

The CSPRA

Wave

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CALIFORNIA STATE PARK RANGERS ASSOCIATION

JAN -FEB 2005

NORTHEAST NUGGETS



**CASCADE SECTOR, NORTHERN BUTTES DISTRICT
(see pp. 3-9)**

Also: Nature Noir, pp.10-11; Ship of Fools, p.12



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



VALERIE BRADSHAW
CSPRA President

As I think about what to write for this message, I cannot help but wonder what the New Year will have in store for each and every one of us. It is also impossible to not have thoughts of how blessed we have been to live and work in such an incredibly diverse state as California. I overheard a conversation at the airport the other day that speaks not only to the point the person was making, but can easily have been about the diversity and close proximity of our 278 state park units.

Update from Sacramento
by *Monica Miller, CSPRA Lobbyist*

With the November election having come and gone the state has sworn-in a new legislative class. Term-limits having been fully implemented, the legislature will turn over one-third of their members every two years. Although this election cycle did not bring the winds of change that many had predicted, the legislature will continue to be controlled by the Democratic Party. The Assembly will remain at 48 democrats and 32 Republicans and the Senate will remain at 25 democrats and 15 Republicans. The leadership is divided up between north and south, the Assembly elected a speaker from Los Angeles, Assembly Member Fabian Nunez and the Senate elected a president pro-tem from the Bay

The statement was about how much a young woman enjoyed living in the Sacramento area as within a short drive in any direction, she could be in the desert, mountains, gold country, major metropolitan city, forests, coast, lakes, rivers – virtually any environment one could think of. California State Parks, up and down the state, offers all of these “attractions” and so much more.

With the New Year so very close, or by the time this is published already here, we look forward to another year of challenges and adventures. The legislative session is once again underway; the California Park Conference is fast approaching; immediately followed by Park Advocacy Day, on March 14; and numerous annual events that all of us are involved with. Let’s not forget to stop and take time to remember where we are blessed to live and work – or to have worked – and the legacy that we will continue to help protect, preserve and restore.

I hope that you enjoy reading this edition of the WAVE and that you will have the opportunity to learn about and visit these wonderful parks! Happy New Year!

Area, Senator Don Perata.

The legislature was sworn-in on December 6, 2004 and will officially begin the session on January 3, 2005. They have already named Committee chairs but will continue to work on membership throughout the month of December. Upon their return in January, the Governor will present his “State of the State” on Jan. 5, which is expected to be grim.

The structure deficit will be \$6.7 billion so the focus next year will remain on how to close that budget gap. With so many new faces in the legislature it will be critical to get to know your local legislator. Invite them to your park, let them meet with your staff and allow them to understand and experience first hand the importance of State Parks. With term limits and difficult financial times ahead it is

NORTHEAST NUGGETS

by *Michael Gross*, Superintendent
Cascade Sector, Northern Buttes Dst.

Diversity is a recurrent theme within DPR. The Cascade Sector of the Northern Buttes District presents a different type of diversity: diversity of park units. The Sector is comprised of five park units, Shasta SHP, Weaverville Joss House SHP, Castle Crag SP, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP, and Ahjumawi Lava Springs SP. These parks are spread throughout Northeastern California.

Shasta SHP was originally called Redding Springs and was the county seat for Shasta County in the late 1800's. A wildfire destroyed the commercial row and was rebuilt using bricks and metal shutters. Bricks are crumbling apart today due to the "springs" that the original town was named after, and because of the method of firing. The early town settlers used Manzanita wood to fire the bricks, which produced an intense fire, but the intensity did not last long enough to fully cure them.

The Weaverville Joss House SHP is located in the beautiful town of Weaverville nestled in the Trinity Mountains. This delicate wood Taoist temple is filled with irreplaceable hand-fired clay deity figures, altar banners, and other unique artifacts. Weaverville Joss House is the oldest Taoist Temple in California and is still used as a temple of worship today. One of the truly unique events is the Chinese New Year celebration.

Heading North on I-5 towards Oregon, one is awestruck by the beautiful spires of granite jutting out of the landscape. Castle Crag SP offers blue ribbon trout fishing in the upper Sacramento River, a base camp for hiking into the Castle Crag Wilderness, and remnants of the Civilian Conservation Corps architecture. If you are ever traveling by



Castle Crag, stop by and ask to feed the resident trout located in the pond behind the entrance station!

Ahjumawi Lava Springs gets its name from the Ahjumawi band of the Pit River Tribe of Native Americans. The translation of Ahjumawi is "where the waters come together". These waters are, Big Lake, Tule River, Ja She Creek, Lava Creek, and Fall River. The area is rich with archeological features and there are even prehistoric fish traps still used by the Ahjumawi Band every fall when Sacramento Sucker fish spawn. The only public access to Ahjumawi is by boat. Environmental campsites give a true wilderness experience, but do not forget your mosquito repellent!

A short distance from Ahjumawi is one of the crown jewels of the State

Park System, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP. Frank McArthur donated his land to the State of California in 1922. This prevented the Mount Shasta Power Company from using Burney Falls for power generation. Burney Falls, a National Historic Landmark, is the centerpiece of the park, but many visitors do not explore the recreational opportunities at Lake Britton. A day on Lake Britton provides excellent swimming, water skiing, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

The dedicated and talented employees of the Cascade Sector including Administrative Services, Technical Services, and Visitor Services, both seasonal and permanent, are invaluable in fulfilling the DPR mission. The Northern Buttes District Staff also supports the sector operations and are eager to assist with special needs.

The Cascade Sector can provide a diverse range of activities for the visitor. From exploring a gold rush era courthouse museum, touring a Taoist temple, to hiking amongst spectacular granite peaks, to enjoying a magnificent waterfall, or canoeing "where the waters come together", diversity abounds in the North State!



MAINTAINING CASCADE SECTOR

by Gary A. Nelson

Park Maintenance Chief I

The maintenance activities at each park unit are as varied as the terrain of the land and the plant species and wildlife that inhabit the areas.

A very small and talented technical services staff cooperatively work together with visitor services staff, administrative staff, seasonal staff, park volunteers and non-profit organizations to insure the Cascade Sector Park Units provide the highest standards of public service for the park visitors.

Currently Weaverville Joss House State Historic Park has a Cultural Stewardship Project to evaluate the Deluge Fire Suppression System that was constructed in 1993. The project will also include an alternate fire suppression system for the building. A conservation project to restore and preserve the Chinese wood inscriptions located on the exterior entrance of the temple building is being administered by Shasta State Historic Park Museum Curator **Linda Cooper**.

Shasta State Historic Park is in the initial stages of a Northern Service Center \$2,300,000 Multiple Year Capital Outlay Project to Stabilize the 1854 Brick Ruins at the Park. The project includes constructing a boardwalk on the exterior and selected areas of the interior of the Brick Ruins, installing a drainage system around and through the Ruins, developing a treatment plan to stabilize the Brick Ruins and conducting repairs on the structures.

A Cultural Stewardship Conservation Project to fund the evaluation of four pieces of historic machinery at Shasta State Historic Park is also being developed by Museum Curator **Linda Cooper**.

At McArthur Burney Falls Memorial State Park major improvements



Ruins at Shasta SHP



Shasta SHP barn



have taken place since the development of a General Plan in 1997. Improvements have included the construction of three new restroom facilities, a new campfire center, handicapped accessible campsites and the relocation and establishment of new campsites. The park has a total of 128 campsites and a hike in campsite for Pacific Crest Trail hikers. Currently the new park concession is in the process of finalizing plans for a new store in the campground. The Park Accessibility Unit recently traveled to the park and will be making new improvements during the upcoming year including establishing new accessible campsites, signage, parking sites and new restroom facilities. In 2010 CalTrans is planning the realignment of Highway 89 with the construction of a new bridge that crosses Lake Britton. This project will greatly enhance the park by moving the highway well away. With the new improvements to Highway 89 the remainder of the park General Plan

can be implemented.

At Castle Crags State Park and at McArthur Burney Falls Memorial State Park the on-going infestation of the pine bark beetle presents problems with the stand of pine trees that exist in the park. Technical Services staff along with the help of the Inmate Conservation Crews have successfully removed the damaged trees from the parks. The pine beetle infestation is a continuous problem within both parks and is addressed annually by the Northern Buttes Resource Ecologist.

A new parking lot area was recently constructed at the entrance station to the park to provide overflow parking for park visitors and day use hikers in the park and the Pacific Crest Trail. Future maintenance activities at Castle Crags State Park include improving the existing Castle Crags Campfire Center and constructing an accessible trail to the campfire center. The accessible trail will provide access for the handicapped park visitor that visits in the future.

SEASONS GREETINGS! GUNG HAY, FAT CHOY!

by Jack Frost
Guide I

Seasons greetings and Gung Hay, Fat Choy from the Weaverville Joss House State Historic Park. Although the 2005 Chinese New Year won't occur until February 12, we are already preparing for this yearly special event that brought 480 people to last year's celebration. With traditional Chinese Lion Dances, the New Year celebration has become an annual event that many North State residents look forward to each year. This annual Chinese celebration was first observed here in Weaverville in 1852 by the Chinese emigrants who came to Trinity County, 250 miles north of Sacramento, during California's great Gold Rush. By 1853 there were 2,500 Chinese men working in or around Weaverville, most of whom were employed in working their own placer gold claims. Surprisingly, many of the Chinese men who toiled in these claims were not just common laborers. They were middle-class businessmen, merchants and successful farmers. Very quickly the Chinese community in Weaverville became economically successful and large enough to require the need for a spiritual temple, or "joss house". The first Joss House was built in 1855 and served the community until it was lost in a town fire in 1873. The community, although smaller in numbers, had prospered and plans were quickly made to build a new Joss House. No expense was spared, and all the interior pieces for the new Joss House were acquired in China and shipped to Weaverville. The dedication ceremony on April 18, 1874 was cause for a grand celebration with Lion Dances to bring good fortune to the Chinese community. Most important, this new Joss House was topped by two wooden Chow Win Dragon Fish, which were believed to



Chinese Lion Dance at the annual New Years celebration

ward off fire.

The new Joss House had faithfully served the community for 82 years when in 1956 the last caretaker, Moon Lim Lee, officially donated the Joss House to the California State Parks for its preservation. Today as a State Historic Park the Joss House is not only seen by thousand of park visitors and school children who partake in the guided tours, but is still being used by descendants of those early Chinese emigrants. It has become known as the oldest continuously used Taoist Temple in California. Through the ongoing efforts of the California State Parks, Mr. Lee's wishes for the preservation of the Joss House continue.

In 2004 a Cultural Resource Preservation project was completed. The project was developed to preserve three silk altar banners which had been assessed by several textile conservators to be too fragile to leave in their present location in the Joss House. A team of park staff members and Taoist Priests from the Ching Chung Taoist Association in San Francisco worked together to acquire new altar banners and insure that Taoist traditions and cultural concerns were not overlooked. The original

banners were retired to a new climate controlled archival storage facility and exact reproductions were hand made in China as replacements. After completion of the project many local long term supporters of the park, including the daughter of Mr. Lee, have commented that the two new banners look just like the originals.

In 2005 several new conservation projects will begin here for the Joss House. And as in the past, the Chinese New Year will be celebrated with Lion Dances to bring good fortune to the year of the Rooster.



The Weaverville Joss House

“WHERE THE WATERS COME TOGETHER”

by Andrew Urlie, Ranger

Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park

Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park is the northeastern most unit of the California State Park system. Pronounced “Ah-jew-ma-we”, this is one of the last truly wild and scenic places left in California. It lies approximately 50 miles from the Oregon border and 75 miles from the Nevada border. This park is unlike any other California State Park. It is unique not only in its flora, fauna, and geography, but in that the only access is by boat—canoe and kayak are the most popular.

This park is operated out of McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park. It has some unique challenges.

Vehicle access by park staff is available through an easement on the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) land adjacent to the park. The local Ahjumawi people occupy this land to this day. The Ranger before me worked very hard to improve relations: he changed some of the commonly “mis”used names back to the original Native American names, like “Squaw Creek” became “Ja She Creek”, and the park adopted “Ahjumawi” as the official park name. Our district archeologist continued to improve relations by consulting and employing the Ahjumawi when projects are done in the park.

Duck hunting is permitted on Big Lake, but not over the portion bordering Ahjumawi. The “Horr Pond” section of the park is continuous with Big Lake, so our “No Hunting” signs are posted in the water and on buoys.

A non-native plant called *Eurasian Milfoil* invaded the Big Lake area, choking off drainage areas and



causing the water level of the lake to rise as much as 3 feet. Last year this caused the remaining levee to break, flooding 5000 acres of adjacent farm land. Before it broke, the only public access was flooded and became inaccessible, our access road into the park was underwater; and three of the nine environmental campsites were underwater. The park was closed for six months while PG&E repaired the levee.

Ahjumawi is 6000 acres of rugged lava flows and natural water springs. Two thirds of the land is covered by recent lava flows of black basalt. Summer is the most popular time of the year to visit, and the most popular activities are hiking, picnicking, fishing, bird watching, and camping in one of the nine environmental sites.

waters come together”. The Pit River Native Americans gave it this name because this is where Big Lake, Tule River, Ja She Creek, and Fall River come together. They form one of the largest systems of fresh water springs in the world. There are many signs of the early inhabitants including bedrock mortars, ancient village and ceremonial sites, and prehistoric fish traps. Legends abound about this area, and the Native Americans still use these sacred fishing sites.

Water is truly the essence of Ahjumawi. The water at Ahjumawi flows into the Tule River, Little Tule River, Fall River, and ultimately into the Pit River. The Pit River flows into the Sacramento River. This water flows south to San Francisco and passes under the Golden Gate Bridge into the Pacific Ocean.

FINDING ADVENTURE AT CASTLE CRAGS

by **Susan Grove**, Supervising Ranger
Castle Crags State Park

Castle Crags State Park is the first California State Park along the route of thousands of motorists each day who are driving south along Interstate 5 from Oregon. The park has a beautiful setting and beautiful features, and one major not so beautiful one: the freeway itself. In 1960, I-5 was routed right through the park. Many of the campsites back up to the freeway, and semi trucks roll by less than 100' from a camper's tent. Because of the freeway's proximity, many people stop at the park. Also because of the freeway, destination campers seldom spend more than a weekend.

Castle Crags has become a park that overnight visitors use as a base camp to explore the magnificent area around the park and around Mount Shasta, 15 miles north. They usually spend a day hiking into the crags themselves, and then are gone from their campsites during the day for the remainder of their stay. Because of this use pattern, attendance at interpretive programs has traditionally been very low, particularly at those presented during the day such as Junior Rangers and hikes. During the summers of '99 and '00, we funded a Park Interpretive Specialist on a grant. After the grant ended, since program attendance had been so low, I sought new ways to bring interpretation to our visitors.

Thus the "Adventure Pack" was created. I borrowed the idea from East Bay Regional Parks, who have Adventure Packs to check out at their Crab Cove Visitor Center. Castle Crags SP has three identical Adventure Packs. Flyers advertise the packs at the restroom bulletin boards. Visitors check them out at no charge from the entrance station, leaving car keys or a credit card as collateral. They must be returned before night-



fall. The packs each contain a booklet of Tree Cards and a booklet of Animal Cards, each featuring those that are commonly seen in the park. A "Stories and Poems" booklet is intended to be read during rests along the trail. And, finally, the "Activities" booklet serves as the "heart" of the pack. I created nine activity cards. All the activities are suitable to do along the two trails that are closest to the entrance station. Families will find variety to suit everyone's interests and can do all the activities or choose a few such as Aquatic Insect Study, Haiku, Meet a Tree, Animal Clues, Sense Census, and more. The pack contains the inexpensive items necessary to complete the activities, some of which are a funnel, pipe cleaners, bug boxes, bandanas, pencils and paper, and low cost binoculars and a two way microscope. The items are readily available from regular stores or from interpretive supply companies such as Acorn Naturalists.

Visitors sign an agreement when they check out the pack, acknowledging its contents and agreeing to pay for replacement of any items that they break or lose. For park statistics, the check out form also has a time out/in, and how many people are in the party. We've been using the packs for 2 °

summers now, and nothing has been stolen or even lost. The packs are popular because visitors can use them according to their own schedule, for as long or short a period as they like.

The Castle Crags Interpretive Association paid for most of the contents of the packs, and is committed to their upkeep. They pay for replacement of items when they wear out, or when we decide to create a new activity.

Park staff still presents traditional campfire programs since our campers are back in their sites in the evening. And, because many of our visitors are day users who have come for the spectacular hiking or just pulled in off the freeway to ooh and aah at the view of the Crags, we are working with the interpretive association to fund and create a visitor center. However, we're generally not giving daytime programs any longer. We recognize that, at this park, our visitors have their own things to do. But an Adventure Pack is waiting for them when they have time to learn about the park.

Are you interested in creating Adventure Packs for your park? Susan can be reached at sgrov@parks.ca.gov or 530-235-0956.

HERITAGE DAY AT McARTHUR-BURNEY FALLS MEMORIAL STATE PARK

by *Andrew Urlie*, Ranger

Picture yourself stepping back in time to the late 1870s. There are people horseback riding, children pressing apples and drinking fresh squeezed apple juice, and the people around you are dressed in period costumes. In the background, music from a long gone era permeates the air. The fiddlers are children and families singing and playing music together. This would be a great time to make a candle or perhaps try your hand at sawbucking. Could this be what it was like to live back in the 1800s?

Heritage Day is a special event at McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park. It was started in 1986 as a small event attended by a several hundred visitors. The event is held every fall on the Sunday associated with the Columbus Day holiday weekend. It has grown to be a very popular event attended by thousands of visitors.

McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park is a very popular traditional State Park campground in northern California. This park is most famous for its spectacular waterfall and popular campground. The campground is full every night from Memorial Day to Labor Day. It is a popular campground because of the many activities for families available at the park and in the area. At the park itself is the waterfall, Lake Britton (swimming, boating, fishing), and miles of hiking trails. In the surrounding area there is Mt. Lassen, Mt. Shasta, several national forests, numerous lakes and rivers, and some of the best fishing streams in the western United States.

Today the Heritage Day event



includes historic stage coach robberies by the Law Dawgs and Pistoleros of the Olde West, candle making, apple pressing, branding, sawbucking, old time fiddlers, pine bough doll making, weaving, spinning, blacksmithing, and many more activities. People of all ages find something of interest.

This event is sponsored by the McArthur-Burney Falls Interpretive Association (Friends of the Falls) in conjunction with service clubs from the community. It is a four-hour event that lasts from noon until 4:00 pm. Every visitor who attends learns about the history and pioneers of this area, participates in hands-on activities, and brings home a souvenir. The entire event, including entry to the park, is free of charge. This is truly a win, win, win event for the State Park, the community, and the visitors.

Coordinating this event is a chal

lenge because of the logistics and diversity of the event. There are between 150 and 200 exhibitors and 50 to 100 volunteers. There is extensive set up and preparation for each of the exhibitors.

Logistically, there are more people entering the park during this four-hour period than during the entire day on the busiest day of the July 4th weekend. Parking becomes one of our biggest concerns with volunteers stationed at each intersection and shuttle buses running throughout the



park at 15 minute intervals.

To encourage participation with the community and schools in the area, we made arrangements with the Superintendent of Schools to send home an informational flyer about the event with every student in the district. Groups involved included California State Parks, Cal Trans, Friends of the Falls, the Rotary Club, and the Lion's Club.

Putting SCA to Work in Your Park

by Susan Grove, Supervising Ranger

The budget continues to look dismal and times are tight. At McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP, the use of a low cost summer intern through the Student Conservation Association (SCA) has greatly helped in providing services that otherwise would go by the wayside during this crunch. A few other State Parks use SCAs, but staff in many of them may not know about this resource.

The Student Conservation Association is based out of New Hampshire and was created in 1957. The participants are mostly young people and are usually college students or recent graduates. They are seeking new adventures and often laying groundwork for a future career in conservation. They apply by sending an application to SCA after selecting internships that interest them from SCA's catalog. SCA then forwards those applications to the agency. The site coordinator from the agency conducts telephone interviews, selects an intern and advises SCA.

The intern receives free transportation to and from the intern site, free housing, a weekly living allowance (\$60/week in 2004), a uniform, training and guidance during the internship. Also, interns who are U.S. citizens may receive an education award after successful completion of the internship. This award was \$1250 in 2004.

As a sponsoring agency, your park can have an intern for 12 weeks to up to 12 months. At McArthur-Burney Falls, we have always had 12 week interns to help during our busy summer. You must provide housing to the intern and your share of the costs, which were \$2675 in 2004 for a 12 week intern. This calculates out to approximately \$5.60 per hour for the intern's work, which is much, much lower than DPR pay for a Park



SCA intern Michael Peterson

Interpretive Specialist or even a Park Aide. Since our intern at McArthur-Burney Falls does interpretation, our interpretive association pays for the cost.

Interns can do a variety of things, although SCA does not feel that sitting behind a counter at a visitor center provides enough of a challenge for the intern and asks that only a minimal portion of the duties be devoted to that activity. They do trail work, archeology or ecology tasks, research, habitat restoration, surveying, or interpretation and school programs.

At McArthur-Burney Falls, we have had an intern for each of the last 10 years. These young women and one young man have been an invaluable part of our staff and have given many campfire programs, hikes, nature craft programs, Junior Rangers, Little Rangers, and canoe trips. This past summer's intern, **Michael Peterson**, is a 19 year old student at Stanford University with a double major in mathematics and music. He has a passion for visiting state and national parks as a personal hobby, leading to the desire to work and live at one for a summer. Michael was a rarity for us in that he is from California. Most of our interns have been from the east, and one came to us from Canada. Michael gave 60 programs this summer, while the rest of the staff combined (rangers and volunteers)

gave 53. Having an intern enabled us to more than double our interpretive programming!

Parks can put in a request for an intern at any time with SCA, although they prefer to get requests for the summer by November 1st of the previous year for ideal recruitment. A Conservation Intern Request Form is available on line. To submit a request, go to www.theSCA.org/agency.cfm and then click on the "request SCA volunteers" link on the left side of the page. If you prefer a paper request form or want to learn more about the program, contact SCA at 603-543-1700.

I'm happy to discuss our experience with SCA and interns at McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP. I can be reached at 530-235-0956 or sgrov@parks.ca.gov.



Working Below the Waterline

by Janet Carle, editor

NATURE NOIR

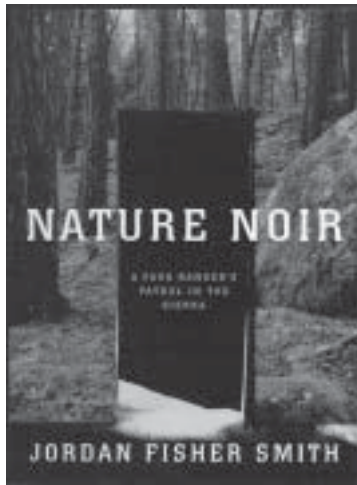
*A Park Ranger's Patrol
in the Sierra*

by **Jordan Fisher Smith**

Park people have a treat in store when retired ranger **Jordan Fisher Smith's** book *Nature Noir* hits bookstores nationwide in early February 2005. Smith, who worked at Auburn State Recreation Area for 14 years, combines all the elements of park work – love of the land, the philosophy of protection, the challenges of working with visitors and the occasional very real danger — into an extremely readable memoir of his years in the American River Canyons.

In 1967, the federal Bureau of Reclamation began condemning 48 miles of the American River canyons on the west side of the Sierra to build a dam as tall as the Hoover and four times as wide. State Parks was under contract to operate the finished reservoir as a recreational lake. When completion of the dam was delayed by seismic safety and environmental concerns, rangers were sent in to manage the land in the interim. In 1979 the State Park Commission classified the 42,000 acre reservoir site as a State Recreation Area, to bring it under Park laws. Jordan Fisher Smith arrived less than seven years later, in 1986. That's where his story begins.

Plying his trade as a ranger below the unfinished dam's waterline, Smith pondered what it meant to protect a "condemned landscape". While gold miners dredged the river and squatters built shelters in the canyons, ponderosa pines sprouted, wildflowers bloomed and bear and mountain lion



returned to this river that had been so impacted by the California Gold Rush. He writes: "After a century and a half of condemnation to usefulness, there was a great longing back toward wildness in these canyons, and they had begun to go that way with an energy like continental drift, like roots heaving pavement. It was desire; it was the force behind everything that happens without human permission or design...."

Smith tells of responding to suicides off the sky-high Foresthill Bridge, built to span the reservoir. He recovers the body of the first Californian in a century to be killed by a mountain lion, in 1994. He shares the grief of Laotian immigrants who have lost a son to the river's whitewater and he patrols that same whitewater by raft on a day the powerhouse staff turns down the river unexpectedly, placing him and his patrol partner in mortal danger.

Smith also notices a cloud of ladybugs migrating through, the continuous sound of the timeless river, and the "exquisitely gaudy" plumage of a wood duck. His advice to the suicide-prone on the Foresthill Bridge, "Stop before the bridge. Get out. Walk down the road. Sniff the air and if it smells good, breathe deep".

While efforts to build the Auburn Dam are presently at a standstill, Smith quotes writer John McPhee, who says in the book, *Assembling California*, "A dam site is a dam site forever." And so Ranger Smith's book



is a meditation on an impermanence we feel in our world in a time of extinctions and global climate change; an impermanence mirrored in Smith's own body, because, as he tells us in *Nature Noir*, he contacted life-threatening Lyme disease in the canyons of the American River and continues to deal with its effects.

Yet in the end the book is joyful: "A ranger is privileged to be intimate with things few other people spend much time with, and your job is to witness and remember." Jordan witnessed, remembered, and has the writing skills to make it all come alive again. Danger, drudgery, disappointment and joy. It's all in *Nature Noir*.

Ed: *Jordan will speak on March 9 at the Parks Conference. For a schedule of other readings/book signings, contact him at www.naturenoir.com (after Jan. 10).*

AUTHOR INTERVIEW:

Why did you write *Nature Noir*?

I think the main reason was, the place I was working as a ranger haunted me so. I had taken a job at Auburn State Recreation Area, a landscape which had been condemned by no less of an authority than the United States Congress to slip beneath the waters of a reservoir to be formed behind the Auburn Dam. The dam's completion had seen long delay, but I got there just in time to see it resur-

AUTHOR INTERVIEW

rected after a huge storm led to flooding in the Central Valley in 1986. It was a very strange experience to learn a new park and know that it could not be expected to be there in ten years.

Auburn is a state park by accident. The US Bureau of Reclamation, the federal dam building agency that was building the Auburn Dam, never operates recreational aspects of its reservoirs—boat launching ramps, campgrounds, patrol functions, and so on—the way the Corps of Engineers does at its reservoirs. Instead Bureau Reservoirs like Folsom Lake, Lake Powell, and Lake Mead are handed over to the National Park Service or state park agencies like DPR to run as recreational lakes.

Such a contract was made between the Bureau and State Parks in 1966. Meanwhile the Bureau started acquiring land in the American River canyons from willing sellers or by condemnation, and burned down the prior residents' cabins, houses, barns, mine buildings, and outbuildings. By 1975, when the dam was under construction, the Bureau had about 42,000 acres of rugged Sierra land. But then the dam ran into technical problems, and in the course of the delay, with no one watching over it, this de-facto wilderness area was resettled by gold miners, squatters, and long-term campers who put up crude shelters or lived out of campers and vans. By the late seventies there were armed people living all over the place, bodies had turned up in shallow graves down there, and stolen cars and old refrigerators were being pushed into the canyon.

With the land out of county tax status the county sheriff could hardly afford to assign resources to the problems. So the Bureau renegotiated its contract with State Parks and rangers were sent in. It was, to say the least, a very strange place to be one.

Why did you choose to work at Auburn in the first place?

I came to rangers from being a climber and mountaineer. I started out with Forest Service as a wilderness ranger and part-time fire fighter in the Tetons. Later I worked for the National Park Service as a law enforcement ranger in Sequoia and Kings Canyon. Once I got on permanent with the State I went to the beaches. I was full time at Pismo, but I ached to get back anywhere in the mountains. Of course I didn't have any seniority. So when a PI job at 1500 hours at Auburn, the closest I could get to Tahoe, I thought: "This is too good to be true." It kind of was. It was a dangerous place to work if you did your job. There was gunfire there so often that rangers didn't run out and jump in their trucks when they heard it. They'd just shake their heads and go on with what they were doing. Once I was there they extended my hours annually, so I was working nearly full time, but even then I never planned on staying there. Somehow the place got a hold on me and I stayed for the rest of my career, except for 1992, when I took unpaid leave from DPR to go back to the National Park Service as a law enforcement seasonal in Alaska.

What was your favorite part of working on the American River?

The size. A lot of state parks are fairly small, and this was a big landscape. And a very rugged one. There are still places I haven't seen there. And patrolling by whitewater raft was the kind of thing that made you feel like a real ranger. But we did spend most of our time in four-wheel-drives, on long dusty roads. There's a whole section of a chapter in the book just about dust and all the places it gets. Dust is your constant companion at Auburn.

Today rangers get so much law enforcement training. Your book makes one understand why it is necessary, but also shows sensitivity to the natural world. What is your advice to rangers just starting careers?

I believe wholeheartedly that you need to be a professional law enforcement officer, and I think I was. But in my opinion it is absolutely essential to be a naturalist and historian of some kind—to learn everything you can about the particular story—be it natural or cultural history—that you are protecting and be prepared to sing its praises to anyone you meet. There's a scene in the book where I wave down a passing car to show the occupants a once-in-a-lifetime natural phenomenon taking place within view of the road, and they see my badge and gun and assume they're being detained for a crime! But in my estimation, the two things are not at odds. All the best policemen are personable with the public, not just rangers. The ability to be friendly and communicative is a good thing in both lines of work, and in talking to people you both find out what's going on in your park, and have a chance to impart some value—to say why the place is so special to you. Patrol work gives you the opportunity to wander around and see things at all times of year. And there is some place in every patrol vehicle for field guides, so get some and carry them. And of course, good binoculars are as useful for identifying warblers as they are for staking out trailheads for car burglars, which I've done a fair amount of.

God knows I'm not a great naturalist. I am constantly humbled when in the presence of really good birders, really great botanists, expert geologists, archeologists who know California Indian ethnology better than I ever will. But I have tried all my life to the extent of my limited ability to know these things. That is why we are rangers and not highway patrol officers or sheriff's deputies. It should not be because we wouldn't be capable of their work, but more that we have this other calling.

See INTERVIEW, page 14

RANGERS OF THE CARRIBEAN

Warm weather in December? Jungley walks and exotic birds and wildlife? Mayan ruins and manatees? For 34 park people, the above proved irresistible during the week of December 4-11. The "Ship of Fools," also known as the Norwegian Sea, set sail from Houston with its boatload of park friends bound for Cozumel, Belize, Roatan (formerly part of British Honduras), and Cancun.

A great time was had by all, as you can see from these photos. Thanks to the Burkes for coming up with the idea.

SHIP OF FOOLS



^L to R: Dave Carle, Susan Burke, Karen Huie, Sue Burke, Bob Burke, Jim Burke, Ken Huie



^L to R: Dahlyne & Ken McKowen, Dave & Janet Carle, Kathleen Franklin, Jackie Ball, Dave & Mary VanCleve

<< Carl Chavez, Joe & Karen Hardcastle



^L to R: Ken Anderson, Shana & John Knott, Jim Burke



^THE WHOLE GANG! (find the face): Ken & Sue Anderson, Jackie Ball, Bob & Sue Burke, Jim & Susan Burke, Dave & Janet Carle, Carl & Margaret Chavez, Kathleen Franklin, Joe & Karen Hardcastle, Ken & Karen Huie, Steffini Jarrett, John & Shana Knott, Dahlyne & Ken McKowen, CL & Stephanie Price, Jyl Rubin, Jeff & Maryanne Schloo, Roisin and Ann Sharp, Dave & Mary VanCleve, Ken & Linda Wilbur, Pete & Sue Williams

BOARD MINUTES


Board Minutes from 10-02-04, at Retiree's Rendezvous

Present: Val Bradshaw, Karen Barrett, Ron Brean, Angy Nowicki, Jim Neal, Wes Cater, Jeff Price, Kirk Mitchell
Not present: Pam Armas, Joe Rogers, Dana Jones and Gar Salzgeber, Jill Dampier.

1. AB 2064, Goldberg's active recreation bill was vetoed by Governor
2. Retirees would like action items. Listed with the agenda.
3. Gars report check for additions
 - a. 786 members;
 - b. Monthly deduction program has been set up for retirees;
 - c. Val suggests to include the sign up form with the retirees letter;
 - d. Angy will send a letter to Roma Philbrook Renz regarding donation;
 - e. Went over financial Report
 - i. RON financial report format needs to be changed the financial;
 - ii. last years comparative would be nice
4. Reports of committee
 - a. leg committee remains inactive;
 - b. Jill and John Mott are on the honorary ranger committee;
 - c. We are looking for more people to be on committees any takers?.
5. Suggest that we recruit for nominees in the WAVE. Also recommendations for Honorary Ranger
6. Nominating committee. Chairman is the immediate past pres. DANA will chair (not present)
 - a. Newsletter advertisement;
 - b. Reflector;
 - c. President elect, Sec/ Treasurer and 2 Directors Joe and Karen;
 - d. Between November 12-and December 1 ballots should be sent to the members;
 - e. 30 days to vote and get it back in before the conference
7. Office Manager. Selection Criteria.
 - a. Recommendations in selecting an office manager;
 - b. Review the duty statement;
 - c. Val will review the Office Manager contract and give additional instructions to the committee;
 - d. We need to review current duties if they apply;
 - e. develop process in which to select the candidate;
 - f. Submit resumes?;
 - g. In the

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- future we need to advertise in the WAVE newsletter responding with a letter of interest;
- h. Committee needs to expedite by the end of October;
- i. Conference call at the end of the month to make the selection;
- j. To offer the candidate start date by December 1, 2004
8. Unbiased Audit. We need to have our books reviewed by an Unbiased Auditor;
 - a. This is to assess the health of the organization;
 - b. Jeff says that it should be done every 5 years;
 - c. It should be a person that deals with Private non-profits
 - i. Omar Bardalles was Recommendation from Ron
 - ii. Karen sent a recommendation to Val via e-mail and will send it again.
9. Jeff – Website advertise
 - a. Pilot program cut the best deal for a three month ad;
 - b. Jeff has done some research and will handle this one;
 - c. Heads up! Web Master contract expires 12-31-04;
 - d. Ron: Suggests that the new moneys from the website should be considered endowments for above and beyond expenses;
 - e. Suggestions to consider: What criteria we could take the money.
10. Conference updates: Angy.
 - a. Final plans will be completed at

- the November 8th meeting;
- b. 2006 conference. PRAC prefers that we not go do it on the cruise
11. Kirk- Increased dues?
 - a. What is the justification?;
 - b. The expenses of the organization based on the mailing newsletter etc.;
 - c. Clarify how we came to this justification in the newsletter;
 - d. Suggested that we consider Grandfathering past members at the last rates?;
 - e. Val to get the info that Gar presented to us last year
12. CPR final date was 09-30-04
 - a. Val wrote a letter with Monica Miller Governmental Advocates (lobby firm) focusing on the Ranger issue;
 - b. She also had concerns about the Acquisition;
 - c. Monica, Val and foundation will be in a meeting next week with President of CSEA seated on the CPR committee;
 - d. Karen: Mentioned that she had heard concerns regarding Cooperative Associations Non-profits.
 - i. They may have to consolidate the Coops something to do with their finances.
13. GAR: Bob Allen as a charter member. Please check the database and find out why he isn't on the list?
14. Send Jeff the Logo graphic only. (Done)

OFFICE MANAGER'S MAILBAG



Gar Salzgeber, Office Manager

Report to the CSPRA Board, From September 1, 2004 to November 30, 2004

New Retired Members (or spouses) are: **Thelma Kishbaugh, David Stratton, Stan Paez, and Dan Abeyta.** A new Organizational Member is: **Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks.**

We also have a great Christmas Gift Idea! Member **Martha Black** from the Sierra District gave Lake Tahoe Vikings Home Tour Guide **Helen H. Smith** a Supporting Membership. I can't think of a better Christmas Gift for DPR employees, park VIPs or even favorite park visitors!

Retirement plaques were presented to: **Bettina Smith Townsend, Michael Curry, Eugene Itogawa, Jackie Ball and Mike Eaton.**

Bill Lindemann received a scholarship from us.

I recently bought a Mac laptop portable and am trying to simplify my thinking enough to learn it. My goal is to put CSPRA files on it and telephonically assist my replacement in learning their new job. This is a bigger challenge than I anticipated.

Getting personnel notes from our retired members about what they're doing with their lives warms the cockles of my heart and sends chills of joy up my spine. I hope everybody else enjoys them as much.

It seems like after the Retirees Rendezvous our mailbag is shallow,

but **Ken (KK) Smith** writes: " Visited family in Nebraska and busy with a 1,000 square foot addition and remodel to our cabin (home). Eve and I have been so busy this past year. Sorry we missed the Rendezvous at McConnell. I have been active with the jazz vocalists and choir at Columbia College. Great time singing and teaching the kids about jazz. Looks like I may be cutting a private CD soon. Eve sends her best wishes also."

LOBBYIST, from p. 2

important that the legislature understand and appreciate the value of our California State Parks.

As always, if you are unsure of whom your legislator is go to <http://www.sen.ca.gov>, plug in your address and your legislator will be provided. This is a start of a new year and a new legislative cycle. Seize the opportunity to continue to educate the members of the legislature and protect our State Parks!

Donations Sought for Silent Auction

by **John Havicon**

Every year at the parks conference, we hold a silent auction to help defray costs. Letters have been sent out to various businesses and corporations for donations of books, event tickets, wines, local artwork and resource tools. I know we have creative folks in our organizations; I encourage your support by donating items for the auction. If you have a visitor center that sells items, they also may be willing to donate something.

Either bring a donation with you to the conference or send it before March 1 to the Conference Committee: California Parks Conference; P.O. Box 161269; Sacramento, CA 95816-1269. If you have any questions, please call me at 916-875-6672 or email parksconference@comcast.net I'll look forward to serenading you all at the conference and thanks for your support.

INTERVIEW, from page 11

Tell us about your other previous writing projects.

I've been doing magazine stuff and a little radio for about 12 years, minus the time I was too sick to do much. I started writing about people and nature, part time, in the winter when work was slow. My first paying job—the one that got my foot in the door—was an interview I did with Al Gore before the 1992 election. It came out in the summer of 1992 and my editor sent me a copy. The magazine arrived at my ranger cabin in the Alaskan bush in the hands of a bush pilot who landed on the lake to drop off my mail. That was a moment! He took off again and I was left in that great silence with the bighorn sheep grazing across the mountainside above me, totally alone, with this great thing—my first magazine article.

How is your health these days? (steadily improving, we hope)

It's still a battle. Lyme disease got into my brain and nervous system and I was fairly useless for a period of years. I can admit to people now that things are better that it was so unpleasant, that for some months I was looking at my gun in very inappropriate ways. Now, under treatment, my quality of life has improved vastly. But for the time being, I seem to have large quantities of antibiotics instead of an immune system to keep the bacteria at bay. My T-cell count is really low, and we haven't succeeded in wiping the little devils out yet. That's the next project. But I enjoy life now; I've got a great wife and kids and I'm happy to be here. And I am very proud to have been allowed to work with the rangers I was assigned with, glad to have had the years I had at this greatest of all careers.

humor in unicorn



Mixed Metaphors and Malaprops

by Jeff Price, retired

Barfing ensigns?

I was not familiar with the name, which made me throw up red flags right away.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T; that is what it means to me!

I know most of you will be expected to work in your perspective districts, but if you want a paid overtime shift on the 4th, ring me up at the Central Sector.

Eggs in one basket, OK, but mallards in the hosiery, are you sure that will help? *They need to get all their ducks in one sock.*

You shore did.

We found this great beach in Maui, right next to the ocean.

A generalist he's not.

Not wanting to do law enforcement is a cop out.

Budding supervisor.

You can't let this fester, you have to nip disciplinary problems in the butt.

Point of impact.

He's really driving the hammer home now.

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The 2005 Conference planning team is organizing a host of great activities. Field trips include kayaking, horseback riding, wine tasting, and an Environmental Living Program at Angel Island SP. A murder mystery dinner and star gazing at Sugarloaf SP's observatory will also be offered, along with many interesting daytime sessions. There will be a special GrayBears track this year with topics of interest to retired members, including a trip to the Bale Grist Mill and an author's panel. See www.cspra.com for updates.

GET CONNECTED

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Catch up on CSPRA activities contact your District Reps, Board or Officers, get latest information.
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Mission Statement



The California State Park Rangers Association is an organization of park professionals dedicated to advancement of the highest principles of public service, and established to support, protect, and defend the integrity of State Parks for present and future generations.



Founded 1964