



The CSPRA Wave

Volume 25, Number 3

Newsletter of the CALIFORNIA STATE PARK RANGERS ASSOCIATION

Summer 2025

"State Park experts and professionals advocating for State Parks since 1964."

2025 Rendezvous September 15-18th

This year's annual CSPRA Rendezvous will be hosted by the California State Parks Central Valley District and Columbia SHP. Registration costs are still just \$45 per person for three fun filled days of seeing "behind the scenes" stories and programs at Calaveras SP, Railtown SHP and of course Columbia SHP. This is a great opportunity to mingle and connect with like-minded State Park professionals while visiting some of our special State Parks. All specific details such as Rendezvous registration, hotel information, camping and the tentative daily schedule can be found on the CSPRA website www.cspra.com

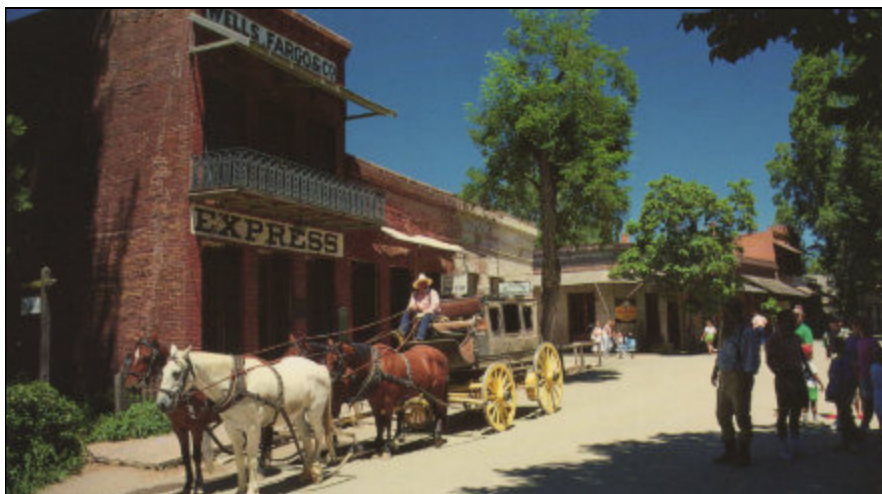


In summary, Monday (9/15) park tour of Calaveras Big Trees SP will include visiting the North Grove, prescribe burn updates, meadow restoration and cabin project updates. Tuesday (9/16) morning tour includes visiting the Railtown roundhouse followed by a Train Ride. In the afternoon we will convene at Columbia SHP to review the building

restoration program, a town tour and visiting many of the concession stores in town.

On Wednesday (9/17) we will be meeting all day at the Faith Hall Community Room at Columbia SHP. Highlights will include a Central Valley District update from District Superintendent Danielle Gerhart; reviewing Columbia's living history programs; presenting CSPRA's Honorary Ranger Award to this year's very special honoree; and other soon to be announced guest speakers and presentations. Your \$45 rendezvous registration also includes a catered lunch, followed by a smoked tri-tip dinner courtesy of Frank Padilla the ultimate prescribed burn boss!

On Thursday (9/18) the CSPRA Board of Directors will conduct a Board Meeting in the morning and everyone is invited to attend. Please consider attending the entire Rendezvous or just certain days! Questions: contact Ron Krueper CSPRA Treasurer.





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The CSPRA Wave

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**Deadline for next issue
September 15**

President's Message

My fellow members and colleagues, I would like to start off welcoming all our new members that have recently joined!



Our ranks continue to grow even in these uncertain times. As the summer season sets in we are facing numerous threats to our beloved State Parks system: Fires, budget cuts, potential pay cuts and high visitation. We can't control the future, but we can prepare ourselves for and our parks for a busy nonstop summer.

Be prepared: Have you checked your "go bag" lately? Fires can happen at any time, our fire season is pretty much year-round these days. Prepare a "go bag" for your needs for yourself and your family at home. I would suggest you have copies or PDF versions of important documents, insurance policies, birth certificates etc. in that bag.

If you are part of a local fire response team for your district or park, be sure you have all the necessary safety equipment, clothing, toiletries etc. in your bag. That first 24 hours of initial attack you won't have much support so plan accordingly. Also, remember to take care of your feet! Good fitting, properly broken in boots, and clean dry socks can lessen the stress on your hips and back.

With the current state budget we are facing cuts in funding, potential cuts in wages, and a loss of tele work. As someone with now 25 years of state service, this happens on a regular basis, don't be overly anxious. As a department we are used to lean times, we will get through this downturn. We as park professionals need to be ambassadors to our partners and the public. When asked about a broken bathroom or a cut educational program, it's important to be diplomatic yet honest about the reasons.

Lastly, don't forget to take care of yourself and your family. When the summer roles around and our parks are full its easy to forget that we as professionals (and our families) need time off as well. Take some time and disconnect, get out in nature and recharge!

Have a safe and productive summer! Don't forget to join us at the CSPRA Rendezvous in September at Columbia State Historic Park in Sonora CA. Registration information is available on the website.

Thank you for your support and all your efforts in making CSPRA the voice of the park professional.

CSPRA PRESIDENT

Steve Ptomey

Whitehead Award Presented



Training Officer Jason Smith, accompanies Tom Bernardo presenting the check to Ranger Angela Winder with Ann Meneguzzi.

On Friday April 11, 2025, thirty-two new Rangers and Lifeguards received badges and training certificates at their graduation ceremony in Paradise, CA.

CSPRA's Whitehead Award with its accompanying check was presented to Angela Winder by Tom Bernardo and Ann Meneguzzi.

We are pleased to note that 30 of the 32 cadets joined CSPRA! Congratulations to all the new SPPO Rangers and Lifeguards!

Baker to Vegas Run

Congratulations to the California State Parks Baker to Vegas Running relay team of 20 Rangers and Lifeguards who ran 120 miles in 15 hours 46 minutes north of Baker CA via Pahrump NV to Las Vegas April 5-6th.

Over 240 law enforcement agencies were represented in the annual LAPD B2V and entered teams with the California Highway Patrol Elite recording 1st place in a time of 12 hours 32 minutes. California State Parks placed 32nd overall and CSPRA was honored to help sponsor this years team financially.

Besides our 20 runners, several other State Park employees and retirees volunteered their time to provide logistical support for the team including Ron Krueper CSPRA Treasurer.

Most law enforcement agencies were from California, however there was teams from Oklahoma City, Salt Lake City and Queensland Australia.

Go to Baker to Vegas website for team results present and past. <https://bakervegas.net>

Baker to Vegas - Where Runners Go To Compete!!



A Peek at the Pika

By Laura Van Etten-Collins

Walking in a high mountain meadow, enjoying the sweet pure air with camera in hand, I thought I would get some good wildflower photos. Suddenly, I heard a repeated high “eeeepp” call. I thought that the call might be coming from a “Whistler” or Marmot, a large rodent, a mountain dwelling ground squirrel. Marmots are known for their high-pitched whistle or call.

Changing my camera lens, I headed toward the sound where the talus slope met the grasses at the edge of the meadow. Using stealth, I



Pikas are sometimes called “Rock Rabbits”



neared the sound, having to repeatedly stop, listen, and start again to zero in on the sound’s origin. I finally found an American Pika AND a Marmot amongst the boulders in the scree. Pikas are sometimes called “Rock Rabbits”, but I never

really thought about them being actual rabbits. They really don’t look like what I think of when I think of a rabbit, with the whole big ear thing. Come to find out, they are in the rabbit family.

I wondered if rabbits were related to rodents because these pikas looked very rodent-like, sort of like a cross between a mouse and a guinea pig. Scientists have decided, after much scrutiny and debate, that rabbits are cousins of rodents, but in their own group, Lagomorphs. Lagomorph means “hare shape”. This group contains pikas, rabbits and hares. Rodents and rabbits differ in the arrangement of teeth, but both have chisel shaped front teeth, they’re gnawers. Rabbits are strict vegetarians, unlike rodents, and don’t gnaw on plastic car engine parts. Rabbits have shorter tails. The soles of a rabbit’s feet are covered in fur, where rodents have paw pads.

With their grey/black/brown colored fur, these cute little

guys were very well camouflaged amongst the rocks. They can be spotted by watching for movement and listening for their call.

The pikas I met were very busy gathering green vegetation and transporting it to a big flat rock in the sun to dry out. Pikas don't hibernate, so the dried vegetation is piled up underground in "hay piles" for scrumptious winter fare. Hay piles have been found in size up to one bushel and three feet in diameter. Imagine what a big pile of eight, one-gallon bottles of milk might look like. The food gathering season at high elevation is short, so pikas have to make hay while the sun shines, so to speak.....

Pikas, like other rabbits and also rodents, are poop eaters. In the name of efficiency, they eat their own poop. Apparently, this is an essential part of their digestive process to extract



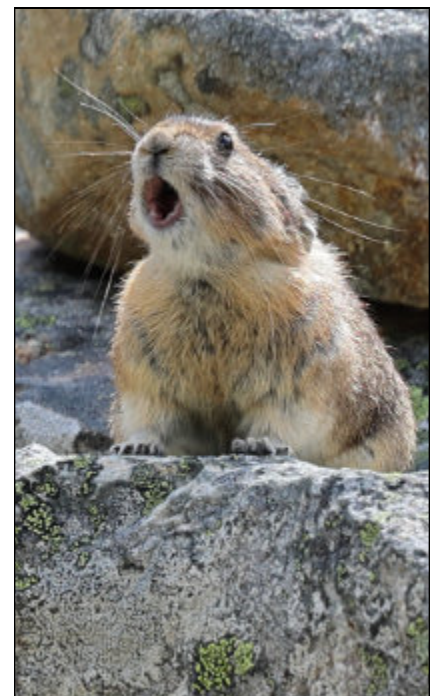
as much nutrition as possible from food, especially vitamin B.

Pikas don't tolerate heat well, which is a good reason to live at high elevation. As the earth's climate warms, some scientists have become very concerned that pikas may not survive. However, these little animals may be more adaptable than we think. One study in the Bodie Hills has shown that

they have adjusted their food gathering times to avoid high daytime temperatures and are out and about in early morning and late evening hours.



Marmot, a large rodent, a mountain dwelling ground squirrel



This pika was giving a high-pitched "EEEEPP" call. I'm not sure what it was saying, but perhaps it was a warning, "Hey, stay away from my hay!!". Nearby there, a Marmot, eying the pika's pile of drying vegetables...

Photos by Laura Van Etten-Collins

Court De-Certifies Gondola EIR

By Ron Krueper

On May 1, 2025 the California Court of Appeal issued a ruling to de-certify the LA Metro Environmental Impact Report (EIR), a privately funded aerial gondola transportation project to connect Union Station to Dodger Stadium through Los Angeles State Historic Park (LASHP). The Appeal Court remanded the EIR back to the trial court with directions that LA Metro set aside its EIR Certification; adoption of CEQA findings, statement of overriding considerations and project approval.

Specifically, the Appeal Court found that LA Metro did not comply with CEQA by undertaking review of measures to mitigate significant construction noise impacts and not requesting consultation with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. LA Metro must now prepare and certify a legally sufficient supplemental EIR with corrective actions before reapproving the project which could take up to a year to complete if they choose to proceed.

Last November 2024, CSPRA participated in the initial public input meetings held

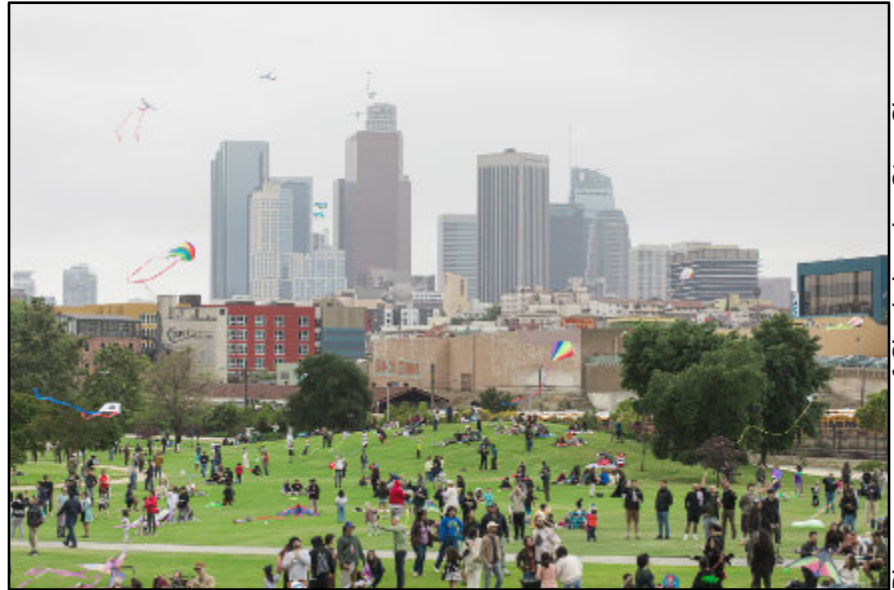


Photo courtesy of Clockshop by Gina Clyne

by California State Parks Planning Department to consider a LA SHP General Plan Amendment (GPA) that would be needed to allow a gondola loading station onsite and aerial cable rights through 2 acres of the 32 acre Park. CSPRA through its comments, along with many other groups and individuals, recommends that Parks considers a “NO” to the GPA process and it never is presented before the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) for consideration and vote. CSPRA has continually advocated during past public comment periods at PRC meetings before Commissioner’s the potential adverse precedent setting concerns if a privately funded interest were to take or be allowed to use a portion of a California State Park, along visual aesthetic impacts and loss of open space use.

On June 26, 2025, the PRC

was scheduled to visit LA SHP to only review current park operations and programs and not the actual gondola proposal. However, this visit was suddenly canceled last week with no reschedule date. CSPRA and many other organizations/ individuals had been planning to attend and depict the visual impacts and loss of park use of the aerial gondola with a loading station and removal trees in the southern portion of the park. We will be ready when the visit is rescheduled.

The photo depicts the recent May 17th Annual Kite Festival at LA SHP showing the southern end of the park where gondola cars would travel just 26 ft. over the top of the grassy hill with the iconic downtown Los Angeles skyline on the horizon. I do not think moving gondola cars and kite flying make for a good mix! Stay tuned!

CSPRA's New "Way Back Machine"

By Jeff Price,
CSPRA Webmaster

Over the past months, several long-time members have collected every available CSPRA publication sent out over the past 60 years. This archive includes nearly 450 newsletter issues from 21 editors and is now online as a PDF compilation.

This "Way Back" review provides a broad perspective on the organization, its history, accomplishments in protecting state park integrity, and service to professionalize all California State Park careers.

You may view the collection at: <https://cspra.com/>

Background: CSPRA's member communication document has gone through seven name changes in 60 years. The first issue was just called "CSPRA Newsletter," until 1969 when it was renamed "The



Reporter." Then Editor Jeff Price held a contest in 1980 to rename the newsletter and "California Ranger" was selected, as suggested by

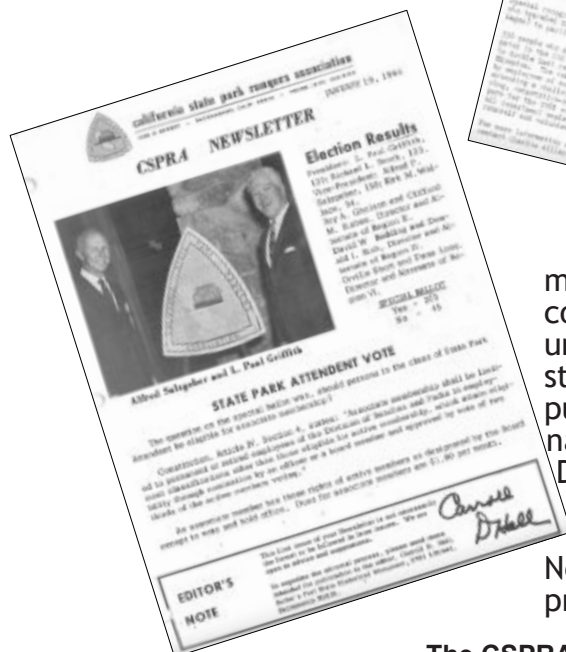
into a joint publication by CSPRA and PRAC and it became a separate publication for the short-lived 501(c)3 "Cal Ranger Foundation" under then President Rick Parmer. When that charitable non-profit became inactive in 1992 the publication name "The California Ranger" evaporated. The name returned to "CSPRA



Newsletter" until "The CSPRA Wave" was selected as the name in 2000.

We were unable to locate a few past newsletter issues and those are shown in a dimmed, gray font on the website. If you are a pack rat, have stashed back CSPRA news issues or have any of the missing issues, please let webmaster Jeff Price <jeff@cspra.com> know; we would like to borrow, scan and upload them to complete the collection.

member Bill Krumbein. It continued with that name until the Board decided to start a professional publication and took that name for the journal in December 1980, and the newsletter went back to using the name "CSPRA Newsletter." Then, the professional journal evolved



Wave Goodbye

Anna Cross

As a park aid in the 70s, Anna was one of the first women to work in maintenance and rose through the ranks to retire as a District PMC in 2001. Along the way she worked in numerous coastal Districts from Marin to San Diego. Anna continued working until 2016 as an RA. A former Marine, she maintained that demeanor and work ethic throughout her career.



With her larger-than-life presence, Anna inspired many. She wanted to leave state parks a better place for all, especially women in non-traditional fields. Anna was active on the Statewide Women's Advisory and EEO committees and served as a Women-in-Trades coordinator, EEO counselor, and recruiter. She was a president of the State Park Maintenance Supervisors' Association and a member of the State Park Advocates for Gay and Lesbian Rights group.

Anna and Lois Harter met at a CPR class and were together for 42 years, marrying in 2008. She is also survived by two adult children, Ty and Todd, and grandchildren. Anna's commitment to parks and people will be missed.

Dennis Doberneck

Dennis was born in Petaluma, California when much of the North Bay was still undeveloped ranches. Dennis went to Sacramento State University and received a Bachelor of Science Degree.

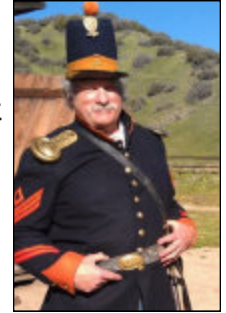


During college, he worked as a smokejumper for the Forest Service. He had dreams of becoming a Game Warden or State Park Ranger. State Parks came calling first. Dennis took his first position as a Park Aide at Anadel before being hired as a State Park Ranger at Salt Point State Park.

Dennis promoted and moved many times during his career with State Parks — Annadel State Park, Big Basin Redwoods, Malibu State Park, and Hungry Valley State Park. Hungry Valley is where Dennis's volunteering with the Hunter Education program began. Responding to an ad in the paper, Dennis was soon joined by his co-teacher Steve Newman. Dennis thoroughly enjoyed his time in the mountains of the Grapevine. Dennis promoted to District Superintendent of Oceano Dunes and remained there until his retirement in 2001. Dennis passed this March at the age of 77.

Bill Moffat

A Celebration of Life was held recently for Bill Moffat at Tule Elk SNR. Bill was the supervising Ranger there for many



years. He managed the Tejon Sector, including Fort Tejon and Allensworth State Historical Parks, along with the Tule Elk Reserve. Coworkers note he sometimes drove them crazy, but he was a good guy. He had a great sense of humor, was an excellent birder, naturalist and train aficionado.

Bill served as a state park ranger for almost 30 years and he really had a passion for the wildlife, especially the park's namesake Tule Elk. He was in much demand as a speaker, sharing his love for the elk, developed over many years spent working as a park ranger and has living with his family at the on-site reserve location.

Bill enjoyed leading birdwatching tours as well as sharing his expertise about the Tule Elk population and the opportunities available for the public to view and provided information for those interested in hunting the elk. He had a lot of history to share.

Bob LaBelle

Robert “Bob” Ronald La Belle passed away at home in Lodi, at the age of 83. Born in Bell, CA, he



graduated from Nevada Union High School in Grass Valley, and received his BS in Biological Science from Cal Poly, SLO. In 1969 he began his career as a Fish and Wildlife Assistant for the California Department of Fish and Game, serving the Mendota Wildlife Area.

He accepted his first assignment as Ranger in the Piercy Area. In 1973 he was promoted to the Big Sur Area. In 1977 Bob promoted to Interpretive Specialist for the Inland Region. During the next 14 years, he accepted further promotions at Region Headquarters including Superintendent of Visitor Services, Superintendent of Technical Services, and Acting District Superintendent at the American River District.

In 1991 Bob became District Superintendent for the Russian River District, which subsequently combined with the Mendocino District during the 1993 department reorganization. In recognition of his success he received the Olmstead Award. His natural ability to inspire others through respect and confidence has made him a legacy and friend of many.

Dick Mercer

Dick Mercer died peacefully on May 2, 2025. He is survived by his devoted wife of 60 years, Dina; children Brian (Alyssa), Steven (Heather), and Danielle; and several grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Mark (1972).

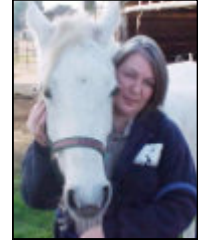


Born to Robert & Florinda Mercer in Alameda, CA, they relocated to various points in the Bay Area; Southern California; and Kansas City, KS. He worked summers on his grandparents' farm in Clarksburg and attended Sac State, where he met his beloved Dina.

You may remember Dick as a friendly face in Parks IT department. His career included Water Resources, Parks & Recreation, and GTE before settling on his true passion: founding Experience Italy, a travel consultancy specializing in Italy. He himself logged over 62 trips there. A lover of food and wine, Dick prepared countless gourmet meals for family and friends and annually judged the San Francisco Chronicle's wine competition. A self-proclaimed dreamer, romantic, and lover of life, Dick changed countless lives with the experiences and bonds created, living every day to the fullest.

Victoria Yturalde

Victoria Madeline O'Keefe, 69, was born on April 8, 1955, in McGill, Nevada. She grew up in Southern California until she moved to Davis in the late 1970s. Between all of her studies and raising her children she found time to play the bongo drums and sing in a local Davis band.



Victoria attended UC Davis and obtained a bachelors's degree in English. She then went on to obtain her masters degree in library sciences from UC Berkeley.

She went on to become an archivist for the Special Collections in the UC Davis Library. After she left the UC Davis Library, she spent her career at the California Department of Parks and Recreation as an archivist, where she ultimately retired.

Victoria and John purchased Abigail's Acre in Rio Linda, in 2002. Victoria was a horse rider, animal lover, music enthusiast, an intellect and excellent cook.

Victoria passed on May 18, 2024, and is survived by her husband, John O'Keefe; son Jonathan Yturalde; daughter Joy Rosenquist; and four grandchildren. Victoria is also survived by her sister, Deborah Mandas, and brother James Mandas.

Mixed Metaphors & Malaprops

By Jeff Price,
Seriously Retired

A metaphor makes a direct comparison, substituting one thing for another. A malapropism is the mistaken use of a word in place of a similar sounding one, as in, "he is the very pineapple of politeness" instead of pinnacle.

Great engin-eering.

He built us a really strong retaining wall using 12" cylinder blocks.

A purple computer novice?

Man, I feel like a real maroon when it comes to tech.

Failure to communicate...

Look at it this way, you can't forget something you don't remember!

Sounds fishy to me.

They have to let him off the hook, but tell him to reel it in, after those crazy comments.

Basic chemistry misunderstood.

This 2025 Wisconsin superior court election will be a litmus valve for politics in the future.

That describes reverse osmosis.



We have already reduced the number of illegal immigrants entering the country by more than 100%

Need to head that one off.

Two peas are better than one.

Premonition idiom.

Don't judge a book before you see the cover!

Primate pitcher.

You don't want to be the one who throws a wrench at the monkeys.

CSPRA is affiliated with several other non-profit organizations that share our goals.

The Park Rangers Association of California is a professional organization for park Rangers and other employees of municipal, county, special district, state and federal agencies.



The International Ranger Federation supporting the critical work that the world's park rangers do in conserving our natural and cultural heritage.



Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs Promotion of the Proper Use, Enjoyment and Protection of America's Scenic Wilderness and Outdoor Resources.



Association of National Park Rangers communicating for, about and with National Park Service employees of all disciplines and providing a forum for professional enrichment



California Park Hospitality Association representing companies and individuals who provide hospitality services under contract with the California State Parks.



California League of Park Associations supporting the Non-profits that are partners with State Parks.

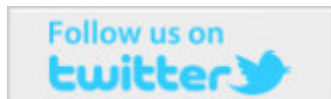


Ranger Foundation — Rangers Helping Rangers. Our 501(c)3 charitable organization supports critical incident debriefs throughout the state park system. More information about how you can help [HERE](#).





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Betsy@CSPRA.com

CSPRAnet

Member List Server

Sign-up for timely CSPRA news right in your inbox.

Just send your email address (no State emails please) to webmaster@cspira.com with the subject line "add me to CSPRAnet"



Retiring Soon?

If you or a co-worker will be retiring soon, please contact Membership Services Coordinator Betsy Anderson at (707) 884-3949.
betsy@cspira.com.



Already Retired?

Want to keep in touch after you leave DPR? Join Gray-Bears email ListServ - FREE and EASY

graybears@cspira.com

Join CSPRA Or join us online at cspira.com

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Job Classification: _____

District / Park: _____

Social Security # _____ (req'd for pay deduction)

Phone(W) _____ Phone (H) _____

Email: _____

Membership Type (Check one)

- ☐ Active \$10/month
- ☐ Active Retired \$60/year (\$5/mo.)
- ☐ Supporting \$36/year*
- ☐ Organization \$50/year*
- ☐ Benefactor \$1,000/life*

** Please include check for 1 year's dues for these membership levels.*

I hereby authorize CalPers and the State Controller to deduct from my salary and transmit as designated an amount for membership dues in the California State Park Rangers Association. This authorization will remain in effect until canceled by myself or by the organization. I certify I am a member of the above organization and understand that termination of my membership will cancel all deductions made under this organization.

Signature _____

Date _____

Membership by Mail:

CSPRA — Betsy Anderson
PO Box 618 Gualala, CA 95445



“What’s up Doc?” Get the straight “poop” on Pikas — See page 4 Photo by Laura Van Etten-Collins

California State Park Rangers Association



CSPRA is an organization of State Park professionals dedicated to advancement of the highest principles of public service, established to support and preserve California State Parks for present and future generations

Founded 1964