No matter how advanced his equipment was for the time, he undoubtedly was diligent to cultivate his basic skill set. He could shoot, move and communicate. Here's to the everlasting glory of traditional rangers! 🐾



Through

Keeping pace with

Thomas Edison embodied the spirit of invention that gripped America in the late 19th century, and he devoted his life to technological innovations.

By Claire Shields, Thomas Edison

At the corner of Main Street and Lakeside Avenue in West Orange, New Jersey, stands a group of red brick buildings. To the passing motorist the buildings betray little evidence of their glory days and of the people who worked inside.

A short distance away is Glenmont, Thomas Edison's estate. Together, the laboratory and residence make up Thomas Edison National Historical Park. It preserves the work and character of America's foremost inventor, Thomas A. Edison, and the family, friends and business associates who played a key role in his success.

Edison built his West Orange Laboratory in 1887 and worked here until his death on Oct. 18, 1931, at the age of 84. In the 1950s it was turned over to the federal government, and it is now maintained for the public by the National Park Service.

Edison embodied the spirit of invention that gripped America in the late 19th century, and

he devoted his life to technological innovations. It was in West Orange that Edison's technical genius and entrepreneurial instinct came together. Of 1,093 patents granted Edison, more than half were from inventions born in the West Orange lab.

The park is a memorial to the man and a place where the roots of American inspiration and technological innovation can be discovered. Though he was best known for the phonograph and incandescent lamp, perhaps Edison's greatest invention was a new way to invent: the industrial research and development laboratory. Edison did not simply invent, he created the invention industry.

The Laboratory Complex includes 15 structures, six of which were built in 1887 as the first laboratory dedicated to the "business of inventing." These labs house the technology and the technological innovations and artifacts that changed the course of not only America but the entire world. Many rooms contain their

the Ages

Edison's innovation



original furnishings. A replica of the world's first motion picture studio, the "Black Maria," is also part of the park.

Museum collections encompass more than 400,000 artifacts, including prototype and commercial Edison products, laboratory furnishings and equipment, and personal items used by the Edisons in their home. The Edison archives include an estimated 5 million documents, 48,000 sound recordings, 10,000 rare books, 4,000 laboratory notebooks and 60,000 photographic images. These collections are among the largest in the NPS.

Today, Edison's brick and concrete laboratories are well integrated into West Orange's urban landscape. These solidly built Victorian buildings, though, still retain a sense of their former prominence as the core of Edison's "invention factory."

For 44 years, from 1887 to 1931, the site served as the inventor's research and development center. Here Edison and his "muckers" developed many of the devices around which modern life revolves, such as the motion picture camera and the nickel-iron alkaline storage battery. They refined the phonograph and made it the center of a worldwide business.

Edison's work on the phonograph (begun

◀ **Ranger Shemaine McKelvin accompanies a group of young visitors viewing Thomas Edison's rolltop desk in the Library in Building 5, the main building at the Laboratory Complex.**

in Menlo Park) was restarted in West Orange to encompass not only technological development but also the manufacture of commercial and home phonographs, the equipment and studios to create recordings, and the machinery to mass produce them. The phonograph was the first machine that could record the sound of someone's voice and play it back. To our younger visitors it is the great-great granddaddy of the iPod.

What surprises many visitors is the wide range of scientific fields in which Edison was involved. Not only did he improve the phonograph several times, he also worked on X-rays, storage batteries, power generation, mining and cement technology, rubber extraction and the first talking doll.

At West Orange he worked on what was to become one of America's favorite pastimes: "movies." The park is often considered the birthplace of motion pictures.

The inventions made here changed the way we live even today. So strong was Edison's influence on commercialization that today, according to the Edison Innovation Foundation, his inventions and the industries they launched account for about 10 percent of the national economy.

Today the park welcomes tens of thousands of visitors each year. Many associate Edison with the incandescent lamp but have limited knowledge of the extensive range and breadth of technologies for which he is responsible. Ensuring that visitors enjoy their time in the park is a top priority but, additionally, we hope people leave with a greater understanding and appreciation of the extent of the inventions and innovation that took place around them.

As they walk where Edison and his muckers walked, we strive to provide interpretive opportunities through a range of media, whether high-tech or low-tech. Since undergoing extensive renovations and reopening in late 2009, the park now offers a self-guided audio tour for visitors, complementing the more personal ranger programs also featured during the day.

If you want to go low-tech, it doesn't get much lower than Tinker Toys, which feature prominently in our school group educational programs. One such program – Idea to Product: Edison's Invention Process – has a ranger accompany the group around the laboratory complex exploring the various stages of the

invention process. These include research in the Library; sourcing materials from the Stock Room; prototype production in the Machine Shop; to final product, a demonstration of the phonograph in the Music Room.

Following the tour the children are split into groups and have to work together, much like Edison's muckers did, to develop a prototype of a new product — using Tinker Toys! It is a fun, hands-on activity that solidifies the learning experience.

In taking advantage of more high-tech methods, one technology that has proved versatile and low cost to implement is the use of QR codes to assist in interpreting aspects of the park. A QR or Quick Response code is the trademark for a matrix barcode. You may have seen one in a magazine where they are increasingly used in advertisements to link to websites. Anyone with a smartphone can download a free app that will allow the scanning of a QR code.

QR codes are helping to bring to life the Machine Shop. Strategically placed codes allow visitors to scan and link to online content demonstrating the machinery in action. Codes can also be included in park handouts. We use codes in the park's "Motion Pictures" handout to link to short clips of Edison movies available online through the Library of Congress.

Additionally, one of the interpretive rangers has developed a QR code scavenger hunt. Kids, young and old, can pick up a booklet at the visitor center and then follow the clues to hunt for QR codes "hidden" throughout the park. Scanning the code links to online content provides more information about the location.

Try it yourself. Below are two QR codes in use at the park.



RADIAL PRESS
This QR code links to footage from the early 1980s of Adolf Frieda who worked as a machinist for the Edison Co. After retirement he became a park VIP.



MUSIC ROOM
This QR code features the children's scavenger hunt.



Glenmont, Thomas Edison's home



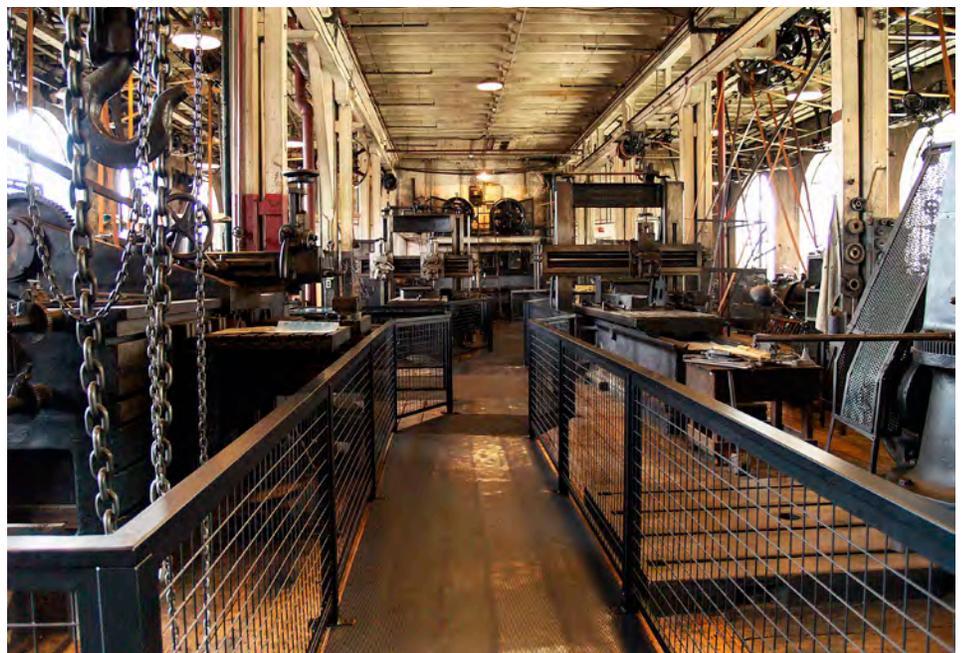
This image from July 19, 1912, shows Edison examining a motion picture film from the home projecting kinetoscope.

What surprises many visitors is the wide range of scientific fields in which Edison was involved.

Looking further to the future, we are working with one of our partners, the Edison Innovation Foundation, to develop a downloadable park app. An employee developmental concept team is brainstorming ideas that will drive the content, while the foundation will provide the funding and technology.

Much has yet to be decided, but among the content envisaged is the ability of visitors to the Chemistry Lab to virtually “experiment” with the chemicals. Enter the Music Room and the app will play music from the extensive archive collection of Edison performers. The app will provide an interactive experience that will be both informative and educational for visitors and virtual visitors.

Ultimately, Thomas Edison NHP is not unlike all NPS sites as we strive to achieve a balance within the available resources. Whether it is low-tech Tinker Toys or high-tech apps, remember the adage, “Use what’s right for your site and story.” Wherever possible, give visitors choice. 🛠️



The Laboratory’s operable Heavy Machine Shop exhibits exceptional historical integrity and provides a unique insight into 19th century machine tool technology, working conditions and Edison’s innovative business model. Skilled machinists worked in this shop, using the large machine tools to make and repair machine parts. The shop was for experimental work, not manufacturing.

All photos courtesy of Thomas Edison NHP

Claire Shields is a STEP (soon to be Student Pathways) employee at Thomas Edison. Previously she was the research manager for the Wales Tourist Board before managing the international research and evaluation program for the British Tourist Authority. She subsequently came to the United States as marketing director, North America, for the Wales Tourist Board. Originally from Wales, she became a U.S. citizen in 2010 and lives with her family in New Jersey.



Many children still enjoy playing and building with low-tech Tinker Toys.

New Faneuil Hall Visitor Center showcases latest technology

By Sean Hennessey, Boston NHP and Boston African American NHS

Although Boston teems with history and culture and is a major center for tourism, until now it didn't have a full-service facility to introduce visitors to the region's history and help them begin to explore the historic parks and trails for which the city is famous.

That changed this past spring when a high-tech visitor center was dedicated at the newly renovated Faneuil Hall, the site of important events in history from the American Revolution to the movement to abolish slavery.

Faneuil Hall has been a vital marketplace and a hub of civic activity in Boston since 1742. When Peter Faneuil donated the building to the town of Boston, he stipulated that the upper floors were to be used for civic gatherings, the ground floor was to be a public marketplace, and the building's use could never be changed. Boston has been faithful to its commitment, and for 270 years Faneuil Hall has been a home to commerce and free speech.

As the center of trade in colonial times, Faneuil Hall would have brought many worlds together. The new visitor center continues that heritage while preserving the iconic space and cultivating Boston's most celebrated landmark into a showpiece and center for visitor information. The new visitor center is much more than an entryway into Boston National Historical Park and Boston African American National Historic Site. It serves also as a gateway to all of Massachusetts' national parks and for the first time introduces tours of Boston's Freedom Trail and Black Heritage Trail from the same location. Superintendent Cassius Cash has



branded this Boston's Trails to Freedom.

Boston NHP, established in 1974, is a unique collaboration between government-owned and privately owned and operated historic sites associated with the colonial struggle for independence and the birth and growth of the United States. These nationally significant attractions include Old South Meeting House, the Old State House, Faneuil Hall, Old North Church, the Paul Revere House, the Bunker Hill Monument, the Bunker Hill Museum, Dorchester Heights and the Charlestown Navy Yard (including USS Constitution, the USS Constitution Museum and USS Cassin Young). The park attracts more than 3 million visitors a year and supports more than 1,200 jobs in the local community.

Soon after Boston NHP was established, the National Park Service uniform began showing up on the streets of Boston. The park was established in a time when the creation of urban parklands was seen as a breakthrough in recreational planning, offering to millions of Americans the only real hope they might ever have to visit a unit of the National Park System. Rangers began interpretive programs at the Bunker Hill Monument and Faneuil Hall in the spring of 1975. The NPS presence in downtown Boston took a major step in 1978 with the opening of a visitor center on State Street, and the ranger-led walking tours of the Freedom Trail began in 1981. While the State Street visitor center played an important role in the early development of the park, it was too small to use interactive technology and engaging presentation tools to awaken visitors to the significance of the Freedom Trail and the Black Heritage Trail, or to offer comprehensive orientation and services.

The new enhanced facility, a collaborative effort between the city of Boston and the NPS, includes interactive exhibits, an audio-visual orientation program, handicapped-accessible public restrooms, a bookstore and several local vendors with goods ranging from coffee to art work. The space is comprised of 7,400 square feet for visitor services, with related office and community meeting space.

In an effort to make exploring the city easier, the NPS developed a first-of-its-kind app that visitors can download to their mobile device at the visitor center. The app includes information about Boston NHP, Boston African American NHS and other parks in the region, and it features custom maps and turn-by-turn directions to dozens of historic sites. Users can design their tour, navigate Boston's historical sites, and find fun facts, frequently asked questions, and restaurant, transportation, shopping and hotel information. You can download the free app from iTunes and Android.

The center is open, light-filled and welcoming. Visitors can find visual displays, printed material, maps, and park rangers and guides at Faneuil Hall to provide expert guidance and free tours of Boston's Trails to Freedom. The new visitor center, integrating current technologies and design while remaining faithful to the traditional national park experience, gives visitors the information they need to make the most of their time in Boston and Massachusetts. 🚶

Photos courtesy of Boston NHP

Sean Hennessey is the public affairs officer at Boston National Historical Park and Boston African American National Historic Site.



Black Magic in the National Park Service

GIS

By Mark Christiano, Gateway

Many of you may have never met a GIS specialist. In fact, it's possible that I am the first GIS specialist to join ANPR, or at least one of the first.

While there are many users of GIS in the National Park Service, there are only 200 or so of the 30,000+ NPS employees who have the job title GIS specialist.

If you think of parks as fiefdoms and superintendents as kings or queens, GIS specialists end up being the mad cackling wizards in the tower. We consult the stars (satellites) for guidance. We use strange devices (GPS units), and we answer strange and mysterious questions like "where is the boundary of the park?"

I haven't concluded this on my own. People have actually said to me, "I really don't know how they come up with the answers. It must be black magic."

I hope to debunk the mystery a little bit, explain the role of GIS in the NPS and maybe get you to cast a few spells of your own.

So what is GIS? The textbook definition says: "A geographic information system allows us to visualize, question, analyze, interpret and understand data to reveal relationships, patterns and trends." (ESRI website: www.esri.com/what-is-gis/index.html)

In other words, it's saying that "a picture is worth a thousand words." Visualizing something allows greater understanding because most data has a spatial component that is often ignored. To take that one step further, we have become a data-rich world. We are saturated in data, but data doesn't help managers make decisions, information does.

A GIS specialist takes data and sifts it, analyzes it and (hopefully) turns it into good information. With good information comes good decisions.

You may wonder about the secret behind the curtain: how does GIS work? The answer comes in two parts: the first is developing/having/creating "spatially aware" data. A lot of people would describe GIS specialists as map makers (or mad wizards), but maps are just the tip of the iceberg, the final product.

Think about a park map showing a grove of trees. In GIS each tree has a location, an XY coordinate that places it on the Earth. This allows us to see where each tree is, where each

tree is in relationship to the trees around it and that together they make a forest.

The second part of GIS is the attribute table. Behind these features is something that looks a lot like an Excel table. Each row is a different feature and each column provides a different piece of information. So for the trees, in addition to the location, we know the tree species, the height, the diameter and more. There is much more information in GIS data layers than what you see on a map. By tapping into that information, you unlock the power of GIS.

Another important fact is that GIS for the sake of GIS is almost pointless. It's only when it has a problem to solve or someone to help that its value becomes apparent.

This is how I view my job. My goal at Gateway NRA is to support all other divisions. Here are a few examples of my favorite projects and how they have helped other divisions. My goal is to give you some ideas of what you could have in your park.

The first example is a layer that is used almost every day: the building layer. It simply shows the outline of the buildings, and by querying the attribute table you can tell a lot about the structure. The associated data table has the FMSS ID and description and the LCS ID and description of every building in the park. We have more than 600 buildings at Gateway and most of them are cultural resources. This simple layer allows everyone to have the key to accessing the large amount of data stored in the FMSS and LCS databases. This is the most used layer in the whole park, and nearly every division uses this layer in some way.

Another important layer at Gateway is the boundary layer. Here in the New York metropolitan area, we fight for every inch of our park. I don't think a week goes by that I don't answer a boundary issue or question. Facilities needs to know where the boundary is to know where to mow. Law enforcement needs to know the limit of their jurisdiction. Concessionaires need to know where they can operate.

If these sound like problems you have in your park, there is a good chance the building and boundary data layers are already available to you too. More than 80 percent of the buildings in the NPS have been mapped to this national

data standard. The Lands Office maintains up-to-date records on park boundaries.

Check out the Lands Office website: <http://landsnet.nps.gov/>. There you will find information about your park boundary, ownership and legal descriptions, and you can view your park data in Google Earth.

The budget is another area in which GIS can help. In the coming years we likely will face budget cuts, there will be more visitors and less rangers to give tours. GIS is one way to help tackle this problem. If you have a smartphone or tablet, check out the new apps from Harpers Ferry. There is a Boston app and a National Mall app. Both allow visitors to enjoy the national parks without a ranger.

At Gateway we have developed online maps for kayaking, geocaching and historic walking tours. Next year we plan to roll out a herbarium map that allows visitors to explore the different plant species in the park. Working with your GIS specialist, you can take the knowledge of one interpretive ranger and use it with a well-designed thematic map that thousands of visitors can use.

GIS can even save lives. One night at Gateway law enforcement received a report that a woman was missing. Her car was discovered inside the park soon after sundown. NPS law enforcement, two other local law enforcement groups and Coast Guard police descended upon the parking lot. The scene was quickly getting out of hand and time was running out. The park's fire chief remembered (the previous day) I had handed him some maps of the park.

In under a minute of the maps coming out, incident command was established on the hood of the car. Search and rescue was underway because they had a map to focus everyone. They used the maps to create a search area and the woman was found quickly.

The real heroes, of course, are law enforcement personnel, but the maps played an important role. The maps became the key to focusing everyone's efforts, and they provided a common language. Our chief ranger asked that we start the grid map book project the next week. Every law enforcement ranger and the surrounding police departments are issued a map book showing the park. The maps use high-resolution, aerial photography of the park and show the building numbers and the names of different areas. A simple grid atop the maps allows for quick communication of one's location or for a SAR.

Hopefully by now, if I've done my job, you're thinking that you want to use GIS in your park and want to know your building's

FMSS numbers. Or maybe you want to make a thematic map or increase visitor safety by having grid maps for the park. These are just a few ideas; I haven't touched on natural and cultural resource GIS projects. So how do you get started?

If you want to start doing GIS at your park, or at least get access to the data, first find out if you have a GIS specialist in your park. If you don't, your next stop is the GIS coordinators at www.nps.gov/gis/contacts/coordinators.html. Each region has one. They are responsible for overseeing GIS operations in your part of the country. Together the GIS coordinators make up the GIS council. The council is responsible for coordinating GIS efforts on a national scale. Each regional GIS coordinator has a seat along with a few rotating positions.

For example, currently I am the park representative to the GIS council. The council works together on parkwide GIS actions such as the ESRI license. This allows you to get ArcMap on your computer for free because the bill is paid at the department level. The council creates standards on datasets like the building layer and provides education and support to rangers. The council also has created a GIS tutorial for learning GIS. It uses park data and gives examples based on real NPS problems. Often when doing outside training, the data you work with has nothing to do with your field. For example, one class I took had me mapping train routes in Paris. The coordinator for your region should also have a copy of any GIS data previous done for your park. You might be surprised to find out how much data your park already has. Oftentimes GIS data is created for large projects like GMPs. In addition, there is a program called NPScape that generates GIS data for each park in the country. This is a great place to start looking for GIS data.

The GIS community also maintains a sharepoint site: <http://inpniscsfern1.nps.doi.net:7000/sites/IR/RIM/default.aspx>. Here you can find many helpful links and documents. Each subcommittee of the GIS council has a tab. There are groups for cultural resources, egis, fire, GPS and mobile mapping, remote sensing and park GIS. Each subcommittee has a monthly conference call to discuss issues pertaining to their subcommittee. The park GIS conference call is a general one, and different speakers present topics or projects they are working on. One of the best ways to learn is by hearing what other parks are doing. There is also an active listserve to join and keep up to date with GIS activities in the NPS.

Another place to look for data is on IRMA:

GIS is one of the most powerful tools at your disposal.

<https://irma.nps.gov/App/Portal/Home>. Within the IRMA website you will find the GIS datastore. You can then look up your park and see what GIS data might be available. Most of the data will focus on natural resources, so it's a great place to find a vegetation map for your park.

A few other tips to get you started in the world of GIS. If you want to learn more at home, I recommend a book called *Getting to Know ArcGIS*: <http://esripress.esri.com/display/index.cfm?fuseaction=display&websiteID=177>. It offers step-by-step instructions to get you started. It also comes with a free version of the software for 180 days.

I recommend checking the main ESRI website: www.esri.com/. You also should check out what GIS resources exist locally. Try typing in the name of your state and the words "GIS" and "clearing house." Almost each state has a website that will let you download GIS data. Often you will find datasets about roads, trails,

watersheds, zoning and parcels. You may also find high-resolution, aerial photography for your park.

I have tried to debunk some of the mystery of the black magic that is GIS in the NPS. There are a lot of great resources to get you started and a lot of data and programs to help you along.

GIS is one of the most powerful tools at your disposal. I encourage every ranger to look into it, regardless of your field. It will make your job easier.

Then, you get to be the mad wizard who seems to pull answers out of thin air and amaze your co-workers. Please contact me if you have questions or run into problems. 🧙

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ANPR ACTIONS & NEWS

Groups meet to discuss goals, keys to future viability

Representatives from five NPS employee-centered organizations, with participation from the directorate of the National Park Service, gathered in mid-June in Boston to discuss issues adversely affecting our individual organizations, the work we perform in support of NPS employees and stewardship of the national parks, and our advocacy role in assisting the NPS and the park system in performing their vital mission. The attendees also discussed the collective role our organizations might play in the planning and support of the NPS centennial and in promoting the Call to Action for its second century.

What was readily apparent to attendees, as each discussed their respective organizations, was the shared commonality of our concerns and the issues adversely affecting the meaningful work and programs sponsored by each organization. In addition, we committed to working together to engage the issues confronting our effectiveness. We also will partner to affect meaningful change for the benefit of national parks and those who serve them. This includes agency employees, alumni, cooperating association and concession employees, and the ever-increasing number of park volunteers.

An initial need, we agreed, was to better inform the membership of each respective group about the mission, programs and accomplishments of our sister organizations. A brief overview highlighting the five organizations, mutually developed by representatives attending the June meeting, is provided below.

We hope this initial gathering of NPS employee-centered organizations, and the discussion and work accomplished thus far, spark deeper interest in the purpose and membership of each group. It also can serve to enhance the mutual efforts and long-term commitment possessed by each to materially assist our national park family to deal effectively with the momentous issues and challenges commonly confronting us all.

— Stacy Allen, ANPR President

NPS Employee-Centered Organizations

The national park concept is as pure and elegant a pursuit for one's career as many of us can imagine. Success in combining enjoyment with unimpairment in a challenging future

landscape is not a sure thing. It will need help from its friends and its family. Its friends are a vast constituency of satisfied visitors and fans of either individual parks or the park system. Support for national parks — once famously described as miles wide and an inch deep — is exemplary among federal agencies. However, support from its family, those who know the institution best, its strengths and its vulnerabilities, can be a key asset in determining the long-term protection and health of the park system.

The sense of family among NPS employees has been strong in the past. To be powerful in the future and a telling force in a changing environment, this sense of family must endure — and strengthen. This requires a high degree of long-term commitment, participation and resolve from employees and alumni in an age of short attention span and the tendency to “bowl alone.”

For those who believe this to be true, who care about the consequences and wish to buck these trends, there are ways to engage. The organizations described here are the legacy of previous generations of those who cared. These organizations are active today and are making a difference. Yet they need the ideas, energy and support of today's generations. Please consider joining and shaping the future of these organizations, and in turn, the future of national parks.

George Wright Society

Founded in 1980, the George Wright Society is a professional association of researchers, managers and educators who work in, or on behalf of parks, protected areas and cultural sites. International and multidisciplinary in scope, GWS organizes conferences, publishes a journal and interactive website, and provides other opportunities for people to discuss current and enduring issues in protected area conservation. We connect people to core conservation values and encourage people to critically explore those values. Through our work, we continue to develop a significant body of knowledge about place-based conservation, and make that knowledge available to a worldwide audience at minimal or no cost. The GWS strives to be the premier organization connecting people, places, knowledge and ideas to foster excellence in natural and cultural resource management, research, protection,

and interpretation in parks and equivalent reserves. www.georgewright.org

Coalition of National Park Service Retirees

The coalition is a nonprofit organization comprised of former employees of the NPS. It was established in 2003 to voice its support for the mission of the National Park System and the employees who carry it out, and to express its concerns about legislative and policy decisions that diminish the values and purposes for which the system was established. The coalition has grown to more than 800 members, comprised of former employees from all levels of the organization, with more than 25,000 years of NPS experience.

Its goals are to:

- Protect and defend, through nonpartisan advocacy, the National Park System and its mission.
- Instill public understanding and appreciation of the system and the NPS.
- Initiate or engage in activities that will contribute to, or educate others about, the role of parks in a healthy planet and a vigorous American society.
- Develop alliances and engage in collaboration in support of the system and the NPS.

www.npsretirees.org

Association of National Park Rangers

“Stewards for parks, visitors and each other”

Organized in 1977, the Association of National Park Rangers is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization created to:

- Communicate for, about and with National Park Service employees of all disciplines
- Promote and enhance the professions, spirit and mission of National Park Service employees
- Support management and the perpetuation of the National Park Service and the National Park System
- Provide a forum for professional enrichment

Currently comprised of 1,000 members representing all job classifications in the NPS, ANPR sponsors a group health insurance program for seasonal NPS employees; employee development activities; development of an NPS employee oral history database, and an annual professional conference, the Ranger

Rendezvous. The website at www.anpr.org provides more about the goals, work, publications (*Ranger*) and employee-centered programs.

Employees & Alumni Association

The Employees & Alumni Association is a 501(c)(4) membership organization first organized in 1955 for NPS employees to promote the values and ideals of the NPS and to maintain the sense of family across generations of employees.

E&AA informs members of the significant activities and accomplishments of the NPS and its employees, alumni and NPS partners through publication of the *Arrowhead*. This quarterly newsletter is distributed to E&AA members and to all active NPS employees under an arrangement with the NPS.

The E&AA encourages public understanding of the national park concept and the responsibilities of the agency in administering the National Park System.

Members encourage qualified persons to enter the NPS as a career and mentor those with high career potential to attain greater responsibility.

The E&AA, through the National Park Service Employees and Alumni Trust Fund, supports the George B. Hartzog Jr. Education Loan Program to provide interest-free loans to E&AA members for the higher educational needs of their children, grandchildren or themselves. In the best family tradition, the trust fund also supports disaster relief efforts to aid NPS families in the event of disasters such as hurricanes, floods, fires and earthquakes, or incidents of personal calamity.

Global Parks

Global Parks is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that organizes volunteer, retired national park professionals to support national systems of protected areas worldwide.

GP works with government and nongovernmental organization partners to plan activities that contribute to the achievement of a wide variety of outcomes. These activities include protected area management and action plans; managing and protecting natural and cultural resources; interpretation and education; transportation; site development; science; tourism; visitor use; visitor and resource protection; coordination with local communities, academe and national and international partner organizations; park and park systems branding and signage; and revenues, expenditures and administrative practices. GP volunteers conduct and participate in workshops and assist with curriculum development.

GP volunteers transfer knowledge, mentoring, experience and proven practices that can strengthen development and operation of new and emerging protected area and national park systems that look to the U.S. national park system for assistance. <http://globalparks.org/website/node/1> 

The Professional Ranger

Interpretation

“But the purpose of interpretation is to stimulate the reader or hearer toward a desire to widen his horizon of interest or knowledge and to gain an understanding of the greater truths that lie behind any statement of fact.”

— Freeman Tilden

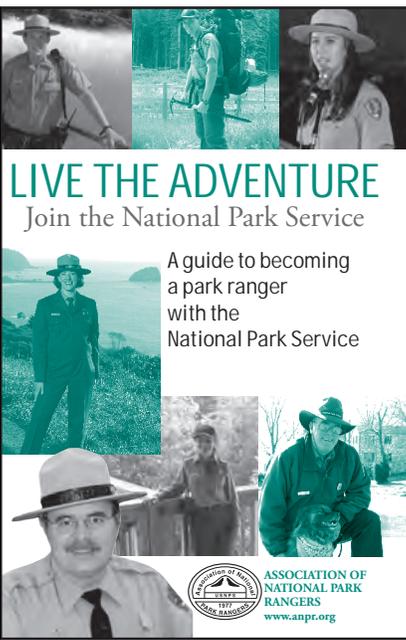
A critical need to interpret controversy

— When did working for the National Park Service become the same as working for the U.S. Postal Service? Do not be mistaken, I love the services provided by my post office. My older brother is a postal employee. He is professionally dedicated and dependable. But how often have you experienced a dedicated and dependable interpreter delivering his or her program as though they were delivering junk mail?

Some people love getting this type of mail but typically it ends up in the trash. Delivering an interpretive program in this timid manner does not fulfill the democratic promise of the national park idea or the mission of the NPS. Like postal junk mail, interpretive “junk mail” comes in variety of forms. It may be popular, verbose and play to an adult audience’s 8-year-old level of intellect and emotions. But it does not answer the age-old interpretive question: SO WHAT?! This junk mail caters to one aspect of the NPS mission: to provide for visitor enjoyment. Sadly, it neglects to create a sense of visitor advocacy for preservation and stewardship that is important in fulfilling the more essential aspect of the NPS mission: to leave unimpaired for future generations.

Professional interpreters need to remind themselves daily that the national park idea is **radical**. It is an idea filled with controversy, revealing stories of political and social activism (Webster’s Dictionary defines “controversy” as “a discussion marked especially by the expression of opposing views: dispute.”) Even more important to the interpreter is the ongoing need to remember the national park idea **continues** to be controversial even today.

Why else would the parks be threatened



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by a lack of federal funding, privatization and ongoing environmental problems (such as the unfortunate politics of climate change)? These threats will be fatal to the national park idea if the professional interpreter forgets these needs and remains ignorant of controversy, or wrongly assumes their programs should be detached from controversy, or the controversy makes the interpreter personally uncomfortable because it doesn't match his or her own social or political ideology.

A park can also reflect contemporary controversy that is currently a hot topic of national and/or international debate. Imagine how facilitating an interpretive dialogue with these controversial topics would energize what the **NPS Call to Action** refers to as a need for “civic engagement,” a bureaucratically polite term for social activism, in our parks.

Here are some examples of parks and their contemporary controversy that are in critical need of civic engagement through interpretation.

- Gettysburg: **war**
- Frederick Douglass: **human trafficking (modern day slavery)**
- Grand Canyon: **uranium mining**

- Springfield Armory: **gun control**
- Crater Lake: **human rights to free and clean drinking water**
- Coronado: **immigration and cross border issues**
- Women's Rights: **gay rights**
- San Antonio Missions: **separation of church and state**
- Little Bighorn Battlefield: **cultural survival of indigenous people**
- Valley Forge: **responsibility and limitations of the military in a free society**

Expression of accuracy and truth about political landscapes, ideologies and elected officials (past and present) that have shaped and continue to shape, for good or bad, the future of our national parks and the controversies they tell, must be woven into a park's personal and nonpersonal interpretive services.

I am not saying that interpreters should promote an NPS mission-friendly political party in their programs (strictly forbidden according to the Hatch Act) but they should stop "delivering junk mail."

Professional interpreters must find and passionately share with visitors the controversies of their park. Nothing could be more relevant and engaging for visitors or more important to the survival of the national park idea. □

— Pete Peterson
Grand Canyon

Resource Management

The Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies reported in spring 2011 that nearly 40 percent of American adults were concerned about climate change, while 25 percent were "dismissive or doubtful." In response to Presidential Executive Order 13514, issued in October 2009, the NPS and other federal agencies established departmentwide climate change response programs. As with programs developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Forest Service, the NPS program focuses on monitoring climate change effects, communicating observations and engaging publics, adaptation strategies and mitigation actions. The Landscape Conservation Cooperatives led by the FWS, along with some parks, NPS regions, and inventory and monitoring networks, have identified indicators of climate change to monitor in high-elevation, high-latitude, coastal and arid lands areas. Development and implementation of monitoring protocols is underway.

Many recent papers discuss how scientists communicate about climate change and how various audiences receive the messages. Scien-

tists (and park resource managers) have been advised — not only in communicating about climate change — to watch their "jargon," to use Fahrenheit rather than Centigrade when talking about trends in temperature, even to avoid the term "theory," which may (mistakenly) convey that a process such as the greenhouse effect is merely a hunch or speculation.

Scientists endeavoring to be precise often err in sounding too vague about the connection between human activities and climate change, yet the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, both distinguished consortiums of scientists from many disciplines, have attributed most of the earth's warming of the past 50 years to human activity. Parks such as Rocky Mountain are documenting changes it has already seen in response to climate trends. What is expected in the future is explained in simple, direct statements such as "on average, the onset of spring snowmelt and runoff in Colorado is beginning about two weeks earlier than in the late 1970s" (NPS and the Center of the American West).

However, recent sociological studies suggest that attitudes and beliefs, including religious, political and cultural backgrounds, complicate Americans' views about whether climate change is occurring and whether or not it is an important societal issue.

In this research, findings contradicted the hypothesis that more (persuasive) information would increase peoples' acceptance of climate change as a fact or an important issue. Survey participants generally credited scientists of all types as being credible professionals, but their attitudes about climate change were strongly influenced by whether they thought their personal behaviors and/or livelihoods would be at risk of change.

As our agencies develop complex, down-scaled climate models and vulnerability assessments to help predict changes in resource condition, and as we work on simplifying the resulting factual messages for park visitors and other publics, we may also need more thoughtful dialogue about how to connect with people on climate change and other issues that are vital to the future of park management. □

— Sue Consolo Murphy
Grand Teton

Kudos List

These people have either given a gift membership to a new member or recruited a new member or an old member to return to ANPR. Thanks for your membership help.

Mark Herberger
Reed McCluskey
Kevin Moses
Cora Provins
Maureen Finnerty
Casey Horrigan
Jason Flynn

Annalisa Jones
Nicole Schaub
Mary Martin
Alison Steiner
Bill Kruger
Carey Goldstein

Professional Issues

Where did summer go? Here we are in fall already and it seemed as if summer flew by as quick as a nighthawk.

Fall has much anticipation for a lot of us, especially for me. It means the end of a safe summer season, and most of us will start slowing down our workload. It also means hunting patrols, crisp azure skies and a Ranger Rendezvous in beautiful Indian Wells, California! I encourage everyone who can make a day or all week of the Rendezvous to come and join us. See what being part of this fantastic and dynamic team can do for you.

— Jessica Korhut, Bighorn Canyon

ANPR's new health insurance program kicked off July 1; help spread the word

Transamerica is the new insurer for ANPR members who are seasonal workers or volunteers and need affordable health care.

Please help get this information out to prospective enrollees. ANPR's health insurance program apparently still isn't widely known even though this is its sixth year. We continue to see comments from national park employees on social media indicating that they were unaware of the program's existence. For the previous five-plus years ANPR contracted with Aetna to provide an affordable insurance plan.

Details about the current insurance program are on the ANPR website at www.anpr.org/insurance.htm. Help us spread the word.

Personal Finance

More money in your pocket at the end of each month — We work hard for the money we earn. When we spend it we expect quality products and services. A lot of us live within our means — we don't spend more than we make. But sometimes there are items we need or want that exceed our income. Most of the time we are able to purchase these items on credit and then pay off the debt within the next month or two. Unfortunately, there are times when we can't make the pay-off and our debt increases. With loans for homes and vehicles we usually enter into a contract for a certain amount of money over a specified amount of time.

When we make smaller purchases using credit or credit cards, the time factor usually becomes whatever it takes to pay off the balance, and is based on a minimum monthly payment. If the balance increases, the minimum

monthly payment increases to a point. The scary part of this formula lies in the interest rate (usually high and often adjustable) and the minimum monthly payment. For example, you purchase a \$2,000 television and make the minimum monthly payment. Total cost would be near \$7,000 over about 30 years. This is poor economics for us as individual consumers, but a great deal for the lender who earns money in interest you paid. I call this "give-away money."

Truth-in-lending laws require mortgage companies to tell you that the total cost of that \$100,000 house you just bought will cost you nearly \$300,000 and take you 30 years to pay off. Not so for the credit card companies mentioned above.

By the time we pay for ongoing costs-of-living, such as food, clothing, utilities, taxes and more, and maybe entertainment, and then pay the mortgage, credit card and other bills,

there isn't much left in our pocket at the end of the month.

We took action earlier and quit creating debt, didn't we? In doing this we also began to quit giving away money.

Another way to start this process is to pay cash for items. If you don't have the cash, don't purchase the item. Easier said than done, this works well with want items, but it often falters when a need arises you can't avoid. We need to be creative and careful.

Think about some of the items you purchase that you could defer or eliminate, that would let you accumulate that extra bit of cash for the needs and even some of the wants. Ideas include the \$5 latte five days a week when a \$1 cup of coffee would suffice; the two-per-week lunches at \$14 as opposed to the brown bag \$3 deal over a year; the \$3 DVD rental every Saturday; the \$15 pizza every Friday, plus cheesy bread, beer and more. What about that quick driving trip to the store for items you forgot? The gas, wear and tear, and insurance on the car don't come free — not at \$3.50+ per gallon and 20 mpg or less. Use your imagination and do the math. There are many actions we can take to reduce our outflow of cash. P.S. Don't use the credit card. It equals giveaway money, which costs us.

This is mostly common sense, but how many of us are taking action? Here are our actions steps so far:

- Quit creating debt
- Quit giving away money
- Start paying cash wherever possible
- Continue paying off our debts

Next issue: *Beginning Steps to Paying Off Your Debt* □

— Bruce W. Reed, Daniel, Wyoming
anprbruce@yahoo.com

Humor in Uniform

Spelling Errors — An email circulated to 15 superintendents about an upcoming meeting. At one point I wrote that I would be attending the meeting in "Rabid City." This prompted a reply: "That sounds like a scary place!"

This was followed by my admission that spell check doesn't catch my most common spelling errors in planning documents. "Public" is a commonly used word. But spell check does not highlight the word if the "l" is omitted.

A series of embarrassing spell-check error messages ensued, culminating in *the* most mortifying error. While working in special use permits, I wrote an email back to an angry person trying to get a right-of-way permit. I intended to start off with "hello" but dropped the "o" in the reply. I was horrified by my error (unintentional, of course!)

— Ken Mabery, Scotts Bluff

IRF Update



IRF on Facebook

The International Ranger Federation has established a Facebook page in English and Spanish. Many of you may already know of the IRF Facebook group, which was started after one of the World Ranger Congresses by rangers interested in networking. It has been a good place for sharing ranger issues.

With the new IRF organization page you can check for official news regarding IRF activities, ranger associations, rangers and related issues. You also can comment on those stories and share them with others.

Visit the new Facebook page and "like" it, then share it with your friends. Search for International Ranger Federation or Federación Internacional de Guardaparques.

Sponsorships needed for Congress attendees in Tanzania

The next World Ranger Congress is set for Nov. 4-9. Although many rangers already have registered, IRF has a list of about 25 rangers who need sponsorships to be able to attend. These rangers are from developing nations such as Angola, Guatemala and Kyrgyzstan. They work in important protected areas and want to meet rangers from other parts of the world, then work to form a ranger association in their country.

IRF is seeking support for sponsorships from ranger associations and their members. If you are planning to attend the Tanzania

Congress, or have been fortunate enough to attend past congresses, perhaps you could join Deanne and me and other ANPR members in helping to support one of these rangers.

The cost of registration for the congress is about \$1,000 (U.S. currency). It covers lodging and meals at the congress. Travel costs can vary from inexpensive (from African countries) to about \$2,000 (U.S. currency). Even if you can't fully sponsor a ranger, contributions of any amount would be appreciated.

You may make your contribution to ANPR (see www.anpr.org), and note that it is for helping to sponsor a delegate to the World Ranger Congress. Thank you!

IUCN World Conservation Congress

President Deanne Adams and Secretary and Executive Officer Elaine Thomas will attend the forum portion of the World Conservation Congress Sept. 6-15 in Jeju, South Korea. A key reason for attending will be to present the Young Conservationist Award sponsored by the IRF and the IUCN/World Commission on Protected Areas. They will present a poster on ranger training and attend other sessions at forum workshops. They also will meet with key IUCN and WCPA members.

I'll report on this meeting and the award ceremony in the next issue of *Ranger*. Travel well. □

— Tony Sisto, tsisto47@aol.com



Make memories at the Rendezvous in California's desert

Plan to join your ANPR colleagues for this annual gathering.

Enhancing the Green & Gray, the theme of this year's Ranger Rendezvous, is a return to activity-based leadership, training opportunities, special events and fun. The Rendezvous begins Sunday, Oct. 28, with afternoon registration and an evening president's reception and runs through noon Thursday, Nov. 1.

For those wanting to become more involved with the future of ANPR or to begin skills development of running an organization, start by joining the ANPR Board of Directors meeting from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 28.

The Miramonte Resort and Spa in Indian Wells, California, (near Palm Springs) is the host site of Ranger Rendezvous XXXV.

Program and speakers

Keynote speaker Rick Tate will present "How to Keep the Green and Gray from Becoming Black and Blue." The topic will provide inspiration that is fitting for the challenges parks are facing. William Tweed, author of "Uncertain Path: A Search for the Future of National Parks," also is scheduled.

The Stephen Mather Award will be presented by Craig Obey of National Parks Conservation Association. A mystery guest is scheduled for Thursday morning's closing session. Discussion on Thursday morning will focus on ANPR hosting the Eighth World Ranger Congress in the United States in 2016.

Training opportunities

Are you seeking professional development training? Members of the Joshua Tree Search and Rescue team will conduct "Introduction to Technical Rescue" Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 27-28, at Joshua Tree. *There is no cost to participants.* The course will cover some of the basics of technical rescue, and the new SAR task books can be distributed and partially signed off. Camp sites will be available. Minimum 6 participants, maximum 30. For further information and to register, contact Jan Lemons at jlemons3@yahoo.com. Registration closes Friday, Oct. 5.

"Performance-Based Coaching" will be facilitated by Bill Wade, ANPR life member and NPS retiree, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday,

Oct. 28. Course highlights include clarity and alignment of performance expectations; improved performance diagnostic skills regarding results and motivation; and positive impact on employee motivation and retention. Full details are on the ANPR website.

Two sessions of interest to seasonals and younger workers will be a meeting with WASO HR representatives on getting hired, and once hired, mastering a career path; how to apply for NPS jobs; a résumé review; and details about the NPS Career Academy; and a panel discussion, "Youth and the National Parks," a look at the issues of youth involvement in national parks and the NPS. It will be from two perspectives — that of young park visitors and also a foundation for developing the workforce of the future. ANPR member Jin Prugsawan will lead the discussion.

Lodging details

The conference room rate for a single/double is \$99 plus taxes and resort fees (13.37%); add \$10 for a triple/quad room. Make reservations by calling 1-800-237-2926 and give the confer-

ence name: **35th Ranger Rendezvous.**

ANPR's room block will be held through Oct. 6.

Roommates, ridesharing & scholarships

ANPR will coordinate room and ride sharing to help defray expenses for attendees. If interested in these options, please mark them on the preregistration form.

We also hope to award several scholarships to first-time attendees through the **Bill Supernaugh Memorial Scholarship Fund.** Applications are being accepted online.

Seasoned Rendezvous registrants can sign up to share their room with a first-time attendee and help mentor them at the Rendezvous. See the preregistration form on the website.

Special activities

More details about the Rendezvous, including a community service project, a ranger-led bus tour to Joshua Tree, a free climbing clinic, the traditional NPS film night, Halloween costume party, photo contest and golf tourney, are explained on the website at www.anpr.org. 

Supernaugh Memorial Scholarship Fund needs your assistance

Each year ANPR hopes to fund several first-time Rendezvous attendees to the annual gathering that was well-loved by the late Bill Supernaugh, an active life member. Can you help replenish the fund so several people can travel to this year's Rendezvous?

These first-time attendees have given the gathering favorable reviews for its professional and social networking benefits.

Do you have a story to tell?

ANPR's Oral History Project will kick off at this year's Ranger Rendezvous, and we invite conference participants to take part in the fun! We're seeking all sorts of park stories — old ones, new ones and (even) tall ones.

Did you ever walk into your ranger station to find a bear staring back at you? Have you rescued climbers from Denali's summit during a storm? Was your first Park Service uniform a dress and white go-go boots? If so, come tell us your tales!



Logo design courtesy of Melissa Dalgetty

Go to the **Donate Now** tab on ANPR's website — www.anpr.org — and specify a small amount to the Supernaugh Fund. Your generosity is appreciated.

The Oral History Project aims to collect, share and preserve memories that capture the spirit, character and fundamental values of the National Park Service. A group of NPS oral historians will conduct 30-minute, informal interviews throughout the Rendezvous.

To reserve a time slot that fits your schedule, contact Alison Steiner at rangeralison@gmail.com. Sign-up sheets also will be available at the Rendezvous registration desk.



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All in the Family

Send your news to Teresa Ford, *Ranger* editor: fordedit@aol.com or 25958 Genesee Trail Road, PMB 222, Golden, CO 80401. You also can send All in the Family news and update contact information at ANPR's website: www.anpr.org. Go to **Member Services**.

Bob Love, an ANPR life member and 32-year NPS veteran, assumed the duties of superintendent of Tumacácori NHP in southern Arizona in late August. Previously he was the chief ranger at Saguaro. A native of southern California, he earned a bachelor's degree in park and recreation management at California State University, Chico. He and wife **Stacey** have two sons, **Matthew** and **Daniel**.

Mike Murray, superintendent of the Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras, Wright Brothers and Fort Raleigh), retired July 31 after 34 years with the National Park Service. A Virginia native, he began his NPS career after working as an outdoor recreation instructor and program leader. Before the Outer Banks Group

post, he worked at Cape Cod, Yellowstone, Everglades, Yosemite, New River Gorge and Sequoia-Kings Canyon.

He served as deputy superintendent at Cape Cod for eight years, including nearly a year as acting superintendent. While in that position he received the 2004 Northeast Regional Director's Superintendent of the Year for Natural Resources Stewardship. Last year he received the Director's Award for Superintendent of the Year for Natural Resource Stewardship.

Mike is married to **Elizabeth Kirkpatrick Murray**, and has two sons, **Evan** and **Kian**.

Jeff Ohlfs has been promoted to chief ranger at Joshua Tree. He has worked at the park for 21 years, previously as the Cottonwood district ranger. He also has worked at Lake Meredith, Hot Springs, C&O Canal, Redwood, Whiskeytown, Crater Lake and Pinnacles.

Cindy Ott-Jones, currently superintendent of Lake Meredith and Alibates Flint Quarries, will move to Big Bend as superintendent in late September. She brings more than 30 years of experience with the NPS. □

Australian ranger seeks exchange with U.S. national park ranger

Michael Sharp, a ranger with the National Parks and Wildlife Service in New South Wales, Australia, wants to swap places with a National Park Service ranger for a year.

Although the two agencies don't have a formal interagency policy on ranger exchange, Sharp's employer is supportive of individual staff pursuing an exchange themselves. Details about salary and conditions could be figured out later, but an exchange ranger would work under the same conditions and pay as rangers in the NSW agency.

Sharp is based in the Mudjee area office, one of four areas that make up the Blue Mountains Region. There is an area manager, three rangers, an administrative officer, a works supervisor and six field officers. Each ranger manages separate national parks and nature reserves.

Sharp is responsible for Coolah Tops National Park (approximately 16,000 hectares) and Avisford Nature Reserve (approximately 2,500 hectares).

Mudjee, a small rural community with a population of about 8,000, is about 3.5 hours northwest of Sydney by car. Sharp has a comfortable, three-bedroom house and car that he would offer to the exchange ranger.

His main work responsibilities include pest plant and animal control, neighbor liaison, fire management, law enforcement and visitor management. He typically spends two to three days a week in the field depending on workload.

Sharp is happy to explain many more details about the protected areas he manages, specifics about the job and where he lives. Contact him at michael.sharp@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Welcome (or welcome back) to the ANPR family!

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

Matthew Abraham Montrose, CO
 Silas Aiken Flagstaff, AZ
 Michael Allen Woodbridge, VA
 Aaron Bohlke Gustavus, AK
 Thomas Bunyan Urbana, IL
 Rob Burrows Denali Park, AK
 Timothy Cook Franklin Lakes, NJ
 James Cornett Whitefish, MT
 Chad Cornwell San Diego, CA
 Nathan Edgerton Security, CO
 Timothy Federal Anchorage, AK
 Adam Fix Buffalo, NY
 Colleen Flanagan Denver, CO
 Matthew Frappier Salt Lake City, UT
 Gretchen Freshman Miami, FL
 Courtney Gaalema Medora, ND
 Amanda Garrison Stafford, VA
 Thomas Gerlach Paramus, NJ
 David Good Shield Grand Junction, CO
 Jason Hairston Houston, TX
 Rebecca Heston Berkeley, CA
 Kelly Honce Bayport, NY
 Joan Jacobowski Hayward, WI
 David Jacobs Quincy, MA
 Annalisa Jones Spring Valley, CA
 Kyle Kaiser Skagway, AK
 Nathan Kennedy Browning, MT
 Justine Lai Sacramento, CA
 David Lamfrom Barstow, CA
 Katherine Landry Wawona, CA
 Lee Lang Fort Collins, CO
 Shaun Lehmann Forest Hill, MD
 Jared Low Three Rivers, CA

Joshua Lynch Cuyahoga Falls, OH
 Stephen Matt Los Alamos, NM
 Sarah Moddel Staten Island, NY
 Barbara Moritsch Eagle, ID
 Bryan Muroski Peninsula, OH
 Jeremy Painter Mount Nebo, WV
 Gina Palmer Skagway, AK
 Aaron Peters Midpines, CA
 Julianne Pierson Bloomington, MN
 Brandon Range Loveland, CO
 Jonathan Rees Yardley, PA
 Brian Roberts Avon, CO
 Carla Robinson Granbury, TX
 Joseph Rogat Anchorage, AK
 Daniel Romes Kalaupapa, HI
 Jordan Ruff Chelmsford, MA
 Chris Sailor Longmont, CO
 Kathryn Sargeant Poulsbo, WA
 Frank Sheckler Yucca Valley, CA
 Kirk Singer Livingston, TX
 Renee Smith Three Rivers, CA
 Lucinda Stafford Page, AZ
 Sharon Strickland Panama City, Beach FL
 Deborah Strock Hagerman, ID
 Daniel Strong Groveland, CA
 Mary Thompson Woodbridge, VA
 Thomas Thompson Collinsville, OK
 Stephanie Toothman Washington, DC
 Seth Tuuri Petaluma, CA
 Daniel Umstead Syracuse, NY
 Joanne Welch & Chris Smith Anchorage AK
 Christie Willard Kinzers, PA
 David Young Mason, MI

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Visit www.facebook.com/parkrangers or search for Association of National Park Rangers on either site.



Yellowstone employees marched in the 2012 Montana LGBT Pride parade in Bozeman this past summer. *NPS photo*

Yellowstone employees participate in LGBT Pride in Montana

Yellowstone National Park joined the nation in observing the month of June as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month. LGBT and straight ally NPS and concession employees marched in the Pride parade in Bozeman, Montana, in June and staffed an informational table about the park.

NPS and concession employees were invited to participate via emails and flyers posted in various park buildings. For the first time an official news release was issued announcing

the park's participation at Pride.

Visibility is important to the LGBT community, especially in a conservative and rural part of the country. Pride is an opportunity to raise awareness of the LGBT community and to celebrate the diversity of the workforce. Pride also is an opportunity to show others that LGBT people are their friends, co-workers, neighbors and the park rangers who educate them about national parks like Yellowstone.

In giving his approval, Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk said he considered this activity to be an example of park employees doing community and public outreach similar to other park outreach efforts. Like last year, hundreds of people applauded and cheered us during the parade. We also received compliments on the quality of our resource table and the information we had to share with the public.

Park employees answered questions about Yellowstone, encouraged those attending the Pride event to visit the park, and explained how people could apply for jobs at the park. Approximately 75 people came to the table and talked with staff about the park. Several people said that they were impressed that the NPS and Yellowstone were represented at Pride.

Event highlights included 19 people in our group marching in the parade, as opposed to seven people last year, and two NPS employees marching in uniform compared to one last year.

— Kevin Franken
Yellowstone

Another park employee library, this one at UC California, Davis

All his adult life, Mike Harrison (who died in 2005 at age 107) collected books and art dealing with the West.

He had a special affinity for the National Park Service due to being a ranger at Grand Canyon from 1922-1931. Upon his death, his entire estate went to the University of California at Davis.

I have, over the years, donated many items dealing with the Park Service, as did my father (the late Dwight Hamilton).

Last April I took the train to Davis and met with the head of UC Davis Special Collections to tour the Michael and Margaret B. Harrison Western Research Center on the campus.

The collection consists of more than 21,000 volumes, in addition to the work of famous artists. Information about the center can be found at www.lib.ucdavis.edu/harrison or by calling (530) 752-2112.

— Leslie Spurlin
Grand Junction, Colorado

Life Century Club Members

Life members who contribute an additional \$125 are recognized in the **Second Century Club**. **Third Century** membership can be attained by contributing an additional amount to bring your total life membership to \$500; **Fourth Century** membership can be attained by contributing an additional amount to bring your total life membership to \$750; **Fifth Century** to \$1,000; and **Sixth Century** to \$1,250 or more.

If you are a life member, consider raising your contribution to the next level.

2nd Century Club

Lawrence Belli	Ron Konklin
Tony Bonanno	Bob Krumenaker
Jim Brady	Mary Laxton
Paul Broyles	Tomie Patrick Lee
Rod Broyles	John Mangimeli
David Buccello	Colleen Mastrangelo
Patricia Buccello	Jack Morehead
Dennis Burnett & Ginny Rousseau	Rick Mossman
Michael Caldwell	Aniceto Olais
William Carroll	Tim Oliverius
Cliff Chetwin	Bill Pierce
Bruce Collins	Tom Richter
Bruce Edmonston	Bryan Swift
A.J. Ferguson	Mark Tanaka-Sanders
Mitch Fong	Dale & Judy Thompson
Hal Grovert	Victor Vieira
Dr. Russell Clay	Karen Wade
Harvey	Philip Ward
James Hummel	Kathy Williams
Craig Johnson	Janice Wobbenhorst
Margaret Johnston	Phil Young

3rd Century Club

Erin Broadbent	Jonathan Lewis
Carl Christensen	Dan Moses
Kathleen Clossin	William Quinn
Maureen Finnerty	Edward Rizzotto
Rebecca Harriett	Teresa Shirakawa
Steve Holder	Barry Sullivan
Mary Karraker	John Townsend
Dave Lattimore	

4th Century Club

Deanne Adams & Tony Sisto	Bruce & Georjean McKeeman
Vaughn Baker	Jean Rodeck
Deborah Liggett	Rick Smith
Jay Liggett	Nancy Wizner
Scot McElveen	

5th Century Club

Rick Erisman
Butch Farabee

6th Century Club

Dick Martin
Stacy Allen

7th Century Club

Bill Wade

8th Century Club

Wendy Lauritzen

In Print

Public Trust, J.M. Mitchell. Prairie Plum Press, Littleton, Colo., June 2012. ISBN: 978-0985227227, 352 pages, hardcover, \$24.95; paperback from tatteredcover.com, \$17.95; Kindle, \$6.99

Reviewed by Rick Smith

Have you ever read a piece of fiction where the dilemmas that the main character faces are so familiar and real that you think you are reading nonfiction? That's the way I felt when reading *Public Trust*. It is the story of an NPS resources specialist, Jack Chastain, assigned to Piedras Coloradas National Park in New Mexico. He is at this site after running afoul of political interests in his previous assignment in Montana. The author never reveals exactly what the problems were, but obviously they were serious enough to merit reassignment.

Chastain arrives shortly after the president has declared a national monument to be jointly managed by the NPS and the BLM. This action has bitterly divided the community of Las Piedras, especially a developer who needs a road across the new monument to make his planned development viable and needs to prove that an endangered frog lives nowhere nearby. Moreover, Chastain is working on a fuel-reduction effort in a part of the park that involves some tree thinning. This plan is the subject of a lawsuit brought by local environmentalists who misrepresent the thinning as "logging in a national park." Does any of this sound familiar?

As the cliché says, the plot thickens when Chastain becomes involved with the daughter of one of the fiercest opponents of the monument, a former state senator. Their relationship is marred by the father's mistrust of federal employees and the constant sniping at the feds by the developer.

Chastain doesn't have many people to turn to for support because the environmental community is led by a eco-Nazi whose only interest is to stop the fuel-reduction program in the park and prevent the planned development adjacent to the monument. When Chastain tries to bring the parties together to discuss their differences and learn what the other side really wants, the environmental leader disrupts the meeting and the mediation effort fails.

Everything blows up in a public meeting that the BLM and the NPS convene to listen to the community's ideas on the future manage-

ment of the monument. It reminded me of a public meeting that Maureen Finnerty and I once held in south Florida on hunting camps in Big Cypress. Like that meeting, the public meeting in Las Piedras is full of attacks against the federal government and the employees of the two agencies. Finally, Chastain speaks out to tell the two sides that there is room for agreement here but their built-in prejudices against each other and the feds are blinding them to those opportunities.

It was a neat end to the meeting, but the next morning, the superintendent (who, by the way, is a pretty sympathetic figure in this novel) informs Chastain that he is to have no further contact with the public and that he has been ordered to arrange another transfer for him. Once again, Chastain has been caught between competing interests that have no interest in compromise.

As Chastain is contemplating his future, a fire breaks out, discovered to have been started by our old friend, the eco-Nazi. During the attempt to control the fire, he and the crews are able to turn the fire into the area that had already been thinned, thereby reducing its rate of spread and its danger to nearby properties outside the park. One of those properties belongs to the former state senator. Chastain has the senator's ranch house foamed and is able to evacuate his daughter who was trapped by the fire. In one of the burned-over areas, Chastain makes an interesting discovery that promises to change a lot of people's minds.

One thing I liked about this book, since it was written by a former NPS employee, is that the NPS employees in the book talk like NPS employees. Mitchell also accurately catches the environmental-speak that we so often hear. The anti-fed rhetoric also rings true. Chastain's position of being caught between competing interests over park issues is certainly familiar to most *Ranger* readers.

This is a good read, and it's fun to trace the ups and downs of Chastain's time at Piedras Coloradas. Of course, his reassignment is canceled and the book's last scene has him swimming nude in a secluded pool with the former state senator's daughter. That was the only part that didn't seem familiar to me. □

Rick Smith, a life member and former president of ANPR and the International Ranger Federation, retired from the National Park Service after a 31-year career. His last position was as associate regional director of resources management in the former Southwest Region. He then served as acting superintendent of Yellowstone. He lives in New Mexico and Arizona.

About the author

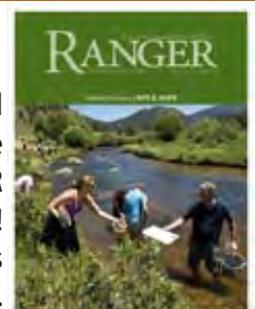
J. M. Mitchell has known the conflict over public policy, especially in the debates over America's favorite places, the national parks. He was chief of the agency's Biological Resource Management Division and retired after 36 years of service, having worked in Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Zion, Washington, D.C., and Fort Collins, Colorado. He worked on many of the most controversial issues facing the national parks, and knew the privilege—and sometimes the pain—of public service.

Mitchell started writing fiction for fun as a diversion from technical and scientific writing. It was the ironies observed while conducting public meetings in Yosemite and Grand Canyon that led him to create Jack Chastain and the twisting plot of *Public Trust*. Rather than use the staple image of the inept government bureaucrat, he wanted to create a character of competence—a public servant, maybe a damaged one—and throw him into conflict and politics, amidst competing interests and polarized expectations. Could he survive?

Mitchell, his wife and daughter divide their time between Denver and their ranch on Colorado's Western Slope. He remains engaged with the National Park Service, helping to develop training for natural resource professionals. He also is working with a group of retired colleagues to start The Nature Fund for National Parks, a philanthropy dedicated to supporting science and stewardship. □

Do you know of an interesting book to review for *Ranger*? We encourage you to write a review, so please contact editor Teresa Ford to suggest a title: fordedit@aol.com

Give a friend or colleague an ANPR membership! Details on next page.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION — Association of National Park Rangers

New Member(s) Renewing Member(s) Date _____

Name of ANPR member we may thank for encouraging you to join _____

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

- | | Individual | Joint |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Seasonal/Intern/Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$45 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$85 |
| • Permanent or Retiree | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$145 |

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not an NPS employee or representative of another organization

- Sustaining \$70
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ACTIVE (all NPS employees/retirees) ASSOCIATE (other than NPS employees)

- | | |
|---|---|
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