

# NEWSLETTER

california state park rangers association

VOLUME VI NUMBER 12

NOVEMBER 1989

## BODIE UPDATE

by J. Brad Sturdivant

As you've all heard by now, the Canadian mining company Galactic Resources raised quite a ruckus when they arrived on the Bodie scene back in June of 1988. Since then, tours of the Galactic property, tours of Bodie, tours of Nevada's Borealis and Aurora open pit mines, coffee, donuts, and catered lunches have become a normal part of park operations. More than once the comment was made "maybe they will just go away," hoping that if Galactic left, the problem would also leave. But we know that another "Galactic" would probably be waiting to move in.

In late June of 1989, a former Bodie park aid, who had gone to work for Galactic, stopped by the kiosk and said, "you guys don't have to worry about Galactic anymore. They just went broke and laid everybody off." We didn't dare believe it. They did cease drilling operations during the peak visitor season; they did layoff most of their help; and the drill rigs did leave. But the Bodie Consolidated Mining office remained open, and a cultural resource team continued to map out areas of cultural sensitivity.

The tours, talks, lunches, and rumors continued and are continuing to this day. Galactic returned in mid-September for another two weeks of core sampling. We have heard they would like to return (Continued on page 3)

## 1990 CONFERENCE - CHICO

-- Sierra Nevada Brewery Tour --

by Rick LeFlore, Co-chair Program Committee

To many, the city of Chico is associated with Bidwell Park, Bidwell Mansion, CSU Chico, a famous magazine's prestigious "top party town," and (at least to Herb Caen/ San Francisco Chronicle readers) Velveeta Cheese. Participants in the 1990 CSPRA Conference will have the opportunity to visit yet another gem in Chico's crown: the Sierra Nevada Brewery. On Wednesday, March 7 at 5:30 PM, an optional half-hour tour will be given of this "state of the art" microbrewery. Afterwards, appropriate beverages and snacks will be available in the brewer's recently completed dining area. Hearty appetites and spirits will no doubt be raised for the big spaghetti feed. Join us as we create yet another CSPRA, and Chico, experience. YYY



CSPRA Board Meeting, September 1989

**THE CALIFORNIA  
STATE PARK RANGERS  
ASSOCIATION**

A professional association.

Office of the  
Executive Manager  
**Doug Bryce**  
P. O. Box 28366  
Sacramento, CA 95828  
(916) 383-2530  
\*\*\*\*\*

**PRESIDENT**  
**Don Murphy**  
(714) 780-6222  
\*\*\*\*\*

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(408) 335-9145  
\*\*\*\*\*

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For additional information on the  
association, write the  
Executive Manager.

## **LEWIS DESERT BILL: NO PARKS, LIMITED WILDERNESS**

Unable to defeat the California Desert Protection Act, Congressman Jerry Lewis, R - Redlands, and three Republican colleagues in the House have prepared an alternate bill that would do little to protect the desert despite its title, "California Desert Conservation Act of 1989."

At this writing, the measure had not been introduced, although its sponsors had promised in a September 12 letter to House colleagues to do so "early next week."

The bill - unacceptable to environmentalists - would create 51 wilderness areas containing 2.1 million acres and eight off-road vehicle trails. It would create no national parks. The 2.1 million acres of wilderness falls far short of the 4.5 million acres in 85 wilderness areas proposed in the CDPA. It brings opponents of the bill back to square one. The BLM had proposed 2.1 million wilderness acres, then cut that to 1.9 million. This year, BLM's state office forwarded to Washington another 2.1-million-acre recommendation.

California Desert Protection League Director Elden Hughes commented, "I'm pleased to see this out on the table. It appears that they are introducing BLM's recommendation with the addition of off-road vehicle trails." But he noted that 30,000 miles of roads and trails in the California desert are already open to ORVers.

Lewis' cosponsors are Representatives Al McCandless, La Quinta; Bill Thomas, Bakersfield; and Duncan Hunter, Coronado. (Reproduced from the October issue of the CDPL NEWS) \$\$\$

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The **NEWSLETTER'S** Editor is Doug Bryce; contributing editors and authors are as noted. Articles are welcome, 1000 words or less. All submissions become the property of CSPRA and may be edited without notice. **THE DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES IS THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.**

## BODIE UPDATE

(Continued from page 1)

this winter or spring for continued exploration work and that they are looking for a partner.

So our fight goes on. Thanks to all of you for your support. the Save Bodie! T-shirts are great. Several local businesses, from Bridgeport to Bishop, have agreed to sell them. We hope you'll help the cause by buying a T-shirt for yourself! Remember: "The Bodie experience...worth more than gold."

## THE "SALTON SEA SALUTE" OR BRAIN DAMAGE:

Mosquito Folk

Medicine May Be Toxic

by Jeffery B. Price

It appears from recent research that a common bath oil with widespread use among park personnel as a "folk medicine" bug repellent may be harmful.

Before getting into that issue, let me give those of you who have never experienced the peculiar requirements and adaptations necessary to a desert assignment some background and a few anecdotes, so you will catch up with those who have.

In late July, my family had the pleasure of attending a dinner party at the home of a dear friend, Mary Willson, while re-visiting Calaveras Big Trees and the surrounding area. Among the guests was Craig Engel, the local District Superintendent, and we got to talking about our similar experiences at Calaveras and in the Southern California desert.

Engel shared a riddle familiar to anyone who has worked desert

parks in August, when the tiny black gnats or "no-see-ums" hatch out and plague all xerophiles. His question was, "What's the Salton Sea Salute?" (You may substitute any variation of gesticulation and geography; Ken Smith calls it the "Borrego Wave," Ernie Brown called it the "Picacho Salute," etc.).

The answer is to rapidly wave your hand back and forth, about one inch in front of your face.

This is exactly what outdoor desert conversations (especially in August) rely upon to keep the darn pesky, moisture-seeking gnats out of facial orifices. You can imagine seeing two people engaged in polite conversation, both wildly waving their hands in front of their noses.

Several of us at the party recalled that "someone" told us that a common bath oil would defeat gnats, mosquitos, and other insect pests. I recalled that several rangers at Borrego carried it in their patrol first-aid kits and that some desert residents preferred it to popular commercial insect repellants. One woman even used it on her dog.

After the Big Trees trip, I was doing some computer research on toxics and threats to parks, hoping to find information to help our "SAVE BODIE!" committee. CSPRA subscribes to EcoNet, a computer communication service used by hundreds of environmental/park organizations to exchange information. Listed under "toxics/environment" was the seemingly out-of-place title "Skin So Soft".

When I downloaded the file, I found an alert issued by toxicologists that use of Avon's Skin So Soft may be harmful. Research is going on, but the report warns that liver and/or brain damage is possible from misuse of this bath oil product.

The report quotes research from the May 19, 1989 issue of "The Medical Letter" (a newsletter published for the medical community by New York based nonprofit organization, The Medical Letter, Inc., 56 Harrison Street, New Rochelle, NY, and other sources. The article reports on insect repellants and contained a reference to Skin So Soft in its research. The following information is taken directly from the Medical Letter article.

"SKIN SO SOFT - A commercial concentrated bath oil, Avon Skin So Soft, has come into wide use as a "folk medicine" mosquito repellent. This product contains di-isopropyl adipate, mineral oil, isopropyl palmate, dioctyl sodium sulfosuccinate, fragrance and benzophenone-11. In one study, the bath oil did repel A. aegypti, the mosquito carrier of Yellow Fever...but...Skin So Soft may protect against mosquitos for as little as 30 minutes...and the safety of repeated, widespread application of the concentrated bath oil to the skin, is unknown."

The first two ingredients of Skin So Soft, in combination, have been known to cause brain and/or liver damage, according to one of the authors, when applied directly to the skin in concentrated form, as opposed to being used in a bathtub full of water. The article concludes that the body has no way to get rid of the chemicals which are absorbed into the skin, and the levels just keep increasing in certain body tissues (brain and liver). The "medical alert" strongly cautions against frequent and repeated use of Skin So Soft in concentrated form, as an insect repellent, until allergists and toxicologists complete their research.

For the record, I have nothing against the Avon Company or its products. Since I came across this information, and know many CSPRA members and families who use Skin So Soft as an insect repellent, it seemed appropriate to put out an alert. YYY

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## LEAVING A LEGACY- A Synopsis of an NAI Workshop by Carolyn Edwards

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As a new member of the National Association of Interpretation (NAI), I had not yet attended any of the organization's functions. My first opportunity occurred October 13, 14, and 15 when I went to Region 9's special natural history workshop, California Wilds II. Held at the Clem Miller Education Center in the midst of beautiful Point Reyes, the workshop proved to be both informative and therapeutic for me.

Currently I am out of the field on a special two year training assignment with the Resources Agency. (Resources Agency Management Program - RAMP) RAMP involves three eight-month assignments to different department within the agency. As a State Park Ranger, I am now on loan to the California Conservation Corps. I will spend time also with Fish & Game, the Department of Water Resources, and the agency itself for a look at the big picture. While this is proving to be a tremendous learning experience, it has also left me a bit nature starved. Not wanting to lose touch with the field and knowing I'll return at the close of this assignment, I saw the NAI workshop as the perfect learning and networking opportunity.

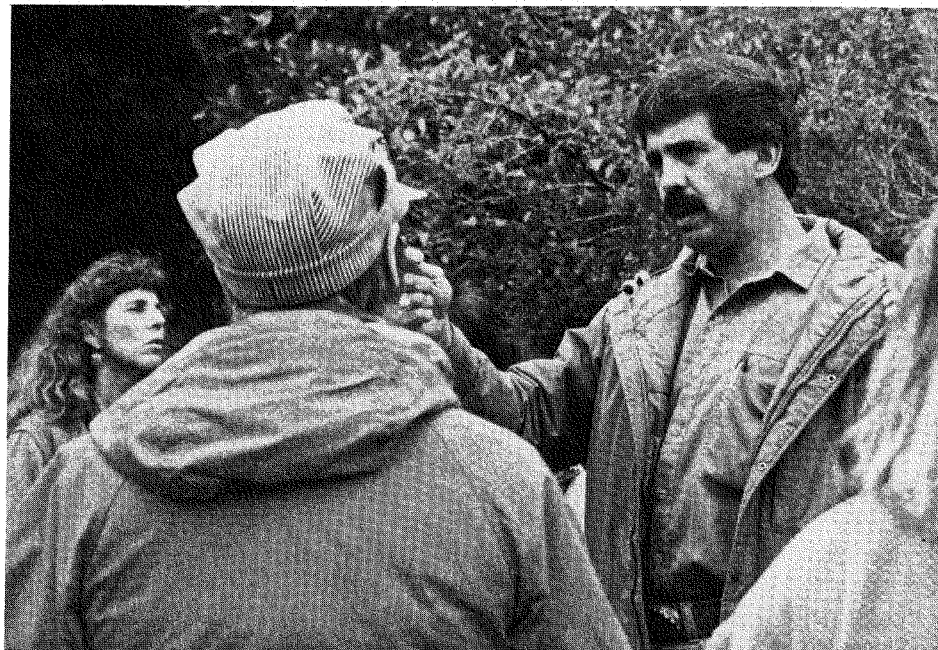
Since training funds were not available, I applied to CSPRA for a scholarship to attend the conference. CSPRA graciously accepted my request with the stipulation that I share my experiences in an article for the NEWSLETTER.

If you've never been to Point Reyes, you've missed an opportunity to learn in a wonderful

environment.

One of the most valuable parts of the workshop was the chance to meet so many interesting people from such a variety of organizations. I was surprised that State Parks was so under-represented at this workshop. Representing State Parks in addition to myself were Joanne Danielson from Santa Cruz Mountains District and Brian Dressler from Mendocino District.

I hope that more DPR staff will participate in future activities and workshops. We have much to share and much to gain by taking an active role.



The three workshops I chose to attend were: Tracking by Day and Night; Mammals and Survival Designs of Plants; and Ethnobotany. All three group leaders were high-energy, knowledgeable people.

Tracking, with freelance naturalist Michael Ellis, was a wonderful foray into the Limantour Natural Area where we identified scat, tracks, and other signs left by a variety of critters. The evening portion of the walk was especially memorable. With a full moon to

guide us, we hiked out to the salt marsh and dune areas where we discovered evidence of bobcat, deer, skunk, and mice.

Saturday's workshop with Ron Russo left me with two memorable impressions. One is he never ceases to amaze me with his wealth of knowledge and his genuine enthusiastic delivery. The other impression was more subtle. He had his son with him. A typical boy of his age (I guessed around 6th grade) would probably not have wanted to spend a Saturday with his father and a group of adults. This boy was different.

He was a junior Ron, racing along ahead of the group shouting "Hey, Dad, there's another deer wallow up here!" How many kids his age would even know what a deer wallow was, much less where to find one? It was evident that Ron has spent years sharing his love of the natural world with his son. They have traveled and discovered many places and things together. I remember a class taught by Dr. Michael Freed of Arkansas Tech University, where he stressed leaving a legacy.

## LEAVING A LEGACY

(Continued from page 4)

We all strive to leave a legacy, to share our appreciation of nature with our park visitors. But how many of us make sure we do the same with our own families? Perhaps the best legacy we can leave is right there at home...think about it.

My third and equally exciting workshop on ethnobotany was led by master storyteller, Ane Ravetta. This woman was fabulous. She captured our attention immediately with a story of the earth's creation, complete with different voices and postures for each of her characters.

All too soon it was time to leave. I felt that wonderful exhaustion which comes from working hard doing the things you love. Listening, participating, sharing, and reflecting were all key elements of a weekend I'll not quickly forget.

Thanks, CSPRA. YYY

## "CALIFORNIA RANGER" GETS NEW STAFF

The "CALIFORNIA RANGER" will be co-edited by David Brooks of PRAC and Doug Bryce of CSPRA. Assisting them will be Rick Sermon and Don LaKatos from the Mott Training Center. Rick and Don will be soliciting articles and recommending subjects that should be included.

Please send your articles to CSPRA, P. O. Box 28366, Sacramento, CA 95828-0366. Articles should be 1,000 words or more and include photographs and/or other graphics. Please include a biographical sketch of yourself of no more than 100 words. Articles may be edited without notice. YYY

## 1990 CONFERENCE - CHICO - March 6 - 9, 1990

This year's conference will include 15 hours of educational sessions. In addition to two major speakers (arrangements have not been completed), we will have three tracks: Cultural Resources; Natural Resources; and Operations. These sessions will be as follows:

### GENERAL SESSIONS

**Mark Wellman**, ranger and accessibility coordinator at Yosemite National Park, speaking on accessibility and his climb up El Capitan.

**Panel Discussion - Views From The Frontlines: Strategic Defense Tactics for Maintaining and Expanding Interpretive Resources in the 1990s** - Steve Christiano, Director Yosemite National Institute; Mary Wright, District Superintendent Monterey District; Costa Dillon, District Ranger Santa Monica Mountains NRA; and Ron Russo, Chief of Interpretation East Bay Regional Park District.

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Cultural Computers** - Inez Cook and Larry Felton, DPR.

**Managing Historic Buildings and the 5024 Process** - Frank Lortie, DPR.

**Cultural Site Protection** - John Foster, Breck Parkman, and Don Ito, DPR.

**Interpreting Cultural Resources** - Wendy Wells-Franklin, Mike Tucker, and Gary Reinohl, DPR.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Vanishing Resources - Goodbye California: Riparian Woodlands** - TBA; and **Whitewater** - Dave Martinez, DPR.

**Bats: Not just in Gotham City** - TBA.

**Star Thistle-Bio-Control Alternatives to McClouds** - Tom Hofsommer, Sacramento County Parks.

**Computers - Crashing your Park and Resource Problems Away** - TBA.

### OPERATIONS

**Musical Interpretive Moments** - TBA.

**Breaking the Barriers - Disabled Access in Parks** - Vicki White, Accessibility Coordinator, Golden Gate NRA, and Mike Brown, DPR.

**Creative Solutions to Resolving Trail Use Conflicts** - Ross Henry and Dave Martinez DPR, and Renee Crowley, East Bay Regional Park District.

**Creative Participation, Innovative Programs Between Parks and Other Groups** - NPS program, "Partners in Parks."

**Finding Funding For Fundamentals** - Nancy Stone, Golden Gate NRA.

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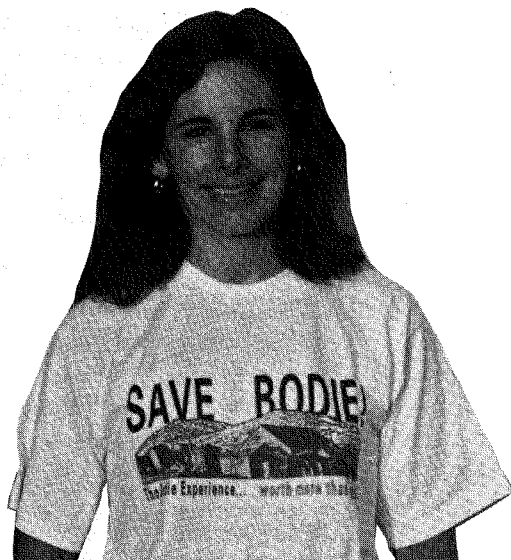
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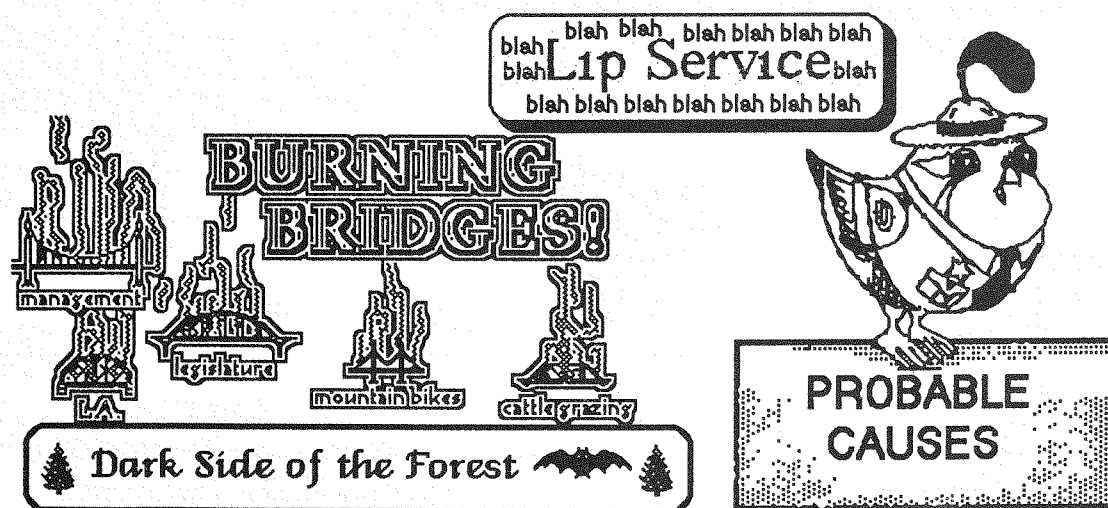
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order form

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Please lemme have:

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## REGIONAL MEETINGS

Doug Bryce will be holding four meetings in Southern California the week of December 4, 1989. All member and non-member park personnel in the area are invited. We will be discussing CSPRA activities, your desires for CSPRA, and your questions about CSPRA.

### MEETING DATES & LOCATIONS ARE:

**San Diego** - Tuesday, 12/5/89 - Woodcarver restaurant, 3225 Midway Drive, San Diego, 5:30 pm

**Huntington Beach** - Wednesday, 12/6/89 - Huntington SB Training Room, Magnolia & PCH, 6:30 pm

**Malibu Creek** - Thursday, 12/7/89 - Hunter House, Malibu Creek SP, 6:00 pm

**Goleta** - Friday, 12/8/89 - Screwy Louie's, 6396 Hollister Avenue, Goleta, 6:30 pm

**Pizza will be provided by CSPRA. ¥¥¥**

## NEW MEMBERS

We are glad to introduce these new members to our organization. CSPRA offers a forum for sharing ideas and concerns and a means of making an impact in the professional field of the ranger. There is a place for each of you here, and your commitment to CSPRA requires a commitment to you from this organization. Each of us by getting involved can help the other. Again, welcome to CSPRA. ¥¥¥

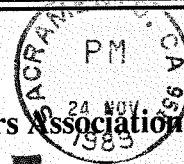
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