The Journal of the Association of National Park Rangers

RANGER

Stewards for parks, visitors & each other

New perspectives on our natural spaces

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On the cover: The Hoh Wilderness in Olympic National Park has been considered one of the quietest places in North America. There is a growing demand for places of quiet reflection, and many parks are responding. Photo: Melissa DeVaughn

Our national parks through a new lens

Editor's notes

– Melissa DeVaughn

While recently editing a book-length project for a client, I read about a phenomenon called "disruptive innovation." The author did not invent it – it was first "defined" and written about by Harvard University professor Clayton M. Christensen in the mid-'90s. In essence, disruptive innovation occurs when a new market or idea enters an existing market and displaces what was once thought to be well-established. Think about the way smartphones entered the flip-phone-centered market and quickly overtook cellphone ownership as we know it.

I have not stopped thinking of disruptive innovation since.

Now apply disruptive innovation to the national park experience. We can't replace the physical landscapes and structures that make up our 424-unit National Park system. In fact, we don't want to. After all, these national treasures are recognized for their very existence and should be preserved for all time.

However, we can twist the focus of the *ways* in which we experience our parks – we can "disrupt" our default NPS experience. Mention Yellowstone National Park, and the first thought that comes to mind may be the sight of Old Faithful erupting in all its glory. Yosemite National Park may conjure the grandeur of El Capitan, captured by artists and photographers since it was first discovered. And what about the Grand Canyon? Well, obviously, it is the site of the canyon itself.

But what if you are blind? For individuals who do not have sight, their NPS experience will be wildly different – and I'd venture equally as satisfying. Their other senses open an entirely new world that sighted visitors will never experience.

In this issue of *Ranger* magazine, we explore the idea of disruptive innovation in ourselves. How can we, as users of the park system, flip our perspectives and perhaps find even more meaningful ways to interact with the places we visit? Furthermore, how can we as park professionals think about how we approach our jobs and get things done? How can we intentionally think more creatively to solve problems – especially amid a federal system that is dictated by rigid protocols and strict rules. Disruptive innovation is not about breaking rules – it's about finding new solutions within the rules and growing through original thinking.

For those of you currently working within the NPS, consider David G. Trickett's essay on "Three Questions," which challenges you to reconsider the status quo. Maybe that problem you have been banging your head against the wall over really *does* have a solution. It's all a matter of perspective.

Shannon Wilson shares the way she had to re-frame her park experiences as a wheelchair user after spending her childhood and young adulthood hiking the backcountry and working as a ranger. Rather than sit on the sidelines, she learned to improvise when met with the many challenges our natural spaces present.

And back to that Yellowstone Old Faithful experience. … put on a blindfold and enter a park using your other senses. Flip your perspective and innovate: Feel your park, hear your park, touch your park. These places are here for you, waiting to be explored anew.

— Melissa DeVaughn
Ranger magazine editor

RANGER

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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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FINAL DEADLINES

Spring issue .... Jan. 31
Summer issue .... April 30
Fall issue .... July 30
Winter issue .... Nov. 15

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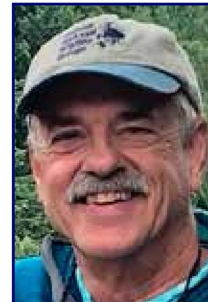
Spring's arrival: Time to plan new adventures

President's message

– Rick Mossman



I AM VERY HAPPY RIGHT NOW AS I WRITE THIS COLUMN ON the last day of January because the EPA just vetoed the development of the Pebble Creek Mine in Alaska to protect Bristol Bay. Bristol Bay is (arguably) the greatest salmon habitat in the world. When I lived in Alaska, many years ago, a commercial fisherman once made a haul of $750,000 worth of salmon in one day out of Bristol Bay. This story reminds me that saving the environment and protecting wild places and wild things is a constant and never-ending battle. It's a battle that most of the members of this organization have fought over their lifetimes in small or even big ways. Whether it's educating the public as interpreters, as resource managers studying biodiversity, building environmentally sensitive trails and roads as a maintenance worker, enforcing law as protection rangers, or as overseeing and supporting this work as administrators. But as we know, it's constant. The issue of the Pebble Creek Mine will rise back up in a few years, and the fight will be on again.

This is the Spring issue of *Ranger*, and I know I'm looking forward to Spring as it has been a very rainy winter here in Mount Vernon, Wash. With Spring we think about summer travel plans. As I sit here, I have been filling out permit applications and trying to make reservations for hopeful summer trips. Although this can be very frustrating and sometime fruitless, I'm glad that agencies are trying to implement public-use limits.

Over the last few years as a result of both the NPS centennial and the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more people are getting out to see our national parks, which has resulted in new permitting and far advanced reservations. Besides parks, many U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management areas also are now requiring permits. I am very glad that the agencies are trying to limit use, which is necessary if we are going to preserve and protect. Even before I started working in the NPS (almost 50 years ago), the NPS has tried to implement use limits. Of course, politicians and private businesses have tried to block that idea at every turn. Maybe now we are making some headway in that effort as the public is becoming more aware that overuse ruins their parks.

If you have plans for this summer, make sure you get reservations, if possible, and necessary permits ASAP. A quick check in mid-January showed that most of the concession campgrounds and hotels in Yellowstone were full ,or close to full, for most of the summer – and It's only January. Although, I did notice that the $800 a night rooms at the Lake Hotel were available a few nights.

In this issue of *Ranger*, we hope will open your eyes a bit to new ways to look at parks. It's easy for those of us who have lived in parks all our lives and looked at beautiful sunsets and mountain scenes routinely to sometimes (momentarily) forget the magic of our national parks. So, please read the stories here and think about the possibility of seeing a park on your next visit through "a new lens."

— Rick Mossman
ANPR President

3 Questions

to consider as you chart your unit's path to a more fruitful future

By David G. Trickett

I have had the privilege of being connected with the National Park Service at three distinct periods of my life. In the first half of the 1970s, I was a rather lowly ranger … posted in an utterly wonderful place: Yellowstone. About 25 years later, I had the very good fortune to be able to engage the agency at different levels and in different places (from field units through regional functions to the Office of the Director), as what I call a teacher and guide — but what government officialese would prefer to call "consultant." And in just the last few years, I have once again had the joy of reconnecting in a modest way, especially by having been asked to be part of several events in Wyoming to commemorate the 150th birthday of Yellowstone. During that series of occasions, the paths of a former colleague from Yellowstone days and mine converged — after more than 45 years of our having gone along different trajectories.

One of the results of that renewed friendship was my decision that it was both fitting and timely to join ANPR. I have yet to attend a Rendezvous. I had planned to be present this past year in Tucson, but family conflicts and COVID prevented that. I have been pretty diligent in reading past newsletters and issues of Ranger, though, and in a series of conversations with numerous ANPR folks have been invited to share some of the things I've learned along life's way that might be relevant for those who still wear the green and the gray.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

After leaving the employ of the NPS in the mid-1970s, among the things that I pursued was advanced education. Along that path, I met and was mentored for a number of years by a person credited with having been a major force in the creation of the field of management study and practice: Peter F. Drucker.

Spending time with Drucker in numerous settings — his home, university seminars, corporations, nonprofits, with some government entities in the United States and beyond, and even just driving in cars and sharing quiet meals — I learned much that has led to the profound adventures I've been able to experience over the years. And it is three questions that he almost always put to those with whom he worked that I believe are still deeply relevant to a very wide public, including ANPR members (and yet-to-be members), whatever their area of specialty.

WHAT IS OUR/MY BUSINESS?

The first is this: What is our/my business? This may seem to some of you a silly question, because all we need to do is to look on our office door or desk or (if we have one) business card. We all have titles, ranks, position descriptions, classifications, and such. But to recite such things really doesn't answer the deeper question of what, exactly, we're about.

I've had numerous experiences of being present with folks and organizations (and, in some cases, nations) as they wrestle with what they're about, what their "business" is. I'll give an illustration: One time, when I was on the road with Dr. Drucker, we met with the international governing board of a fairly vast service corporation. It owned numerous companies that did things ranging from flood remediation to fire cleanup to pest control, and so on. When we asked this "buck-ends-here" board what their business was, what they were all about, there was absolute silence for a few moments. It seems that the simplicity of the question was unfamiliar to them, so after thinking for a bit they decided their best answer was to name the multiple entities they owned and operated. Though somewhere in the larger founding vision of this global enterprise there was indeed a common thread that provided clues as to the core "what" of all their businesses, this group of directors had never actually made that connection. Think about it yourself: If you were responsible for such a diversity of functions and activities (which the NPS and its units are), how do you describe the core "what" that ties them all together? What is your unit/entity's distinctive contribution to a world where peoples and cultures see everything through multiple lenses? In the case of this multinational entity, we were able to help the top leaders see that their distinctive "what" was (and it still remains) that they employ people who otherwise might be left out of the job

Knowing your business and who your customer (constituent) is can help shape effective leadership in parks. Illustration: Roan Hall

market because of certain developmental challenges they face in life — and those employees actually provide significant material benefit to the company's customer base. Their "what" was, and is, helping develop human capacity that might otherwise remain untapped. So when you think of the NPS and its multifarious sites and functions, what do you discern to be its core business?

Don't think of all the things it does, but perhaps think in terms of Curly's iconic message in the old film "City Slickers": What is the one essential thing that captures the heart of the NPS?

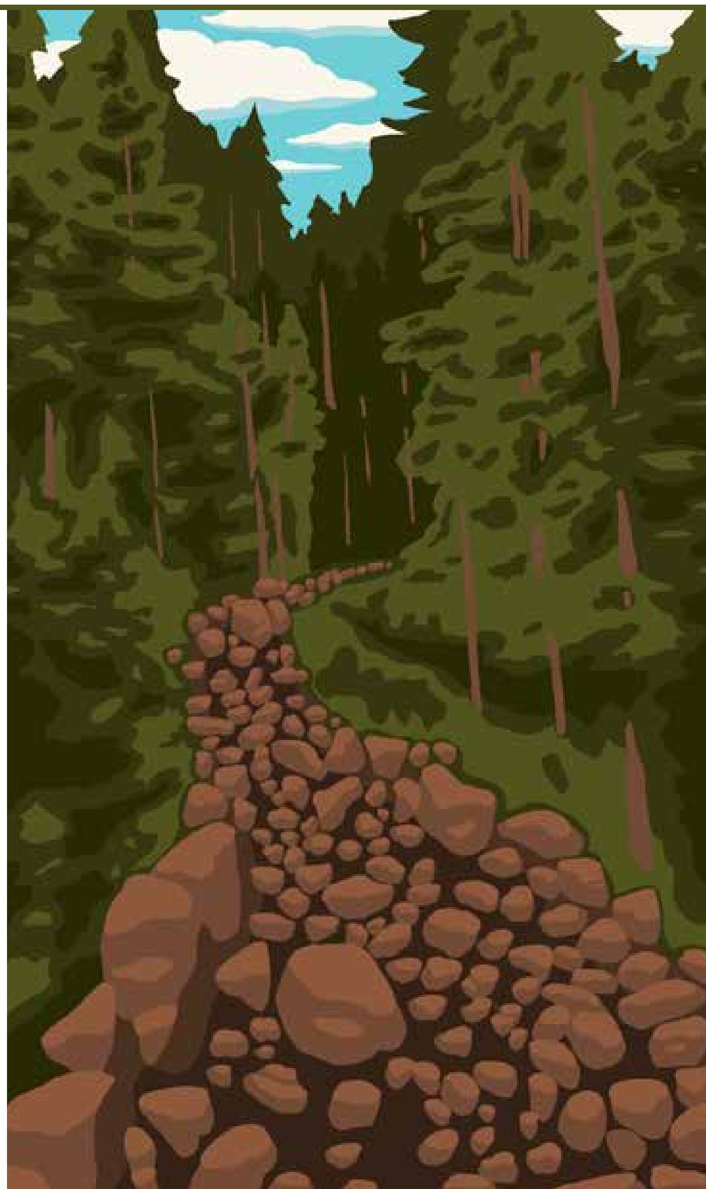
WHO IS OUR CUSTOMER?

The second question from Drucker is this: Who is our customer? Another way to put it is to ask, whom do we serve? Well, the NPS serves not only visitors of increasingly diverse backgrounds and cultures, but also multiple government entities, tribal nations (even if some members thereof don't actually visit many NPS sites), and extra-American groups and organizations. But there are also some key internal customers, or constituents, that it's easy to categorize as external — but they are not external at all. These folks are to be found in differing functional areas and at different levels of seniority within the NPS, the Department of the Interior, members of Congress (and their staff), and other very senior personnel in Washington, D.C. Then there are the constituents that include fellow employees, family members of employees (and here matters of housing and pressing attendant matters become of paramount importance), in-holders, concessioners, gateway communities, the wider world of tourism, and yet others who provide products and services to the NPS. We know all this, and yet we also find that attempting to manage so many competing demands and expectations from all directions takes up an increasing amount of time and energy of NPS managers, especially the higher up the GS/SES ladder one gets. But what about those folks who have never entered a NPS site? How do we tell our story to them in a way that engages them and their life stories, given that at least some of them may have only a very hazy notion of what we're about? These people have longings, they have dreams and hopes and fears — and I am convinced that NPS sites can actually help them connect our stories with theirs. (One that has touched my life for quite a while is Little Rock Central High School; this is in part because I spent a great deal of time in Arkansas in the late 1950s and through the 1960s, and in part because I later came to work with members of the Little Rock Nine. The same, in a slightly different way, can be said of the Sand Creek Massacre site.) Connect the stories and heal memories — this is one way to grow a constituency that can advocate for and champion the cause of helping more people affirm the essential need to have and celebrate the NPS.

Let's use a thought experiment as an illustration of Drucker's second question.

Think of a large crowd — in a football stadium, on the Mall in Washington, D. C., within an open-air massive market in central Nairobi, or … just fill in the blank with an image familiar to you. Two that I always recall are sports-related: the first was a time when I saw Pele, the recently deceased phenomenal soccer (futbal) player. The tens of thousands of people in the same stadium when I was there were mostly rooting for one of two teams, but also just to be present for this exciting sport and to see this magician of the field in action. I recall thinking, and wondering, what were the thoughts and hopes of all those who'd gathered for the event? How strong were the connecting threads bringing all together at one time in one place?

I had a similar experience when I visited the now-disused (for major sporting events, at least) Astrodome when it was pretty new; they were still refining the composition of the fake turf. I was there to see Willie Mays, a hero of mine, who hit a landmark career home run during the game. But so many others in the stadium, including the guy behind me who spilled a large beer down the back of my shirt, might have been there for other reasons. But the game itself, and the level of excellence at which it was played, connected us. There was enough overlap of attendees' intent and reason for being in the same place at the same time that we shared something important, even if our time there was also distinctive for each of us. For the NPS, how can we see large constituencies (even those whose very numbers have helped spark the implementation of reservation systems to gain entry to some units) whom we are to touch as best we can so that they can be shaped into champions of the NPS… not because of who we are but because of the natural and cultural treasures we shepherd, and how we interpret and protect them? In the end, ought not our goal be to see only two subcategories of folks we serve: those who love and support the NPS and those who will do so? It's that kind of thinking that helped both Steve Jobs and Bill Gates grow their companies so that they have strong global constituencies. I think that this approach can serve and strengthen the NPS.



What does the customer (constituent) value? The answer to this question can put you on the path to success — or not. Illustration: Roan Hall

WHAT DOES THE CUSTOMER VALUE?

The third question is the one where Drucker advised all his listeners to be careful in how they answered it, for getting this question framed wrong in your mind frequently means that you will falter on the shoals, you will miss the point, and thus might develop an answer — and strategies and plans, and expend potentially vast sums of money, on the wrong things. If you want to thrive, and not just survive, be very careful about how you hear, process, and answer this question: What does the customer (constituent) value?

I have witnessed well over a hundred organizations, ranging from the world's largest private sector corporation to governments on several continents to NGOs to dozens of NPS sites, confuse this question with another one: What do I believe that our customers/ constituents value? It is one thing to learn to listen and actually hear what those we serve value; it is quite another to plunge headlong along a path of action based on what we really want others to value. One path spells life and promise; the other spells self-focus and ultimate demise. Which shall we choose, how do we know the difference between the two, and how shall we go about getting it right? An illustration of this third basic question comes from time some years ago when I was engaged by the chief executive of a multinational corporation to help get clearer on an aspect of what his customer base really valued. The company has been effectively a household word for about a century, and has evolved into embracing a wide array of asset types: film, television, and internet streaming services; amusement parks in several countries; consultancies for other organizations; licensing agreements with manufacturers of toys, games, clothing, and accessories; and more. One day, I was approached by a friend of mine who was also a member of this corporation's governing board. He said that the chief executive was seriously considering a possible development at one of his most visible properties that happened to be in the United States. This CEO had a sense of something important that he wanted to do, but two reliable and major advisors were in disagreement with him. I was asked to help him discern how best to proceed, and it seemed that the task at hand would include attempting to answer

Drucker's third question for this enterprise. As it turned out, the executive's deep yearning was to develop something that was very important to him as he moved further into his own his middle

It is one thing to learn to listen and actually hear what those we serve value; it is quite another to plunge headlong along a path of action based on what we really want others to value. One path spells life and promise; the other spells self-focus and ultimate demise.

years; it was almost a legacy opportunity for him.

After a period of going back and forth on this possible undertaking, he came to see that his customer base—truly millions of people with many different backgrounds, life stories, hopes, dreams, and expectations—simply didn't get all that energized by his own values hierarchy and sense of importance, at least in terms of this initiative. He had blurred what he valued highly with what they value. A key insight that turned into part of the development strategy for a revised form of his sought-after undertaking was captured by this question: how can you (the whole company, not just the CEO) help people from different places, interior (mental, emotional, spiritual) spaces, cultures, and even language groups stretch their learning horizons—thereby having the adventure of discovering new and important things about themselves as well as about peoples and places very different from their own? It took a while, but this process began to take some intelligible tangible shape, and the company formally recognized that those they served included those who valued not merely being "entertained," but even more to learn and stretch and grow…and, somehow at the core, they were seeking the experience of wonder, a very different and special lens with which to see the world. So, the question for us can be put this way: can/does the NPS serve its many constituencies in a way that engenders learning, hope, promise, and wonder?

The National Park Service has been instrumental in shaping how I see the world and act within it, as I'm certain it has been and is with many of you. Can we find ways to work with these three basic questions and move to even greater strengths and public witness in a world that desperately yearns for some of the things that the NPS can offer them?

David Trickett is an ANPR lifetime member, and founder and president of The Jefferson Circle, which strives to address disruptive change so that people, organizations, and societies can have a future with hope.

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Awakening our senses

How quiet helps us appreciate our parks anew

Quiet Parks International's Nick McMahan records the soundscape at Kintla Lake in Glacier National Park. Glacier was the first national park to be awarded Quiet Park status, in July 2022. Photo: Nick McMahan

By Melissa DeVaughn

The De Havilland Beaver floatplane had just dropped us off after a noisy but breathtaking flight from Kodiak Island to Shuyak Island, the northernmost island in the Kodiak archipelago. Our children were toddlers, and their excitement at wandering the pebble-covered beach near our public-use cabin was demonstrated by screams of delight and laughter. As the whir of the floatplane diminished after takeoff, we began hauling our weeks' worth of gear from the beach up along the fern-lined trail to the cabin.

Hours later, with our friends, my husband and our kids settled into the cabin, I had a few minutes to wander down to the shoreline on my own. The water lapped gently against the rocks. Terns, oystercatchers, and murres called to each other in a series of piercing whistles and staccato caws.

It was that moment, 22 years ago, when I became fully aware of the power and beauty of the natural sounds around me. It surprises me that it was this moment – after all, I grew up in a relatively quiet town in Virginia, spent my childhood along the Blue Ridge Parkway, and in the early 1990s thru-hiked the Appalachian Trail where I experienced six months of as much silence as I wanted.

But this is what stuck.

The natural soundscapes that pervade such wild places as Alaska's Shuyak Island State Park are also what make our national parks so special. It is an easily overlooked aspect of our public lands. To shift perspective from a visual experience to the richness that comes with an auditory one takes intentional effort. It is not easy. After all, the human default is what we see: the view of a mountain range, a cascading waterfall, bears snatching fish out of a river.

"We have no problems talking about our national parks in terms of scenic values – that's a straightforward dialogue," said Gordon Hempton, an acoustic ecologist who has been recording natural soundscapes for some 40 years. "But I will argue that that is a condition of our contemporary culture, and it is not the condition of our species. Evolution has taught us that every animal species has the ability to hear, but not all animal species have the ability to see."

Gordon Hempton is an acoustic ecologist who has championed the value of natural soundscapes for more than 30 years. He is shown here in Olympic National Forest, the site of his original inspiration for the One Square Inch of Silence. Photo: Sean Parkin

That is why Hempton is a champion of the preservation of silence in its most natural sense. He is founder of One Square Inch of Silence, a project born in 2005 when he sought out the quietest place in North America. This symbolic location was in the Hoh Rain Forest of Olympic National Park and meant to be a starting point for recognizing, appreciating, and sustaining the value of natural spaces uninterrupted by man-made sounds.

Visiting the Hoh Rain Forest four years ago confirmed that it was indeed quiet. Walking along the Hoh River Trail during an unseasonably warm, sunny September day, I intentionally sought out solitude. The 18-mile trail wanders through dense rainforest, and skirts the Hoh River before heading toward Mineral Creek Falls, nearly three miles in. It eventually ascends toward Blue Glacier deeper into the park. It feels primeval there, with massive trees, Jurassic-sized ferns and undergrowth supported by nearly 140 inches of rainfall annually. Just a few minutes in, the cloak of trees tempered any sounds from the parking lot and ranger station. No wonder the area inspired Hempton.

Around the same time that Hempton was championing the merits of preserving silence, the National Park Service was updating its

Management Policies, which also recognizes the value of natural soundscapes.

Karen Trevino, division lead of the NPS Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division, is tasked with protecting and preserving park units from manmade noise and light pollution while also meeting the needs of today's park users and managers. (Her division furthermore preserves the cultural soundscapes of park units – such as music at New Orleans Jazz National Historic Park or Taps being played at a national battlefield.)

"Noise masks the sound of nature and culture," she said. "In the park service, we actually protect natural sound under the Organic Act just as we would air, water, biological resources, and physical resources. The sounds of nature, and protecting it, is peppered throughout anagement policies in a lot of different chapters."

For instance, Sound Management Policy, 4.9, Page 56, states:

The National Park Service will preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the natural soundscapes of parks.

Some natural sounds in the natural soundscape are also part of the biological or other physical resource components of the park. Examples of such natural sounds include:

- *sounds produced by birds, frogs, or katydids to define territories or aid in attracting mates*
- *sounds produced by bats or porpoises to locate prey or navigate*
- *sounds received by mice or deer to detect and avoid predators or other danger*
- *sounds produced by physical processes, such as wind in the trees, claps of thunder, or falling water.*

The Service will restore to the natural condition wherever possible those park soundscapes that have become degraded by unnatural sounds (noise) and will protect natural soundscapes from unacceptable impacts.

"Whether or not parks even implement that is another question, but from a policy perspective, the NPS definitely has very much acknowledged the important role that the sound of nature has in the national park experience," Trevino added.

Both Trevino and Hempton agree that natural soundscapes must be preserved – and they both offer ways in which park users and park managers can help. Trevino's division created a training module for park interpreters on the "Power of Sound," aimed at getting visitors to shift their perspective from what they are seeing to what they are hearing. It also created a 24-page Junior Ranger "Sounds Explorer" booklet that highlights the science of sound and why it is important to park. The aim, she said, is to have voluntary buy-in on the value of protecting natural soundscapes.

Sometimes that can mean limiting manmade noises, which can be as simple from switching from a two-stroke to a four-stroke, or a four-stroke to electric. But other times – and this is when it can get difficult – it can affect uses such as snowmobiling, flying airplanes, or jet skiing.

"As far as restricting use, the park service takes that very seriously — park access is something we hold near and dear," she said. "We support the science to help parks support decision making. Our work has to withstand public scrutiny, judicial scrutiny, and scientific scrutiny, and we have to be thoughtful and careful about how we do it."

Big Bend National Park has vast, open spaces, and natural soundscapes prevail for those willing to change their perspective from what they see to what they hear. Photo: J. Jurado

In the years since Hempton declared his One Square Inch of Silence (and wrote about it with John Grossmann in his book, "One Square Inch of Silence: One Man's Quest to Preserve Quiet," 2009), Olympic National Park is not as quiet as it once was due to nearby military flight training. But he remains undeterred. The nonprofit he has since helped co-found, Quiet Parks International, has become a larger extension of the One Square Inch concept. QPI has worked with private conservation areas, international parks and even state and national parks to recognize locations whose perspectives include preserving quiet places.

"QPI is taking an innovative approach," he said. Rather than requiring parks to apply for a quiet park designation and take steps to reduce noise, the organization instead seeks out locations that already exist as quiet spaces and recognizes them as such. There are no costs involved, no switching of two-strokes to four-strokes to reduce noise – rather a recognition of what already is.

"Don't study what you don't want," he said. "Study what you do have. So, what we are going to do is award those areas that for whatever reason are quiet and allow them to choose – if quiet is valuable to you, we will help you save your quiet for the benefit of all life."

The first such national park to receive the award was Glacier National Park, on July 27, 2022.

"This award reinforces the natural sounds educational efforts the park makes to distinguish the natural soundscape from noise, and the importance of the visitors' opportunity for that experience," said Matt Mikkelsen, executive director of Wilderness Quiet Parks in a press release. "Increasing awareness of natural sounds helps promote reverence for the park, its natural ecosystems and wilderness character."

The quiet conversation has been explored at other national parks as well. QPI is currently considering Quiet Park status to Big Bend Ranch State Park, located close to Big Bend National Park in Texas – a location that Hempton has long said is an ideal candidate due to

See **Quiet**, Page 23

Shannon Wilson and her service dog, AshBear, visit Badlands National Park. Wilson has had to readjust her park experience expectations to accommodate the limitations presented by her wheelchair. Photos courtesy Shannon Wilson

The view from here

Differently abled visitors have a park experience worth considering

Photos and story by Shannon Wilson, ANPR board member for Membership Services

Our national parks offer many diverse experiences. Like so many others, our family planned our vacations around visiting the parks. The bat fight at Carlsbad Caverns as a preschooler ranks as one of my earliest memories. As a healthy child and adolescent, my dad did most of the planning for these adventures but gave me increasing responsibility as I grew older. These experiences helped to prepare me for my adult career as a National Park Service ranger. Adventure led me to the challenges of exploring the backcountry, and as a healthy, young adult planning was easy. With a quick ride to the trailhead, all I needed was my travel-worn backpack stuffed with camping gear, a map and compass, water, and food. My hiking excursions became more strenuous, including a late-season rim-to-rim-to-rim solo of the Grand Canyon. Miles accumulated under my hiking boots as I spent time in our parks experiencing "their story" firsthand. It was simple. It was easy. It was second nature to me, as effortless as breathing. I thrived on these experiences.

Fast forward to 2018, when a series of seizures led to trading in my boots for a wheelchair. Routine daily life events had to be relearned. As my new wheeled life became reality, continuing to visit the national parks became difficult to imagine. Or, so I thought.

A bit of my backstory: Not only did I grow up visiting NPS sites, but I set my goal to don the flat hat as a National Park Service ranger while I was in college. I started as a seasonal interpretive ranger in the summer of 2012 and put blood, sweat, and tears into my passion. Signing on as a permanent employee on Dec. 5, 2016, as a visitor-use assistant for Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park was the realization of a dream. However, a few short years later in May of 2020, I would retire due to medical necessity. No longer could I enjoy visiting Sequoia as I had done before: carefree, allowing trails to share their secrets. I did not know how to accept that. I knew only one way to visit a park – by using my own two feet hiking in the backcountry away from people, away to solitude. Exploring the sites and connecting to the wilderness that once fed my soul now seemed an impossibility. A wheelchair in the backcountry is an infeasible task, so now what? How do I, a person who once wore the

What the NPS is doing right:

- **Creative solutions for accessibility that maintain the historic or natural nature of the site (for example, William Howard Taft Home converting a dumb waiter shaft into a one-person elevator).**
- **Rangers that will go out of their way to assist visitors with special needs.**
- **Specialized equipment at some sites - i.e., beach or all-terrain wheelchairs.**
- **Maps showing accessible trail limits.**
- **Some NPS site-specific websites have excellent accessibility pages.**

Where the NPS could improve:

- **Closed captioning for all newly produced videos and adding closed captioning to older videos, whether at an NPS site or online.**
- **More training for Park Service personnel on best practices when interacting with disabled visitors.**
- **Signs/displays with accessibility features that are properly positioned for the intended user and that use more durable materials suitable for the conditions.**
- **Taking the wider view of accessibility begins at the parking lot.**
- **Some NPS site-specific websites have generalized or incomplete accessibility pages.**

Shannon Wilson during her rim-to-rim-to-rim hike of the Grand Canyon, before she became dependent on a wheelchir.

iconic flat hat with pride, experience the same parks that allowed an escape?

A major shift in how to visit the parks and find these connections required a change in how I viewed my own limitations. Yes, "hiking" today does not look like my hikes of the past. Newfound methods were engineered to accommodate my desire to experience the natural world. It takes planning and perseverance, and I cannot rely on my skills alone. No longer do I pick a trail and go. Planning begins before I leave the "civilization" of the visitor center.

Before my illness, if I could drive an all-wheel drive vehicle to the trailhead, then the trail was accessible. Now, with the use of a specialty van for transportation, unpaved roads can be virtually impassible, and unimproved roads are definitely out of the question. Knowledgeable park rangers can often suggest alternatives. While I may have to forgo some opportunities, other adventures are now within my ability.

Trail conditions need to be evaluated differently now. Factors such as weather that used to make hiking uncomfortable are now dangerous. Light rain may cause an ambulatory hiker to grab their rain gear. That same rain may make the wheelchair's hand rims too slick for the user to maintain control of the chair.

Using a more stringent set of criteria, I evaluate the suitability of a trail. Can I safely navigate a trail in my wheelchair without damaging it or injuring myself? Can I maintain control or self-rescue? Previously ignored conditions now have to be considered – firmness and stability of the trail surface, the trail's grade and cross grade, the trail length, and the trail's smoothness. A small stretch of an unstable surface that a fully ambulatory hiker might not notice can be devastating for a wheelchair user who does not have access to an all-terrain chair or an assistant to help them across. I experienced these conditions at White Sands. The park has an elevated catwalk to access a section of the dunes, but the wind had blown sand over the first few feet of the catwalk. Had I traversed this area alone, I could not have navigated this sandy patch and would have missed seeing these beautiful dunes up close.

Slopes on the trail can challenge a wheelchair user. Braking to prevent rollbacks and the change in the center of gravity can cause tip overs. Potential damage to a customized wheelchair would be catastrophic. This chair is my mobility. Due to the complexity of this device, it can take months to get repairs completed. When my chair breaks, I have to use an inferior backup mobility device that is harder to maneuver and lacks the comfort of my primary chair.

While many parks have created accessible trails, they tend to be short routes typically located close to the visitors' center. These trails are expensive to construct. Therefore, it is reasonable that they are built where about 90 percent of the visitors begin their park adventure. However, the National Park Service can provide a wider experience for the mobility-challenged visitor – beyond the limitations of the visitor centers and into the backcountry. For example, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and Assateague Island National Seashore offer wheelchairs built to cross the sand. Rocky Mountain, Yellowstone, and Sequoia Kings Canyon National Parks offer specialty chairs that allow visitors to go on trails that would be inaccessible to visitors in conventional wheelchairs or with other mobility issues. These instances are just a few of the NPS sites that offer these types of programs to meet the needs of a diverse population of visitors. Specialty mobility devices may strain an already tight budget, but they are only one solution for mobility access. Look out for creative solutions to expand your park's accessibility. Without research, the proper equipment and the park service's implementation of creative accommodation on behalf of the differently abled, a greater area of these enchanting sites are awaiting exploration. Preparation is essential for success. Access to these adventures is not perfect. Obstacles will still need attention. More trials will present themselves on the trail, and I'll be ready.

Shannon Wilson is medically retired from the National Park Service. She served in six different units, GRCA, JECA, WICA, MIMI, DESO, LIHO, and SEKI during her time as a ranger. She is ANPR's board member for Membership Services.

A race against time

By Butch Farabee

So, there I was … a newly minted park medic behind the wheel of Yosemite's first, brand-new modular ambulance. Riding shotgun was Sandy Coberly, a trusted nurse from Lewis Memorial Hospital, the small hospital in the Valley. We had just transferred a climber with a basilar-skull fracture to an ambulance out of Fresno and were re-entering the park. It was Nov. 6, 1977, and the curvy road was icy in the deep shade, so I was extra careful. Approaching Wawona, I heard a faint radio conversation already in progress, "Do you want the EMT kit?" I instinctively transmitted, "This is 311, I have the park's ambulance and there's a nurse with me." I closed with, "Can I help?" Wawona District Ranger James T. "JT" Reynolds hastily replied, "Ten-four, come to the RO (Ranger Office)." We were there in five minutes.

Thrashing around on the floor was a tiny 5-year-old boy, whose parents hovered anxiously. He was semi-coherent but responding to voice commands; Sandy and I could clearly see he had been bleeding heavily from his armpit, but JT had it under control. I was surprised by how much blood he'd lost. Only minutes earlier, little Colin Neu had been happily picnicking with his family. While enjoying some chips, he began fending off a friendly but pesky roadside deer; the yearling won, successfully nuzzling the small bag to the ground. The spiked-horn was nosing it around when Colin reached down to reclaim his food. Startled, the deer spooked and jerked upwards, stabbing the boy in his little armpit with a 5-inch antler!

Sandy consulted with Dr. Jim Wurgler at LMH, who directed us to head toward more advanced care at Fresno Children's Hospital, 90 minutes away. LMH would call ahead and have an ambulance meet us part way. Colin was quickly loaded, with Sandy monitoring him in the back and his father tightly clutching his hand. Off we sped, back down the way we had just come; I was going "Code Two-

Photo courtesy Butch Farabee

Rangers respond to a car accident near the Wawona Tunnel in Yosemite National Park, using the same modular ambulance that carried 5-year-old Colin Neu to Lewis Memorial Hospital in 1977. Facing page: an illustration of the winding roads that lead to Yoesmite National Park.

After an interminable hour of compressions and screaming along down the highway, we reached the ER; a surgical team met us, then disappeared inside.

and-a-Half.” I had my emergency lights on but no siren unless needed, I wanted Nurse Coberly to hear her stethoscope. Luckily, the traffic was light but the narrow, shoulderless road still had hidden black ice, so I remained cautious. I also did not want Colin to vomit while strapped onto the gurney. In 10 minutes, we exited the park and were now going down Highway 41, an even curvier road. Minutes passed, with Sandy and I appraising each other of our status.

Suddenly she yelled, “Butch, pull over, I can’t get a pulse!” Luckily, there was an almost immediate wide spot and I slid to a stop. Jumping out, I took four steps and threw the rear double doors wide open. As she was saying, “We need to start CPR, now,” I slid a backboard under Colin in one motion. Sandy began compressions and I was “bagging” him, simulating breaths; Colin’s father sat silent, stoically watching, but terror stricken. Sandy and I had taught CPR together recently, so we were a practiced team. I had my back to the open doors and within seconds of beginning, I heard a man’s voice, “Can I help?”

Without looking up or skipping a beat, I yelled, “Yes. Get in front. Drive. Don’t kill us!”

So, there I was: a strange man in the driver’s seat of the government’s brand-new, state-of-the-art Yosemite National Park ambulance, going Code-3 down a narrow, curve-filled, icy mountain highway, with Sandy and I in the back of the swaying rig performing CPR, all the while a frightened father sat helplessly, silently witnessing the death of his young son. To this day, I do not know the name of this stranger although I guessed he was with the boy’s family and in the car close behind with Colin’s mother and sister.

In another dozen minutes or so, we met the responding ambulance. I had to join them as there was only a driver plus attendant, but mostly, I feared the worst. Sandy returned our ambulance to the Valley and I now was alongside a new person, bagging Colin. I knew my every compression was “bleeding the boy out,” but I did not have a choice. I also began gently preparing Larry Neu for one of the worst days of his life. He tightened his jaw, slowly nodded, and understood.

After an interminable hour of compressions and screaming along down the highway, we reached the ER; a surgical team met us, then disappeared inside. Fragile 5-year-old Colin Neu was dead, having his pulmonary artery nicked by the young deer’s antler. The surgeon came out later and said, “Even if we had been there, it would have been tough saving his life.”

With JT Reynolds and I each having a young son securely at home, we sent a large floral wreath to Colin’s memorial service in the name of “Yosemite National Park Rangers.”

I teared up just writing this 45 years later; It is still one of the most heartbreaking days in my life. Thankfully, my wife, Anne, helped me grieve through it.

Butch Farabee retired from the NPS with 35 years served in 12 different park areas. He is a Lifetime Member of ANPR and was its first president. To submit your own “So There I Was” story, contact Ranger *magazine editor Melissa DeVaughn at mdevaughn@anpr.org.*

SPRING RENEWAL: SUPPORTING THE ANPR MISSION

As spring rolls around and ANPR's Board of Directors with its newest members have taken up their stations, so too comes the annual bloom of the perennial fundraising campaign. Along with our already-established general operations and targeted fundraising programs, such as the Rick Gale Fund, Bill Supernaugh Scholarship Fund, and Rick Smith Honorary International Fund, ANPR is also embarking on a variety of large-scale projects this year that need some large-scale donors.

One of the larger projects on the agenda will support the Museum of the National Park Ranger.

Museum of the National Park Ranger at Norris Campground, taken in 2013. ANPR is pledging to raise funds to help revitalize the museum. Photo: Diane Renkin / NPS

The Ranger Museum, once an Army outpost and located at Norris Geyser Basin in Yellowstone National Park, tells the story of the national park ranger beginning with the first ranger, Harry Yount, to our present day professionals. Numerous entities, including the Association of National Park Rangers, the National Park Foundation, the Yellowstone cooperating association, Yellowstone National Park, and Conoco-Phillips, worked together to establish the museum in 1991 in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the National Park Service.

Now, 30-plus years of visitors and Yellowstone winters have taken a toll on this facility. The National Park Service is working with students of historic rehabilitation and has identified funding to repair the exterior of the building, but they need ANPR's help updating the interior, which tells the story of America's rangers. ANPR has a unique opportunity to leverage the NPS's funding to support the needs of this building. ANPR also aims to assist with ongoing staffing. We need your support to reach this lofty goal.

The Ranger Museum project is a cooperative effort between the National Park Service and ANPR. Cooperating association Yellowstone Forever is also assisting in the efforts. Ideally, there would eventually be a type of endowment that could ensure the longevity of the museum for all visitors to come.

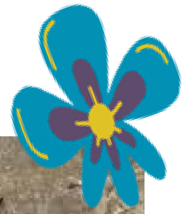
OTHER FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

ANPR is also reviewing the feasibility of creating an employee emergency-relief fund to provide initial support to ANPR members who have experienced emergencies like the Yosemite floods that happened in 2022. Ethics rules would allow an organization like ANPR to provide funds to members as that would be deemed a members benefit that is not an ethics violation to NPS employees.

Recruiting new members or new donors to ANPR is another means in how you can contribute. Recruiting new ANPR members or providing the head of the fundraising committee with specific contact information of potential new donors would be greatly appreciated. To do so, please direct email to wlauritzen@anpr.org with information on how you can help, or if you have questions.

The new format of the ANPR website at www.anpr.org makes donations easy for anyone. We will continue with the Donor Recognition List, which includes any donations that come to ANPR within each magazine cycle. For a detailed read on the donor recognition program, visit see Page 18 of Vol. 37, No. 2, of *Ranger* magazine online at:
www.anpr.org/assets/ranger_magazine/Volume-37-Number-2.pdf

REVISITING THE IRF FOUNDING, 30 YEARS LATER



Story and photo by Tony Sisto

In October 2022, my wife, Deanne Adams, and I returned from England after an extended visit with Gordon Miller near the Peak District National Park. Vaughn Baker also joined us. Gordon turned 81 recently and is currently in a care facility dealing with some health issues. As many ANPR members may be aware, Gordon was instrumental in the conceptualization and founding of the International Ranger Federation on July 31, 1992 (now celebrated annually as World Ranger Day). ANPR was one of the three founding associations of IRF, along with the Association of Countryside Rangers, representing rangers in England and Wales; and the Scottish Countryside Rangers Association.

The official signing ceremony took place at Losehill Hall, the former education and learning center for the national park (President Rick Gale signed for ANPR). We had not been back to Losehill in decades, and Gordon was anxious for a visit as well. Pulling into the familiar grounds, Gordon was intent on finding a plaque that once hung at Losehill in commemoration of the IRF founding. After a bit of wandering the halls, we came across a young man who was able to take us to a former training room where the plaque was still hanging. Gordon was ecstatic, and for us it was surprisingly poignant to find this remembrance of wonderful times past, and the thought that the ranger associations like ANPR, and those since formed in other countries, are continuing the work in recognition of world rangers.

Gordon Miller, instrumental in the conceptualization and founding of the International Ranger Federation in 1992, visits the site of the original signing ceremony for the creation of the IRF. Photo: Tony Sisto

Just as the confluence of the Gardner and Yellowstone Rivers marks 'ground zero' for the establishment of Yellowstone National Park and perhaps the world parks movement, Losehill Hall marks in its way the recognition of that world movement in the establishment of the IRF and its member associations from world nations. Thank you, Gordon.

Tony Sisto is retired after 33 years with the NPS. His assignments took him to 10 national park areas, including six years in Yellowstone. He and his wife, Deanne Adams, also an NPS retiree, live in Alaska.

ANPR OFFERS INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

ANPR might be based in the United States, but we know rangers' needs span the globe. The Association of National Park Rangers made a $1,000 donation to the Ranger Foundation to meet the essential and urgent needs of our peers in Argentina.

Looking to the future, we will continue to work with our partners at the Ranger Foundation, the International Ranger Federation, and other organizations that advocate on behalf of the ranger profession. Providing equipment is a tangible way we can provide that support, but we know that is far from the only thing that needs to be done. We also know there are plenty of needs we need to continue to meet closer to home.

While U.S. park rangers might not frequently find themselves lacking basic equipment like boots, we know that providing opportunities for training, advocating for better access to housing and ensuring staff have a realistic ladder to make ranger'ing a career is essential to sustaining each other so that we continue to accomplish the National Park Service's mission at home and so that we are able to help others live up to the highest promise of our profession around the world.

To Donate

To make a tax-deductible donation to ANPR, visit www.anpr.org/donate and click on the options provided. Better yet, encourage your fellow NPS colleagues to join as members. ANPR represents the needs of all NPS disciplines: maintenance, administration, interpretation, education, law enforcement and more. Donors are recognized in our quarterly Donor Recognition List, published each magazine cycle. For more information on the Donor Recognition program, see Page 18 of Vol. 37, No. 2, of Ranger magazine online at www.anpr.org.

ADMINISTRATION

The hub of the NPS working experience

Marin Karraker in an office she shares twice a week with a colleague at CORO. Photo: Marin Karraker

GREETINGS AND WELCOME TO OUR NEW PROFESSIONAL RANGER series on administration!

When you think of administration, who comes to mind? For those of us who have been in for decades or who may be retired, you might conjure up a stern-looking woman, all beehive hair and cat-eye glasses. Someone you steered clear of at all costs. Or maybe this person was a mystery; some legendary figure you never saw or heard.

For our younger crowd, it might be so far from that stereotype that you're saying to yourself right now, "What in the world is Marin talking about?!" Perhaps you know administrative employees who are young, maybe male, might even have tattoos, and it's very possible they started out in interpretation. My point is that things have changed in admin!

I'm guessing we all feel like our discipline – be it protection, facilities, resources, and so on – is the hub of our NPS sites, but I posit that there's a very strong case made for admin being that entity that keeps all the wheels turning. Maybe not so smoothly sometimes, but turning all the same!

So, while you might be a biologist, a protection ranger ,or a maintenance worker, we support all of you, and truth be told, you could consider yourself to be a sort of deputized admin employee because you likely do your own timekeeping or arrange your own travel, or use a government purchase charge card.

I've been in admin for 12 years now, and I never could have guessed as a young ranger in the '90s how complex and far reaching the work is. Most people know we are responsible for payroll, human resources, and budget, but did you know that admin folks may also work in hiring, employee relations, acquisitions, internal controls, information technology, personnel security, property, housing, fleet, uniforms, fees, permits .... the list goes on and on and on.

Some bigger units have teams for a division of labor while smaller units may have an administrative staff of one. That was the case for me when I jumped into it at San Juan Island NHP. Well, it was more like I dove headfirst into the shallow end! While that was a tough introduction, it certainly gave me all sorts of knowledge and skills that have since served me well as an administrative officer and mentor to others.

So much has changed in just my dozen years in this field. You might remember GovTrip or FFS or DOILearn. All are obsolete, replaced by the latest and greatest of the time (which has likely also since been replaced!). Thankfully, that old workhorse AFS lives on. While DOI moved to FBMS for budget and many other processes in 2012, AFS4 still exists as the more user-friendly budget planning and execution tool.

In future articles, I'll take a deeper look at the various jobs we do and the tools we use. I want to acknowledge our successes and our challenges. And I wish to share the stories of other administrative employees across the service – what they love or loathe about their jobs, how they came to be in this profession, where they hope it will take them. I guess I'm looking to put a face to Admin for anyone who may not have ever met their admin officer or worked directly with a budget tech.

Disclaimer: Consistency doesn't reign supreme in our admin world. It's no secret that the way Park A does things may differ from the way Park B does them, and the same holds true from region to region. If what I write doesn't seem to jive with what is being done at your unit, please defer to your administrative folks.

— Marin Karraker, *Administrative Officer, Southeast Arizona Group (Chiricahua NM, Coronado NMem, Fort Bowie NHS)*

What are all these acronyms?

GovTrip: Was used to create travel authorizations and vouchers and to make reservations for flights, hotels, etc.

DOILearn: Was used to take and track various required and optional training offerings.

FFS: Was used to inventory and track personal property and equipment. Examples include radios, desks, and snowplows.

AFS: Still used for budget programming and "execution." It tracks how money is intended to be spent, and how it was actually spent. AFS4 is the current version being used.

FBMS: The current, giant system used for budget, charge card purchase tracking and reconciliation, reimbursements, property, fleet utilization (mileage/hours tracking), etc.

INTERPRETATION

The fine art of interpretation

When visitors to a national park, monument, or forest see a sign indicating a "Ranger Program" they may ask: "Is it worth my time? Is it going to be fun?"

Some visitors may carry unpleasant memories of a "brag and drag" ranger program where the ranger brags about all he's learned while dragging them around from place to place on a guided walk. Other visitors may opt to drive to the nearest scenic overlook and passively enjoy the view rather than avail themselves of a program that, if done properly, will interpret a natural or cultural feature of the park. If they chose the scenic overlook instead of a live ranger program, they'll miss one of the most popular and exciting activities of their visit.

Pat Pilcher leads a guided walk in period clothing of the historic Keys Ranch at Joshua Tree National Park. Photo: Pat Pilcher

Time after time, surveys taken at national parks show that visitors want to interact with rangers. The variety of interpretive programs – be they guided walks, talks, informal meetings with a roving ranger – are designed to enable visitors to experience a more enriched, recreational experience and, when done correctly, can seem like magic. The magic takes place when a skilled interpreter transforms dry technical or scientific facts into stories that captivate the imagination and create a sense of wonder for the world about us. It is an art that combines communicating ideas and translating complicated technical material into simple concepts that are easily understood and may lead to caring more for the resource.

Interpretation links tangible items with intangible concepts to form a complete story of what is being interpreted. This process involves recognition of the objects, places, events (tangibles) as well as the ideas, systems, and values (intangibles) of your particular site.

Another important link is the recognition of universal concepts. Universal concepts are intangibles such as beauty, life, death, and survival that the majority of people throughout the world can recognize.

Interpretation should also use techniques that provoke visitors to cultivate intellectual and emotional connections that form meaning and identify with the resource on their own terms.

Experienced interpreters are storytellers, entertainers, scientists, naturalists, and above all, top-notch communicators. They strive to involve all of our sensory inputs to reveal meanings and provoke thought or action among their audiences.

Interpreters should be keenly aware of things happening around them and modify their activity to fit the moment. The ability to instantly adapt to fit the mood is a key point in a successful program.

On a guided walk down a sandstone canyon, for example, a bobcat suddenly appears and vanishes within a heartbeat. A skilled interpreter "seizes the moment" and seamlessly incorporates the bobcat into their prepared program. Once again a moment of magic takes the visitor away and gives them insight into the world of nature – a world to which we all belong.

On the other hand, certain distractions are best ignored. Crying babies, barking dogs or low-flying aircraft are just a few distractions I've had to deal with during my ranger career. Part of becoming a skilled interpreter is learning to get beyond these and not allow your concentration to wander. It can be very intimidating when you have 200 visitors watching your every move and suddenly you blank out. With practice, you learn to stay focused and continue the program despite the distractions

To succeed at the art of interpretation, a person must adjust to constantly changing demands and still provide a high-quality presentation. It is a process that involves provoking a visitor's sensory perceptions and gives meaning to often-overlooked treasures within a park.

Interpretive programs such as guided walks or ranger talks are the traditional activities offered in national parks and monuments. Professional interpreters who are proficient in their trade can take you on a magical journey of discovery and enlightenment. Their job requires practice, dedication and a burning desire to engage, enlighten, entertain, and provoke their audiences. Interpreters hold the key to moving visitors through a continuum from understanding to appreciation and finally to stewardship. =They tell the stories and create the magic that keeps visitors coming back for more.

Pat Pilcher spent 30 years working as a forestry technician/park ranger and naturalist guide. His work took him to assignments in Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and California.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

'Don't know much about history'

FLORIDA'S GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS LIKES HISTORY. WHAT he detests is liberals and their agendas. In this instance, it's the far-left overreach that added queer studies into the high school curriculum of an advanced placement African American Studies course that's set him raging.

The governor isn't having any of this. He has banned the course from being taught in Florida's high schools, questioned what "queer studies" has to do with the African American experience, and declared to cheering constituents that "Florida is where woke goes to die."

This is performance art with a switchblade. The governor's anti-woke soliloquies are designed to pander to the basest emotions of his base, who like the state's chief executive appear to confuse being woke with being radicalized. The two have nothing to do with each other.

AP classes, much like the best NPS interpretive programs, encourage discussion and debate. They tolerate the expression of opposing viewpoints and on the matter of African American studies allow inquiring minds the chance to think about race, white supremacy, patriotism, democracy, service, citizenship, and yes, queerness. For the handful of students taking this course, or any others like it, horizons are expanded, awareness heightened, and their ability to be informed citizens in a democratic nation enhanced.

An inner canyon ranger delivers a program to a group of hikers at Boat Beach, near Phantom Ranch in Grand Canyon National Park. AP classes, much like NPS interpretive programs, encourage discussion and debate. NPS photo

The challenge for the governor (and others of his ilk) is that the complicated version of American history challenges strongly held, outdated, and incomplete (read dumb) beliefs about our shared past. That narrative is linear; things were bad until good people (mostly men) made them better. A continent of vast wilderness was tamed, the tamers freed the slaves, gave women the right to vote, and created the art, architecture, industry, commerce, folkways, and freedoms that remain the envy of the world. The trouble is that's never been our entire story and recent efforts by black, brown, and queer people, women, the poor and working-class Americans to claim our place on the mantlepiece of American history has made some of our fellow Americans, well… uncomfortable.

The source of this agita is the way in which all the communities and people above listed complicate the traditional narrative. The march westward to claim a continent came at the expense of the indigenous people who already called that continent home. Yes, enslaved people were freed. But it took a cataclysmic civil war and three amendments to the constitution to enshrine that "new birth of freedom" and more than 100 years of struggle (ongoing) to subvert a status quo bent on undermining progress towards equality and human rights by any means necessary.

Our history is complex. Embracing that complexity doesn't mean you hate America. Rather it means we admire (yes, admire) George Washington for setting up our democratic tradition by not seeking a third term as president even as we criticize him for being a slaveholder. It means we shed hot, silent tears for Emmett Till, a lynching victim, while being moved to greater fortitude by the determination of his mother Mamie Till-Mobley to seek justice for her murdered son. It means admiring the courageous leadership of Alice Paul while being deeply troubled by the racism she infused into the advocacy of her National Women's Party.

All history should teach us to be critical, independent thinkers who can embrace and parse complex narratives. All of us, should strive to be a little more woke.

Our past is indeed our prologue. Collectively, we are Barrack Obama, Strom Thurmond, and Dolores Huerta. What we aren't is a one size (one ideology) fits all nation. And what we ought never to be is a people who are so afraid of ourselves, our past, and each other, that we would do anything, even dumb things, to avoid a truthful examination of our past. If we truly value freedom, we must adhere to the idea that being free requires our action our attention and our awareness. And what are action, attention, and awareness but synonyms for being woke.

— Alan Spears
National Parks Conservation Association

IN PRINT

A bear of a murder mystery in Glacier NP

By Rick Smith

I'm GOING TO TAKE A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO THIS NOVEL since it involves so much investigation and detective work. The approach I have chosen is like one might find in a courtroom.

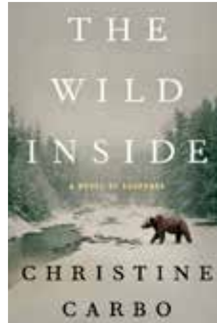
Location: Glacier National Park

Main protagonist: Ted Systead, criminal investigator working out of the Denver NPS office. He is sent to Glacier to investigate a strange crime. When Ted was a young boy, he and his father went camping in Glacier. A grizzly pulled his father out of the tent and killed him. He is still haunted by the memory.

The crime: Someone taped a person to a tree and left him there. It didn't take long for a grizzly to find him and tear huge chunks of his body away, leaving Ted with little evidence to process. During a subsequent examination of the victim's body, the pathologist confirmed that the victim had been alive before the attack but had also been shot at close range. However, the pathologist could not find the bullet and assumed that the bear had eaten it while devouring other parts of the body.

The victim: He was a young man, son of an in-holder in Glacier. The pathologist and the young man's mother confirmed that he was a meth user.

The bear: Since the bear was the only one hanging around the area of the crime, the park was able to trap it almost immediately.



"The Wild Inside," by Christine Carbo, Simon & Schuster, 2015

The question was would the bear poop out the bullet or had he already done so. One thing working in Ted's favor was that the grizzly was preparing for hibernation and storing fat.

Conflict #1: Since the park had earlier received bad publicity regarding the handling of another grizzly, the park superintendent wanted to release the bear as soon as possible. He and Ted were not on the same page here, and Ted feared the bear would be released before a crucial piece of evidence could be obtained.

Conflict #2: Almost everyone Ted questions during the investigation seems to assume they are a suspect. Ted has trouble getting accurate answers because of this attitude.

The bullet: Finally the bear, still in the trap to the annoyance of the superintendent, poops the bullet, which goes a long way to eliminating some suspects that Ted had considered. It does help, though, to throw the spotlight on others.

The guilty party: Hah, hah, I'm not disclosing that. You'll have to read the book to discover who it is. Be prepared to be surprised. I was.

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PROTECTION

Leadership is a four-letter word

Jeff, Keith, and I were riding our Ninja bikes as fast as we could, knowing full-well that we were AWOL and that our platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class (SFC) Saam, was none too happy about it. He wanted us back at Bragg NOW!

Problem was, it was "pourin' the rain" (as the locals would say in rural North Carolina), and Ninja bikes don't adhere to the roadway so well when too much throttle juice is applied in such soggy conditions, as might be the case when the bikes are driven by 18-year-old paratroopers who fear what lay ahead for them at the hands of their Neanderthal-looking platoon sergeant.

On we drove, trying our best to keep the bikes upright, while at the same time trying to put the miles behind us. To make matters worse, Jeff had lost one contact lens, but he assured Keith and me that he still had one good eye and through it, he could "mostly see okay."

Eventually our knees—taking the full brunt of the chilly wind and rain—necks, and hands went numb. We could feel our fine motor skills sapping away, and despite our youth, we knew what we were doing was flat-out dangerous. We knew that if we kept plodding ahead, one of us was going to lay his bike down at 70 miles an hour.

We pulled over, got some hot coffee, and—with extreme trepidation—called SFC Saam. We couldn't tell if our fingers were shaking because of the cold or the fear. We drew straws and Jeff got to do the talking (or whimpering). I could hear SFC Saam shouting into Jeff's ear from three feet away, and Jeff kept wincing like he was in physical pain.

But right before Jeff hung up, SFC Saam added something to his tirade: He told Jeff that late is late, whether it's five minutes or five hours, and all that mattered right now was that we drive safely and get our butts back to our unit uninjured.

Either SFC Saam just didn't want the hassle of injury-related paperwork, or…he cared about us.

The best part of this story is that Jeff, Keith, and I knew that he cared about us. Because of that, we'd follow him anywhere, including into battle. To be sure, SFC Saam had innumerable other qualities that, together, made him an outstanding leader. But none of his troops ever questioned whether he cared about us. We knew 100 percent that the only thing that he placed above the welfare of his men was the accomplishment of his mission, and that's just the way it is in the military—mission first, then troops.

Senior course coordinator Rob "Robby T" Turan *telling* the class how much he cares at the 2006 Basic Technical Rescue Training-East course, Big South Fork NRRA, Kentucky. Photo: Bill Cardwell

IT'S SPELLED C-A-R-E

Leaders have to CARE!

When they don't, their would-be followers notice it.

And when they do, their followers notice it.

This truth applies to leaders in any arena requiring groups of people to work together toward a common goal: sports team coaches, military unit commanders, corporate world CEOs, class presidents, fire chiefs and crew bosses, SAR team captains, and so on. How true is this, then, for the leaders of park rangers worldwide?! Rangers need strong leadership, and they need to know that their leaders care about their welfare.

Each year my agency requires that employees in supervisory positions complete 40 hours of "supervisory" training, and first-year supervisors must complete 80 hours of it. I think this is a great idea, because when a ranger is a supervisor, I believe he or she actually has two jobs, and both bring with them full-time duties. The only problem I have with the "supervisory" training requirement is that it's up to individual employees to identify courses to satisfy the requirement, which allows for too much hit-or-miss regarding the training's practical applicability to actually leading rangers. Too often the chosen training is weak, diluted, generic, and deals plenty with supervision, administration, and managing, but not nearly enough with honest-to-God leadership.

Supervision is important. So is managing, and so is administrating. But the three of these together do not automatically equal lead-

ership. They don't even come close.

Leadership—the true art of leading people—is more about providing purpose, direction, and motivation—and in some cases providing it under adverse conditions in austere environments—than it is about "managing" a budget, or "administering" a program, or "supervising" a work schedule. It's about setting an example, doing the right thing even when the right thing is tough to do, striving for excellence oneself before asking others to do the same, and actually inspiring people to want to be the best they can be, thereby strengthening the team and accomplishing the mission.

And it's also about caring about people.

There is a spot-on perfect illustration of this concept early on in the movie Gettysburg. It was late June, 1863, near the border of Pennsylvania and Maryland. Col. Joshua L. Chamberlain, commanding officer of the 20th Maine Infantry Regiment, was preparing his decimated unit for what rumors were predicting would be a bloody battle when he was informed that he must take responsibility for 120 "mutineers" from the 2nd Maine Infantry Regiment who chose to quit after their unit had become disbanded because when they signed on, they did so believing they would fight only with their own unit, the 2nd Maine. He was furthermore informed that if they refused to join his regiment, he was authorized to shoot them.

Col. Chamberlain didn't shoot the men. Instead…he fed them.

The first thing he asked them is, "When did you men last eat?" After promptly giving them breakfast, he relieved their guards, listened to their concerns and grievances, gave them some of his time—which was probably his most limited commodity at the moment—and gave them his sincerity. As he spoke with them, they could tell he genuinely cared about their welfare. He gave them his empathy, too…told them that his unit started with a thousand men, was already reduced to less than three hundred, and that they had all seen good men die. He told them that, like them, he was from Maine, and like them, he had volunteered to fight for his home, his country. He also gave them the truth: He told them that due to his unit being ordered to march that very morning, there was little he could do about their plight right then, but as soon as possible, he would provide fair treatment.

It was about this point in his interaction with them that he moved into that fabled realm where only the truly great leaders find themselves…he inspired them. He straight-up asked the men, who moments before were bent on quitting, to join his unit and fight beside him. He told them that this army was different from most every other army in the history of the world: rather than fighting for riches, power, loot, and land, his army—the Union Army—was out to set other men free and that "We all have value…you and me."

"What we're fighting for in the end…" he told them, "…we're fighting for each other."

When he finished his impromptu speech, he gave them what little time he could afford to talk among themselves. By the time his unit was ready to move out, 114 troops out of the 120 had chosen to fight beside him. To those 114, he gave three more things:

1) He gave them their arms back—that is absolutely pivotal for a soldier; and

2) and 3) he gave them identity and purpose—both also vital!

They were once again soldiers in a Maine regiment and they once again had a cause worth fighting for. As if all that he had already given them wasn't enough, he went on to allow those 114 men to march and fight beside one another—their own little band of brothers.

Two crew bosses on the Skyland Fire, Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park, Mont. Photo: Brian Sacia

Within the first 10 minutes of meeting Col. Chamberlain, these Union soldiers knew without a doubt that he cared about them. And because of that, they followed him into battle.

Col. Chamberlain had earned something that former U.S. Marine Capt. Nathaniel Fick calls "moral authority." Fick, who led an infantry platoon from the Marines' First Reconnaissance Battalion into battle in both Afghanistan and Iraq, later authored a book about his combat experiences titled, "One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer." In it, he says that "legal authority" is worn on the collar, but that real battlefield authority, "moral authority is the legitimacy granted to a leader who knows his job and cares about his men."

Capt. Fick goes on to add, "Strong combat leadership is never by committee. Platoon commanders must command, and command in battle isn't based on consensus. It's based on consent. Any leader wields only as much authority and influence as is conferred by the consent of those he leads. The Marines allowed me to be their commander, and they could revoke their permission at any time."

Whoa! That is powerful stuff for aspiring leaders! Imagine if every leader knew in his or her heart that their ability to lead their troops isn't half as much given to them from someone higher up the chain of command as it is from those lower down! Capt. Fick, as a young officer, discovered a little pearl of wisdom about leadership not usually figured out until much later in most leaders' careers:

Show your troops that you care about them and they will grant you moral authority to lead them. Then, lead them well, and they will follow enthusiastically.

LEADERSHIP IN THE LITERATURE

Capt. Fick's book has morphed into an exhaustive authority in and of itself — a sort of blueprint for leading people. The U.S. Marine Corps Officer Candidate School includes it on their list of required reading, and many non-military entities have recognized it as a source for molding their own young leaders.

That brings me back to that required annual "supervisory" training my agency requires for its supervisors. This past year I requested to attend a wildland firefighting course and use it as my required supervisory training. The course, L-380: The Fireline Leader, used Capt. Fick's book as a template, and was hands-down the best leadership (or supervisory) training I have participated in since becoming a park ranger.

It's primary take-home message was loud and clear: Leaders must care about those they lead.

So *how* do park ranger leaders show that they care about the rangers they're charged with leading? Now there's a subject that can fill an entire book of its own — a dozen books. For each team, crew, unit, district, park, region … whatever … a different approach might be needed, but enough commonalities exist to explore some simple suggestions that can be broadly applied by most leaders in charge of rangers.

More on specific tactics will appear in future editions of this column, but for now, the actions and attitudes of SFC Saam, Col. Chamberlain, and Capt. Fick are as good a starting point as I've ever known. Each, in his own way, demonstrated to his troops — his followers — that without exception he cared about them.

Each of these great leaders knew that true, solid leadership is a four-letter word.

— Kevin Moses
Central District Ranger, Shenandoah National Park

Editor's note: This article was previously published in *Wilderness SAR* magazine (originally titled *Park Ranger*) and reprinted with permission.

Kudos List

These people have either given someone a gift membership to ANPR or recruited a new member. Thanks for your help and support! *(Updated 3/10/2023)*

- Melinda Moses
- Jonathan Shafer
- Ken Pahl
- Ed Rizzotto

ANPR membership directory aims to connect professionals in the field

You asked, and we heard you! ANPR is developing a members-only directory so longstanding and new members can take advantage of the networking opportunities this association can provide. Are you an early-career professional seeking advice, or an experienced retiree offering to provide mentorship? This is where you can connect.

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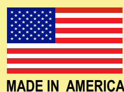

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Quiet, Continued from Page 9

its remote location and absence of heavy flight patterns.

Bob Krumenaker, superintendent of Big Bend National Park, said the natural soundscape is indeed an invaluable characteristic of any park unit, one that he personally appreciates at his own park.

"Big Bend National Park is a place where natural sounds – which aren't necessarily quiet – predominate," he said. "Due to the park's vast expanse, limited development, distance from cities and highways, and lack of airline routes, it's rare to hear unnatural sounds. But the songs of birds, the wind, the rustling of leaves, and when you are near the Rio Grande, the sound of the river waters, are really noticeable, and the contrast to other places becomes obvious. Along with the park's incredible dark skies, the lack of human sounds defines the experience for most visitors. It's one of this park's true wilderness values, and it's important to protect that as the park becomes more popular."

Trevino agrees.

"In comparison to other resources – like noise pollution and light pollution – preserving the natural soundscape is far less expensive than other things," Trevino said. "People just need to be thoughtful in their planning and procurement. Backcountry plans or other visitor-use management plans need to include the protection of natural soundscapes as one of their objectives from the beginning. It's always easier to do it at the onset than go back and do it later."

Hempton said he welcomes cooperation with the National Park Service in aiding its efforts to preserve the natural sounds that add such richness to the landscape.

"If you manage the quiet, the noise will take care of itself," he said.

Melissa DeVaughn is editor of Ranger *magazine. She lives in the quiet Eagle River Valley, in Alaska.*

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