
The *Catalyst*



The Newsletter for Interpretation in California State Parks

Summer 2002

Volume 6 No. 1

Catalyst Wins Prestigious Award!

California State Parks captured four awards, including two gold and two silver, in a statewide competition recognizing excellence in government communications at the recent State Information Officers Council (SIOC) annual awards ceremony.

According to Carol Cullens in Interpretive Publications, "*The Catalyst* won a silver award, which is quite a feat. The competition was very stiff, because most of those who carried off the gold and silver have huge budgets and staff." The judges consider a number of criteria when choosing winners, among them any special challenges, such as budget or staffing, along with the quality of the work submitted and effectiveness of the entry. They noted that the publication has no budget and no staff, that the editor and contributors find time for it outside of their regular duties, that there is no funding source, and, in particular, that more than 2000 people request it, rather than just automatically receiving it.

The Catalyst was just the beginning. Cullens noted "a big winner for us was our collection of 'Diversity Recognition' posters." Laurena Cabanero and Gail Dudding took a gold award for their efforts on the posters. Tina Williams (under the auspices of the Communications Office) also took a gold award for the PSA video on ranger/lifeguard recruitment. John Arnold took a silver award for a news media article on the Empire Mine. Cullens was also recognized for her work on the awards committee.



The awards competition honors employees of state agencies and departments for their achievements in media relations, internet design, audio-visual production, and more. The attendees included state information officers, public relations representatives, and other government communications personnel. Winning entries were displayed during the SIOC awards luncheon held this year at the Firehouse Restaurant in Old Sacramento. They can also be viewed on the internet at <http://www.ca-sioc.org>.

SIOC is a nonprofit organization that meets on a monthly basis to discuss trends and developments in the field of government public information. The annual awards competition's goal is to identify excellent communication efforts among state agencies and to further encourage the production of quality work. 🐾



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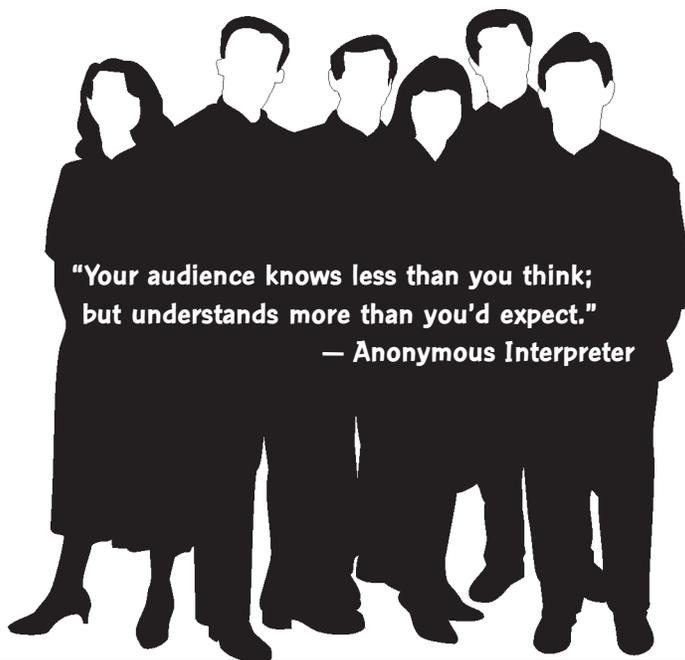
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Contributor's Guidelines

The Catalyst welcomes your original articles of any length! Or, send copies of stories published elsewhere that you think our readers will appreciate. Be sure to include information about the publication so we can get permission to use the material. You may submit an article at any time.

We **really** appreciate articles submitted on disk or by e-mail. We can read most formats of DOS/Windows disks. Printed manuscripts, facsimile or phone messages are also accepted. Please advise if you would like your diskette returned, otherwise we will recycle it in our office to save postage.

Illustrations are strongly encouraged. Drawings, graphs or other illustrations may be submitted on disk or hard copy. Black & white glossy photos are preferred; color prints or slides are usually acceptable. All photos and artwork submitted will be returned promptly.



The Catalyst Committee

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From the Editor

It is just a little bit daunting to put together an issue of Catalyst knowing that it will consume over 25,000 sheets of paper. That's more than 50 reams or one pretty good sized tree! So we tracked down the stories that we think will make it worthwhile and we hope you agree.



The next few pages bring you a whole bunch of news, opinion, advice and other interpretive quickies along with the latest installment from the Master Interpreter.

The energy situation may not be nearly as gloomy as last summer but it is still an important topic for interpretation in our parks. So on page 8 DIS Mary Stokes brings us everything you need for a great Junior Ranger program on energy just in time for the summer solstice. Mary serves the Four Rivers District and can be reached at mstok@parks.ca.gov.

We have been pushing the Department of Education's content standards for the last several issues. More and more parks and historic sites are re-aligning their school group offerings to better meet the needs of teachers. In this issue we feature Calaveras Big Trees and the innovative package put together by Wendy Harrison. Wendy is a long-time interpretive specialist at Calaveras. You can contact her at wandw@goldrush.com.

The events of this past year have changed the way many people look at the flag. On page 12 Joanie Cahill takes a lighthearted look at what is a daily chore for many of us. Joanie is an Interpreter II at Colorado Desert District. She would love to hear from you at jcahill@parks.ca.gov. Continuing on a related topic, we present "Icons" by John Luzader. John is a historian and interpreter in Colorado. This article also appeared in the NAI newsletter of the Cultural Interpretation & Living History Section and is reprinted here with permission. You can reach John at lmow@juno.com.

Intellectual property law is an ongoing interest of many interpreters so we present a look at a different side of this issue in "Free at Last!" We don't really recommend that you make the cola recipe, but if you do, be sure to read and follow all of the warnings found in the complete recipe on the website. Leif Utne writes for *Utne Reader* (one of my favorite magazines). We reprint the article here under the terms of the design science license.

On page 18 we get just a bit technical as we discuss video player control in a visitor center setting. Feel free to skim if you are not a techie, but I know there are quite a few of you who can really use this information.

On the facing page Cara O'Brien checks in with a piece on the Junior Ranger Program just as it kicks into high gear for the summer. Cara is a member of the statewide Junior Ranger advisory team and an Interpreter I at Angeles District. She can be reached at (805) 986-8591.

Page 20 puts the spotlight on California's heritage and legacy of diversity. It is written by Jose Ignacio Rivera, who retired from Mt. Diablo State Park into the world of academia and museums. Jose is now working for the Marin Museum of the American Indian as Director of Education, and he teaches anthropology at Diablo Valley College.

On page 22 you will find a piece by Jamie Mendez. She promises to bring us a better look at cultural interpretation in coming issues. Jamie is a Guide at Hearst Castle® and can be reached at taquish@att.net. Finally the California Tapestry takes a look at The Diversity Ladder.

That's about it! Twenty-four pages of the best stuff we could find to get you through another summer interpretive season. Make it a great one!

Brian Cahill, Editor

What's Up?



Interpreters' Resources

Little Animals

What is the sound of a bear eating jello? On this CD Mark Weakland shares this and many other sounds with children and adults. The music of *Little Animals* teaches children about animals and nature, including dolphins, hibernation and seasons. The award-winning song "Bed Bug Bounce" is also included. Go to www.springwatermusic.com to listen to some cuts or call (814) 629-9661. \$14.95 CD or \$11.99 tape.

National Storytelling Conference

The National Storytelling Network will hold its national conference in Denver, CO July 10-14. The conference will feature more than 30 workshops led by storytellers from throughout the nation. For more information call (800) 525-4514 or see www.storynet.org

1,000 New Nature Centers

Believing that environmental literacy is the key to the human future, the National Audubon Society has launched an ambitious initiative to build 1,000 new nature centers in the US by the year 2020. The first major developments will be in New York City, Los Angeles and Seattle.

Audubon Ecology Workshops

Scholarships are again available to attend the Audubon Ecology Workshop in Wyoming July 13-19. Simply submit a DPR 392 to the Training Center highlighting your need and interest. It may be too late for this year, but start planning early for next year.

Space Short

You can tell the location on the globe and time of the year by the crescent moon in case you're really, really lost. The lunar phases that produce changing lunar shapes are governed by the moon's motion around the Earth in its 29 day orbit. So each day the light reflected off the moon from our position on earth changes.

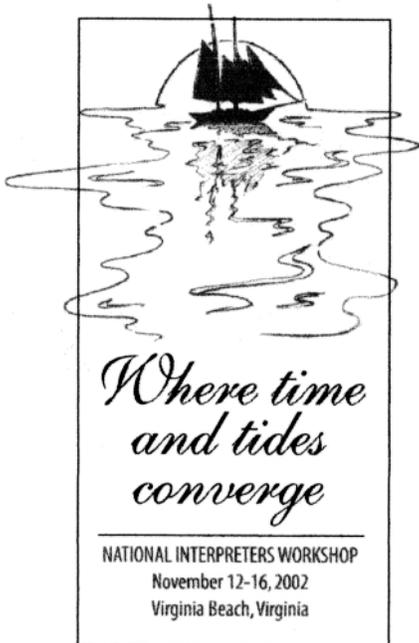
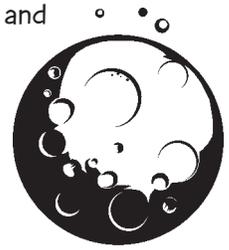
When the moon is a crescent, it is closer to the Sun than is the Earth. The lit part of the moon's face moves from right to left as seen from earth, so a waxing moon will be lit on the right, a waning moon is lit on the left.

With the orbit changing through the year, the same lunar phase changes through the year. As a result, only in late winter and early spring (Feb-April) in the evening does the waxing crescent moon lie on its back with the points going up. This is true for the middle latitudes only.

If you're at a park closer to the equator, the waxing crescent is always on its back; and at the poles, it's always on its side.

The same phenomena occurs in August through

October, but this time you have to look in the pre-dawn hours to see the smiling moon. If you want to see a frowning moon, you're going to have to figure out how to see it in daylight hours around mid-day.



National Interpreters Workshop

The National Interpreters Workshop is held each year in the fall, and it moves around the United States to each of ten geographic regions (Reno in 2003). This five-day event includes three full days of concurrent sessions with more than 100 professional presenters. A full day of field sessions are offered at more than 15 parks, zoos, nature centers, and museums. Networking, contributing to the profession, and learning from colleagues are important opportunities at NAI workshops. For more information see www.interpnet.com or call toll-free: (888) 900-8283.

Visit us on the Web!
Direct Links to these items can be found at:
www.statepark.org/catalyst

Dear Master Interpreter

Dear Master Interpreter,

We are planning a new visitor center and are putting the finishing touches on our exhibit plan.

Our team is struggling with the idea of presenting some (or maybe all) of the exhibit text in Spanish along with English. Which way would you go? Is there some rule that our exhibits should be bilingual these days?

Babel Conscious

Dear Babel,

How much do you know about your visitors? Who is coming to your site? Who is not coming? What languages do they speak? What type of site are you interpreting (some obscure natural site or something like an "old town" that has a story that is inherently bilingual)?

Yes, it is a tough decision. Adding a second language can double (or more) the amount of text on your panels and that can really compromise an interpretive design. But one of our Department's core values is cultural diversity. You already know what the census tells us about California's cultural makeup — now how can you make your new exhibit's message reach a broad spectrum of park visitors? Look for creative ways to add an additional language (or two). Some sites offer laminated cards with text in a second language. You should also look at Folia's new audio inter-



pretive panels. There may be many ways to achieve your goal.

So, no, there is no "rule" mandating bilingual interpretation. But it certainly is a real good idea these days. But then I'll bet you already knew that or you wouldn't have asked the question!

MI

Dear Master Interpreter,

I have been making cool displays for our park bulletin boards on my computer for quite awhile. I think I am ready to take the next step and create an in-house interpretive panel. I understand I can send out a disk from my computer and have it made into an interpretive panel. Is it really that easy?

Digital Dan

Dear Dan,

Well, it depends on several key factors: what software you are using, how you build your files, and who does the output. Yes, it can work very nicely but the process can also be fraught with difficulty. Assuming you have a shop experienced in the same software you are running, you need to talk with them and study their file specifications. Then you must meticulously build your files to those specs. Just because you can get a decent print out of your desktop printer does not mean that someone else will be able to output your file. Common problems include missing graphics and substituted fonts. Good luck!

MI

Dear Master Interpreter,

I have enjoyed reading your column for years. I have never seen a byline on your page, and I've gotta' wonder just who the heck are you? Are you who I think you are?

Curious

Dear Curious

Well, we like to say there's a little of the Master Interpreter in each of us! The MI draws on the talents of a variety of the Department's finest interpreters proffering gratuitous advice to the interpretively challenged.

Thanks for reading!

MI

Dear Master Interpreter,

Sometimes the junior rangers can be impossible little monsters. I think it might be that mid-afternoon time slot, especially after drinking sugary sodas all day. How can I get them to cut back on sugar so they will pay attention to me?

Wit's End

Dear Wit's End

Hmm, are you sure it is the sugar? I'd take another look at my program in that situation. Is it fun? Is it interactive? As the kids' attention first starts to wander, are you prepared to shift gears and recapture it quickly? You might also ask another interpreter whom you respect to watch your program and give you some peer evaluation.

MI

Volunteer Enhancement

In the year 2000, Proposition 12 allotted 4 million dollars for projects to enhance the volunteer experience in State Parks. As a result over 60 valuable projects throughout the State Park System were chosen. These projects include greenhouses, visitor centers and interpretive projects. As a reminder, the Volunteer Enhancement Program (VEP) is quickly approaching the end of the funding cycle. VEP funds **must be encumbered by June 30th 2002** and the money must be liquidated by June 30th 2003.

This spring also brought the passage of Proposition 40 which set aside \$250,000 for VEP projects. These funds will be available for use in the 03/04 fiscal year. Projects have been chosen but future funding may be available. If you have eligible projects you would like considered send a description to Jessica Watrous in the Interpretation and Education Division.



Interpretive Training

The Natural Resource Interpretation Training was held March 25th - 29th. John Werminski, acclaimed naturalist and state park interpreter, teamed with Joe Mette, San Luis Obispo Coast District Superintendent, facilitated an outstanding interpretive training class. Several experts presented important topics that gave participants the tools necessary to provide great interpretive programs. Look for this class to be offered again in the spring of 2003.

Volunteer Opportunities

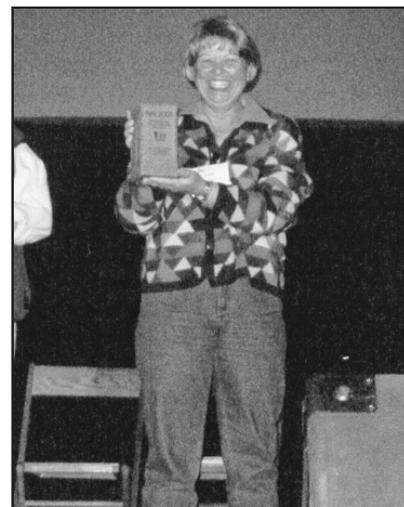
Camp host and volunteer openings can be posted on the department web site!! Please contact Jessica Watrous for details @ 916-653-9069 or yipp@parks.ca.gov

School Group Evaluation

In late December, district interpretive coordinators were sent packets of material for the 2002 School Group Programs Evaluation, which ran from January 1 through May 15. The California State Parks Foundation has graciously offered free one-year memberships, which include seven day-use passes for state parks, to teachers who return surveys. Following the completion of this year's round of evaluations, the Interpretation and Education Division will undertake an analysis of the program and consider how it will be continued in the future. If you have any questions about the 2002 School Group Programs Evaluation, please contact Jenan Saunders at jsaunders@parks.ca.gov or 916 653-0768. 🐾

Aiming for Excellence Wins Big!

California State Parks was the proud recipient of an award from the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) for our publication, *Aiming for Excellence: An Evaluation Handbook for Interpretive Services in State Parks*. The handbook won a First Place NAI Media Award as an Interpretive Skills Training Product. Congratulations to Linda McDonald! Thanks go to Karen Barrett for her work in submitting the handbook to the NAI for consideration. The Interpretation and Education Division is currently updating and preparing the handbook for its third reprint and anticipates distributing copies to districts and the training center in late February. It will also be placed on the Department's



website, for access by the general public. If your district hasn't already requested copies or if you have any questions about the handbook, please contact Jenan Saunders at jsaunders@parks.ca.gov or 916 653-0768. 🐾

Accessibility Projects Update

The Interpretation and Education Division's two deferred maintenance projects that deal with accessibility issues for interpretive programs are going strong.

The Video Captioning project has made available \$30,000 to open-caption over 40 videos that are currently being shown to the public. Our interagency agreement with the Employment Development Department to do the captioning, is up at the end of June and we want to make sure that as many videos as possible get captioned.

As for the project to Videotape Hikes, Tours, Talks and Demonstrations that are inaccessible to visitors with disabilities, we are building up a good head of steam on getting this project going. So if you're sent a draft transcript to review, please give it a once-over as soon as possible.

The Interpretation and Education Division has been busy prioritizing the list of programs nominated by each district last summer, and once a contract is in place, district interpretive coordina-



tors will be contacted to begin scheduling filming over the next two years.

If you have any questions about either of these projects or know of any vendors who should be sent a copy of the RFP, please contact Jenan Saunders at jsaunders@parks.ca.gov or 916 653-0768. 🐾

Opinion

On "Generalist" Rangers

By Karl E. Poppelreiter
SPR II, South Mendocino

Once more I am compelled to remind my colleagues that we are not "generalists." We are "specialists."

I am a law enforcement specialist, an expert in general law enforcement, and an expert in the specialized field of park law enforcement. I am a resource specialist, an expert in the specialized field of park resource management. I am an interpretive specialist, an expert in every sense of the word...because I deliver high quality specialized interpretive talks that no one else who doesn't wear the Stetson, badge, and gun is able to deliver...because as a State Park Peace Officer I am among the best commu-

nicators in state government... I am a fire prevention specialist, an expert in initial attack of wildfires when equipment is limited or non-existent. I am an emergency medical specialist, an expert in basic life support where advanced life support is usually an hour or more away.

As long as the governor and legislature and public overlook the fact that State Park peace officers are highly trained in a multitude of specialties, we will continue to be paid significantly lower than the "specialists" within our department and throughout state government who are equally as dedicated, yet do not share the responsibility for life and death we have, nor the same inherent dangers



we face every time we pin on our star-shaped target and go out to serve the public.

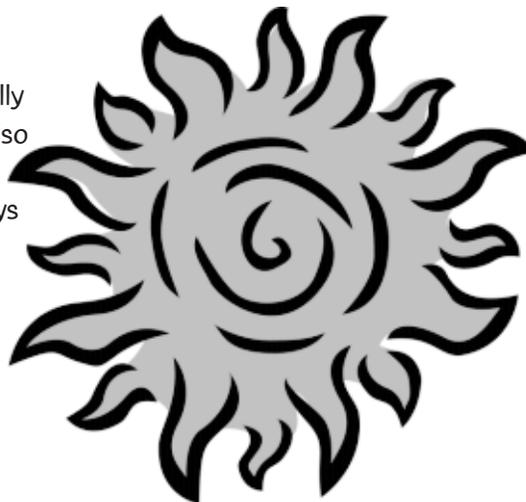
I stopped believing I was a "generalist" ranger many years ago... about the time I realized my duties required me to be an expert in a broader range of tasks than anyone else in government service. 🐾

Jr. Rangers:

Celebrate the Solstice with Energy!

By Mary Stokes
DIS, Four Rivers

The summer solstice weekend (June 21-23, 2002) not only officially kicks off the summer season, but also makes a great occasion to interpret energy. As we soak up all those rays hitting our hemisphere, the longest day of the year might prompt us to reflect on the sun's bounty and the many forms of it that we use every day.

**Background Information:**

Visit the 'Energy Quest' at www.energy.ca.gov/education/index.html for a kids' eye view of the whole subject of energy. Also worth checking is www.earthdog.com/renew. *At Home with the Sun*, a book by Michael J. Daley, is designed for the 6-12 year old age group and is available (\$7.95) from

PSP: Professor Solar Press
RFD #3, Box 627
Putney, VT 05346

If you have solar pre-heating for your campground water heaters (you can see them on the roof!) or other energy-saving features, find out how they work and include them in your program.

Sunny Warm-up ideas:

Solar Energy Shout! (Dirt Made My Lunch, Banana Slug String Band)
Good Day Sunshine (Revolver, Paul McCartney)
You Are My Sunshine (Davis & Mitchell, 1940)

Make a Batch of Solar S'mores:

An inexpensive but effective solar box cooker can be made from pizza boxes. Look for simple directions at these sites: www.solarnow.org/pizzabx.htm and www.eecs.umich.edu/mathscience/funexperiments/agesubject/lessons/other/solar.html

You may want to have the oven(s) already made, or assemble them with the kids, depending on the size of the group you expect, and how much time you have. Begin preheating the ovens right at the start of your program. The oven should be oriented to capture the most sunlight. Have the Jr. Rangers observe their own shadows to determine the optimum orientation for their solar ovens. Make predictions: How far will the sun travel during our time together? Past that branch? (Is the sun *really* traveling?)

You will also need:

Graham crackers, chocolate chips, wax paper bags

Mini-marshmallows (Alternate: Vegetarians may skip the marshmallows)

Jr. Rangers sprinkle mini-marshmallows and chips on half a graham cracker and cover with the other half cracker. Slip the sandwich into a wax bag with child's name in pencil on outside. Put the S'mores into the solar oven at the beginning of the program.

While s'mores 'cook,' you can try the following:

Solar Scavenger Hunt

In groups of twos or threes find and write a list of things in the park that either do need the sun, or don't need it, to live. Keep the lists. Demonstrate some energy chains with the group using illustrated cards or laminated pictures. Have the kids organize the cards into the chain in sequence. (Include links in the chains that are typical of your park.)

Natural Energy Chain

Sun ⇒ plant ⇒ herbivore ⇒ carnivore ⇒ top predator ⇒ scavenger ⇒ decomposer

Name each item in the chain and ask, "Could this survive without the sun?"

Now review the lists the kids have compiled, and discuss.

Solar Safety Kit

You may want to have in your daypack a collection of solar safety items to help discuss the hazards of too much sun. You might include sunglasses, sunscreen, hat, long-sleeved shirt, drinking water, etc. The sun's energy is powerful stuff! Remember the old story *Persuasion*, where the sun and wind have a contest to see who is most powerful? See the full text at www.dancingponyproductions.com/kids.html.

However you decide to mark the summer solstice at your park, don't miss a great opportunity to remind visitors that our state's energy crunch continues. Californians exceeded all expectations in reducing energy use in 2001 (peak energy consumption was cut 10% last summer) We need to do even better in 2002. 🐾



The sun is very powerful!

Safety tips:

Never look directly at the sun. When you need to aim your oven at the sun, use shadows as directional pointers. Wear sunglasses and a hat. (The damaging rays are reflected off sidewalks, buildings and especially water & snow.) Slather on the sunscreen.

How much does lightning heat the earth?

An average bolt raises the air temperature along its path to 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

How long does it take for sunlight to travel from the sun to earth?

The speed of light is 186,000 miles per second, so a sunbeam takes about 8 minutes to reach the earth. (If you could drive your car the 93 million miles to the sun, it would take you 150 years!)

Which star is closest to the earth?

Our own sun. Alpha Centauri is only the next closest. It takes light about 4 years to get to Earth from Alpha Centauri.

How long will the sun shine before it burns out?

Five million tons of the sun's mass is changed into energy every second. Still, scientists calculate that it will keep on shining for billions of years.

How hot is the sun?

The temperature of the sun at its surface is about 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

True or False: The sun moves across the sky from east to west.

FALSE: It sure looks like the sun moves, but in fact it stays still in relation to the earth. The earth spinning on its axis causes our day and night – one revolution every 24 hours. The earth also tilts on its axis, causing the sun to appear higher in the sky in summer and lower on the horizon in winter.

True or False: A razor scooter or bicycle are examples of solar-powered transportation.

TRUE: People who skate, ride bikes and non-motorized scooters get the energy to propel their vehicle from the plants and/or animals they eat! Where do plants and animals get their energy from?

- Half the people in the world today do not have electricity in the home at all.
- Enough sunshine falls on a 3'x3' square to cook 18 hamburgers every hour. This amount of sunshine could also fry 100 eggs or brew 40 cups of coffee.
- Make a solar powered clothes dryer in your campsite – bring clothespins!

- Make solar tea in a clear glass jar.

- Solar cells work because the light energy knocks electrons off the silicon atoms in the solar cell. This was first discovered by French physicist Edmund Becquerel in 1839. It is called the photo-voltaic effect. The silicon in 1 ton of sand, made into solar cells, would deliver as much energy as burning 500,000 tons of coal.

Excerpted from *SUN FUN: Amazing Activities*, by Michael Daley, McGraw-Hill, 1997
Michael Daley, Learning Triangles Press
McGraw-Hill, NY, 1998.

“Thematic Units” Featured at Calaveras

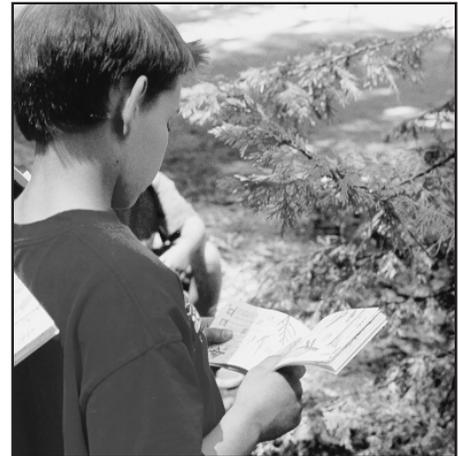
By Wendy Harrison

If you've been following news about education in California, you've learned that teachers are under great pressure (including financial) to produce students that can perform well on statewide tests in reading and math. Because of this, and new state content standards for science and social studies, teachers have become much more restricted in the way they teach those subject areas.

In some grades, very little science or social studies is being taught. Environmental education and hands-on field trips to locations such as Calaveras Big Trees State Park have often become very low on the priority list. In order for teachers to justify these activities, they must be able to show that they are meeting the requirements for state educational standards.

At Big Trees, we have developed and implemented a project to address these new education standards, and to make it easier for teachers to integrate park-related topics into their curriculum. I wanted to share this idea with other interpreters, as it is a model that can be used in any park.

We have designed a series of grade-level units that connect a portion of the science standards for that grade level to an important topic related to Calaveras Big Trees. Each unit consists of three parts – a class visit by park staff to introduce the topic; a kit full of curriculum, children's literature, and hands-on materials for the students to use; and a field trip to Calaveras Big Trees that is oriented to the theme for that grade level.



Learning to use a “Tree Finder” is part of the Dendrochronology unit.

To give you an idea of how this looks, I'll share our 2nd grade unit with you. Among the science content standards for second grade are the study of life cycles, and the growth and development of organisms. I decided to take those standards and apply them to the black bears that live at Big Trees. Our Grade 2 unit compares the growth, development



Playing the “Web of Life” using information collected during the fourth grade biodiversity scavenger hunt.

and life cycle of black bears to humans, a topic that is naturally interesting to 2nd grade students.

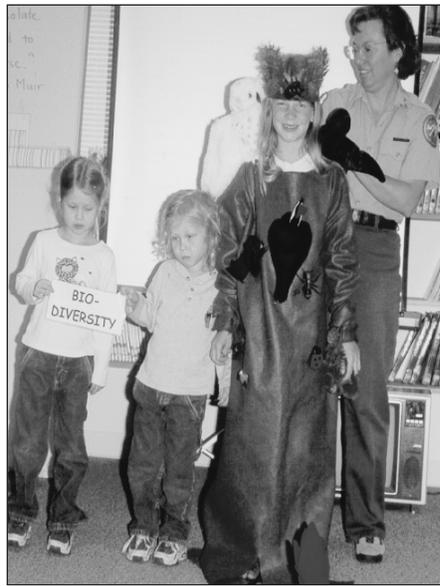
Once I decided on a theme, it was easy to find materials to bring to the classroom, and activities to conduct on our special bear field trip. When I visit the class I use posters and props to compare humans to bears, as well as a short slide show. I leave the teacher with a box filled with many books about black bears, bear track molds, bear skull and claw replicas, and activities the teacher can conduct with the students.

When the students visit Big Trees, they play a black bear trivia game, a black bear habitat game, and visit a "camper" to tell him how to make his campsite bear "safe".

To date, we have developed and implemented 4 units. They are:
 Grade 2: Black Bear Life Cycles
 Grade 3: Plant Adaptations to Fire
 Grade 4: Biological Diversity
 Grade 5: Dendrochronology (Tree Rings)



Second grade students check out our "rigged" campsite to make sure it is bear-friendly with docent Josie Tanis.



Wendy uses a tree costume in class visits to demonstrate biodiversity.

To begin this process at your site, I would suggest starting with the California Content Standards for either science or social studies. After taking a look, a specific grade level will probably point you toward some natural connections with your site. You can download your own copy from www.cde.ca.gov/board.

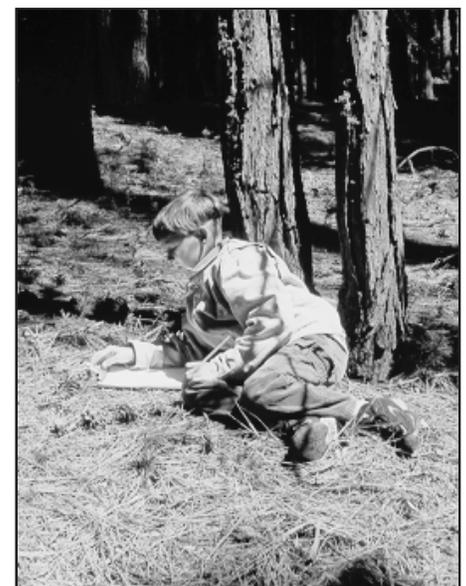
Because of the class visit portion, this program is only offered in Calaveras County. It has had the added plus of encouraging more local teachers to use the park, as it takes them beyond the typical tour of the North Grove. More than one grade level per school can visit Big Trees, and learn something different each year.

This project has been supported financially by our cooperating association, the Calaveras Big Trees Association. Many of our Docents have learned to lead these field trips, and they are important to the success of

the program. Since we have started work on this, we've also received small grants from local organizations and individuals, and a larger grant from the California Department of Education. All but one school in the county have participated to date, with 500 students taking part just this fall alone.

I know this seems like a huge undertaking – and it really is in some ways. However, I have found that once the unit is developed, it is simple to implement. All the materials and activities are there, and I can just take it to the students and enjoy the experience with them. It's a positive thing for the park, the teachers, and most importantly, the students.

If you would like to receive a copy of any of the units we have developed, I'd be happy to share. If you have questions about the process, please feel free to contact me at the Calaveras Big Trees Visitor Center at (209) 795-3840. 🐾



Taking time to reflect is an important component of our field trips.

Interpreting the Flag

by Joanie Stadtherr Cahil
SPI II, Colorado Desert

The putting up and taking down of flags can get to be a chore. Especially when it is 114 degrees and the steel pole is so hot you could crack an egg on the top, let it slide down, and scoop up a plate of fully cooked scrambled eggs at the bottom. Nevertheless, it is a twice daily duty and I try to tackle it in good humor.

A gal I once worked with (who is an artist, by the way...) told me that her ambition was to raise and lower the flag with grace. I think it is possible that she may actually have achieved this goal in time. For me though, grace is out of the question. I am rather short and rather round. I have to climb on the monument part just to reach the tie-on dealie-bobber. I just want to get that flag where it needs to go without snagging it in the thorny mesquite tree which someone was so kind as to plant three feet from the flagpole. I want to get it right side up (preferably the first time), and I would like to not drop it in the dust when people are watching. Lastly, I'd like to do it without burning my hands on the rope or getting them really black from that shiny pole stuff that rubs off on the rope.

I know that I will never be able to raise and lower Old Glory and Old Grizzly with grace, so I decided that at least I can raise and lower them with interpretation. Often the flag lowering turns into an interpretive event whether I want it to or not.



(Perhaps that's because of my unique, passive-aggressive, by-the-wind sailor approach to flag domination, I'm not sure.) What I do know, though, is that it often draws a small crowd.

Kids are fascinated to see how it is going to get down and what I will do next. Foreign visitors are amazed and amused at the attention we give this "living" symbol. They can't believe we actually put it up and then, yes, take it down again, every day! Elderly veterans watch me carefully to see that I'm showing the proper respect, or get misty-eyed with memories. Boy scouts offer to help, and the humorous dad-on-vacation will whistle taps for me. Others might just stop because it doesn't seem right to carry-on when the flag demands our attention.

In the slow season, I sometimes attract more kids at the flag lowering than I do at Jr. Rangers. I figured that, being an interpreter, this was an opportunity. It's easy to enlist park visitors to help take the flags down in the evening. Little kids and people with a limited grasp of English can participate fully, because all they have to do is grab it as it falls. On windy days, three or four people are nice to have for assistance. What's my interpretive theme? It changes from day to day, depending on my audience. Sometimes, it is flag etiquette. I take the time to explain to foreign folk why we don't just leave it up. I listen while they tell me how it's done where they come from. They really like the idea of a special ceremony where old flags are burned on Flag Day. It's all pretty amazing to them.

I like to have kids help with the folding. On our California flag, the bear is bigger than most of the kids who come to help me. Their eyes sometimes pop right out of their little heads when they see it up close! It's easy to see the hump that distinguishes this bear from the black bear. It always brings up a discussion about endangered species and extinction since the grizz no longer lives anywhere near here. Sometimes we get a geography lesson as kids from other states share their flag descriptions and tell us what they know about it.

If you have a fourth grader in your group, it's fun to ask them if they've been studying California

history in school. When they say yes, ask them what they remember about the Bear Flag Revolt. They probably won't remember much, but the answers they make up are worth a million. Not only did I graduate from fourth grade, I taught fourth grade in California for three years, visited Monterey State Historic Park, and I STILL can't remember exactly what that was all about (...please don't e-mail me, I'll look it up again, I promise!) The fourth graders and I though, we all get the idea. There was a battle for freedom and the result was that we won. The stars and stripes and the bear flag are symbols that we live in a free state and a free nation. And we're all on the same team.

Turn a chore into an interpretive event. If you'd like to try some flag interpretation of your own, here are some things you'll want to know. Flags don't have to be the sole interpretive property of historical units. There's one in each of our parks, and flags speak to everyone, graceful or not. 🐾



U.S. Flag

- Flags should be displayed only from sunrise to sunset unless properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.
- The flag should be hoisted "briskly" and lowered "ceremoniously"
- Unless you have an "all-weather" flag, don't display it in inclement weather.
- At half-mast, the flag should be one flag width lower than it normally is, not halfway to the ground. If you fly two flags, they should be two flag widths below the top of the pole.
- The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, or water.
- The flag code does not require any specific method of folding. The triangular shaped form with only the blue union showing has become traditional but it is not required.
- Betsy Ross sewed the first American flag in May of 1776.
- The original flag had 13 stars, by 1818 it had 20 stars, California's star brought it up to 31, and the 50th star was added in 1960.

California Flag

- Why did they choose a grizzly bear? This is a great question to ask your audience. Some historians say that it was to intimidate the Californios (our enemy) who feared it more than anything. Others say the mountain men favored it because it was the fiercest and most determined fighter in the animal kingdom.
- When was the first bear flag raised? The first time was in 1846, in Monterey. By most accounts, it was made under the direction of William L. Todd, a nephew of Mary Todd Lincoln, wife of the future president. The original flag was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, so no one is sure exactly what it looked like.
- How long has this been California's flag? Officially, since 1911. The latest bear design has only been with us for 27 years, though, so if you'd like to suggest something new...

For more information, contact your American Legion, or look on the Internet under flag etiquette, flag history, or bear flag.

Icons

By John Luzader

Since humankind first developed the ability to communicate and leave a record of our existence, we have had symbols and materials that identify our cultures, religions, our mores and morals. These have taken on many forms: a stone altar, clothing, religious icons, a sword in the stone, cities, uniforms, totems, and most recently certain flags that were flown at the World Trade Center site.

These items often take on a religious aura and frequently are bestowed a personality and elevated to human qualities and emotions. "The flag that witnessed the tragedy of the destruction of the World Trade Center....," as was quoted in a recent local paper, "...expresses the emotion of the people of the United States". But the truth of the matter is that these artifacts neither witnessed nor expressed anything. They were at the World Trade Center and may represent the emotions of many of the people of the United States, but they are inanimate objects with no capability to feel or express themselves in any manner whatsoever. Do they tell a story or just provoke one?

And similar to many of the icons of our past, these items have created controversy by their very existence. How should the action of any of these flags being raised be remembered? Should there be a politically and emotionally correct statue erected to represent all the people of many cultural ethnic backgrounds and sexes of the emergency personnel

who assisted after the WTC attack or should the statue represent the historically accurate event with only a representation of the men who actually raised that flag, even though they may not represent the diverse peoples of the United States? How should these flags be used — as a patriotic emblem at baseball and football games? Should one have been carried in the Olympics and flown at the Winter Olympic stadium? Do these actions reflect a patriotic view or propaganda? These are all questions that have surfaced recently

Germany from which so many other flags of the Reich took their consecration, or are they akin to the "Star Spangled Banner," of our patriotic past and the inspiration of our national anthem? Should we be looking to develop interpretive programs that express the views these flags evoke and are we needing to include all the views that this ensign evokes, even the ones of the enemies of the United States?

All this over some colored pieces of cloth.

Conservators and museologists might argue that these particular flags should not be handled at all, that the original artifacts must be preserved for future generations and that the patriotic needs can be met just as adequately with a reproduction.

in newspapers, in the media and in barroom and classroom discussions.

Conservators and museologists might argue that these particular flags should not be handled at all, that the original artifacts must be preserved for future generations and that the patriotic needs can be met just as adequately with a reproduction. This was a discussion recently among a number of my friends and professional colleagues.

Are we, as a nation, as a profession, worried about the context this emblem is taking? Is it becoming much like the "Blood Banner" of Nazi

Personally, I have strong feelings about icons. As an historian and an anthropologist I feel they take on an important role in our understanding of different peoples and their actions/reactions in events from our past. Icons give identity to people. The symbol of a people quickly gives others outside that culture a reference point to associate ideas and beliefs of different peoples and cultures. It is one of the first items to be changed when a government is overthrown, a new land is conquered, or a new religion is established. It announces, "This is new and different from the past; look and see how we are different."

As a cultural and historical interpreter, I admire the bravery of those who made/ make the commitment to protect and serve their icons and the dedication they gave/ give to their beliefs and convictions. It takes heart to defend "simple materials" with one's life and soul. To recount the bravery enacted by men and women who have fought, defended and died for the icons that represent themselves and their beliefs is stirring and emotional.

So what of these particular pieces of cloth?

On a personal note as a veteran of the United States military, as a Virginian and a citizen of the United States, the image of that flag being rescued from the debris of the WTC and being raised, without a schedule, without a preplanned event but through the desires of the men who took it upon themselves to illustrate their patriotism and to demonstrate a nation's unwillingness to be struck down by the actions of terrorism — I was brought to tears. The tears of pride, sorrow, and hope. I feel it truly represents a united people in this country and belongs to the collective "us". It is a symbol whose time has come to assist in our rebuilding and reunification. This bit of cloth has the power to unite and heal many of our differences. It is our flag, not just my flag.

Professionally, these World Trade Center flags are shining examples of how one item, one artifact can tell a story of not only an event, but of the



emotions the and the values of a people. They do not need a media show or costumes or a script to enlighten us to its story; it just needs people.

As interpreters we have many icons that we are responsible in their care and representation. We often get over zealous and attempt to change them, overplay them and overuse them. Some are lost by our actions and some are locked away and forgotten. Others are hidden in fear of what we believe they might inspire and others are kept in seclusion in respect for the pain they might inflict. Often we embellish their histories either through ignorance or because they may not seem "exciting enough" to captivate an audience. The time may be upon us to reassess these icons and reflect upon the story each has to "tell" about the people who created them, their emotions and their histories so that we might

remember and better understand the core aspect of all the icons of the world — people.

Each is a creation of the people who made it, the cultures they created and the lives they lived. It is our responsibility to present these aspects in the most honest manner possible.

Each time we begin an interpretive program we might need to ask, "How do I want the flags of the WTC remembered? How might they be represented 100, 200, or 300 years from now? And how can I make this program / project / interpretation better reflect the people it represents in the same manner as I would want to be remembered? Did I do the best job possible?"

And as for the World Trade Center flags — long may they wave. 🐾

Free At Last!

By Leif Utne

Move over Coke (and Pepsi), there's a new player in the cola wars. Meet OpenCola.

Okay, that may be a bit of an overstatement, but the new soft drink is different from others in one key respect: It's the world's first "opensource" consumer product, writes Graham Lawton in the British magazine *New Scientist* (Feb. 2, 2002). While Coca-Cola and PepsiCo jealously guard their secret formulas, the makers of OpenCola give their recipe away on their web site, www.opencola.org. Not only that, they encourage people to make the stuff at home, and to modify and improve the recipe at will. There's one caveat: The modified formulas must also be freely available to the public. Why? Because, as the open-source argument goes, if you let your customers play with the formula for your product whether it's software code or a soft drink recipe — they'll find and fix flaws quicker and cheaper, and think up more creative improvements, than you ever could on your own, even with a huge R&D budget and a team of engineers. In the end, everybody benefits from better software, or better cola, as the case may be.

The open-source movement traces its roots to 1984, when MIT computer scientist Richard Stallman quit his job in academia to start the Free Software Foundation. In the '60s and early '70s, virtually all software was in the public domain, and thus

open for constant revision and review. But by the early '80s, nearly all new software was proprietary, or "closed-source" its underlying code copyrighted and guarded as closely as the Coke recipe. Stallman felt that this approach hampered the free flow of ideas and ultimately delivered bad software, so he devised a clever legal device known as a General Public License (GPL), or "copyleft." Software that is licensed under a copyleft is in the public domain, and any derivative

The burgeoning "copyleft" movement is reshaping the idea of intellectual property

works that use a piece of copylefted code must also be in the public domain. Thus, the copyleft is like a virus, passing itself on to its descendants.

In fact, this article is an example of this process at work. Since Lawton's *New Scientist* article included a copy of the OpenCola recipe, the article was published under a copyleft. And since I've summarized several passages from that article (mea culpa!), we're publishing this one under a copyleft as well (see the copyleft notice at the end).

Stallman's concept has taken a firm hold in the computer industry. Thousands of open-source computer programs are now available. The most famous of these is Linux, an operating system that runs more than 18 million computers worldwide,

including dozens of Fortune 500 companies' Web servers.

Stallman's idea has spawned a number of creative projects beyond software; OpenCola, originally conceived by a Toronto-based software company as a marketing gimmick, is just the best known. Other projects could have a much more profound impact on the intellectual property landscape. They include:

- **OpenLaw** (<http://eon.law.harvard.edu/openlaw/>). This web site allows the entire Internet community to help a team of Harvard Law School professors and students craft legal arguments in a series of cases that pit the public domain against corporate copyright holders. The briefs developed through this project have been credited with convincing the Supreme Court to grant a hearing in *Eldred v. Ashcroft*, a landmark copyright case seeking to overturn a recent congressional vote extending copyright protection.

- **OpenAudio** (<http://www.openmusicregistry.org>). An experiment created by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, OpenAudio is designed to promote sharing and collaboration among musicians and listeners by getting artists to copyleft their work.

- **Wikipedia** (<http://www.wikipedia.com>). Launched in January 2001, this collaborative, copylefted, Web-based encyclopedia already has collected more than 26,000 articles on everything from astrophysics to Enron, with an eventual goal of 100,000 articles.

Since Lawton's article appeared in *New Scientist*, the magazine's web site has posted a number of letters from readers proposing other open-source projects, from collaboratively maintained online textbooks to shared knitting patterns.

Coca-Cola may not have to worry much about competition from OpenCola in the near future, but industries whose fortunes are built on intellectual property — software, music, film, pharmaceuticals — should take heed. In barely a decade the open-source movement has grown from a small faction in the halls of university computer science departments into a potent political force. Citizens are increasingly fed up with multinational corporations expanding their control over ideas through patents, trademarks, and copyrights. The open-source spirit and the copyleft may be just the tools we need to tip the scales back in favor of the beleaguered public domain. 🐾

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<http://dsl.org/copyleft/dsl.txt>.

Open Cola — The Formula

7X (Top Seekrut™) flavoring formula:

3.50 ml orange oil
 1.00 ml lemon oil
 1.00 ml nutmeg oil
 1.25 ml cassia oil
 0.25 ml coriander oil
 0.25 ml neroli oil
 2.75 ml lime oil
 0.25 ml lavender oil
 10.0 g gum arabic
 3.00 ml water



OpenCola syrup:

2.00 tsp. 7X formula
 3.50 tsp. 75% phosphoric acid or citric acid
 2.28 l water
 2.36 kg plain granulated white table sugar
 0.50 tsp. caffeine (optional)
 30.0 ml caramel color

Preparation

7X Flavoring:

Mix oils together in a cup. Add gum arabic, mix with a spoon. Add water and mix well. I used my trusty Braun mixer for this step, mixing for 4-5 minutes. You can also transfer to a blender for this step. Can be kept in a sealed glass jar in the fridge or at room temperature.

Please note that this mixture will separate. The gum arabic is essential to this part of the recipe, as you are mixing oil and water.

Syrup:

In a one gallon container (I used the Rubbermaid Servin' Saver Dry Food Keeper, 1.3 US Gal/4.92 l), take 5 mls of the 7X formula, add the 75% phosphoric or citric acid. Add the water, then the sugar. While mixing, add the caffeine, if desired. Make sure the caffeine is completely dissolved. Then add the caramel color. Mix thoroughly.

Cola:

To finish drink, take one part syrup and add 5 parts carbonated water.

For more details please see: <http://www.opencola.org:8080/projects/softdrink/documentation/formula>

Pushbutton Activated DVDs

By Brian Cahill

DIS, Colorado Desert

DVD technology, with its high image quality and CD-caliber sound, is the best way to show video for a variety of interpretive purposes. Video interpretive programs are currently being shown in many of our visitor centers. Pioneer Electronics makes an excellent, heavy-duty player that is already in many of our parks, the DVD Model 7400. More of these players will be coming out to the field soon.

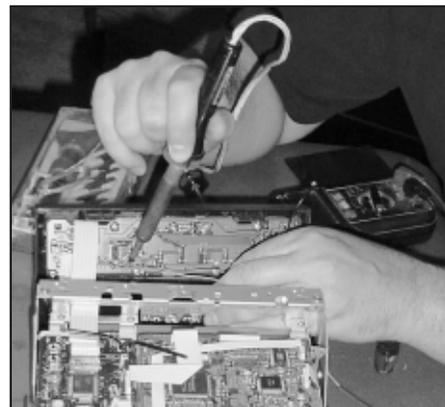
Often it is desirable to keep the player locked in a cabinet, yet allow visitors to start a short video on demand by a pushbutton. There are a couple of different ways to make this happen. One is to use an external controller. These units are available from Museum Technology Source starting at just under \$700. They provide the option of offering several different pushbuttons, giving the visitor a choice of programs — or perhaps the same program in different languages. (see photo below)

A basic system is composed of a DVD controller (Museum Technology Source Inc.'s DVD-204 or DVD-212),

a DVD player (Pioneer Model 7400), and a television monitor. The DVD-204 controller allows for a choice of up to four video segments and the DVD-212 allows up to twelve video segments from a DVD Disc. Both units allow for an additional "Attract" or "Idle" segment to play when no segment has been chosen.

Another option is to rewire the unit to allow external access to the play circuit. If you do this you don't need the controller. Of course this will immediately void your warranty and should only be attempted by someone knowledgeable in electronics. Perhaps there is someone on your maintenance staff that would be comfortable soldering inside your DVD player. In the photos at right you will see how wires can be soldered to the contacts for the "play" pushbutton. When these wires are connected to an external pushbutton switch it can start the program just as if you pushed "play" on the front panel of the unit.

It is critical to decide how you will be operating the player before you have your disc mastered. Coded instructions are often mastered onto



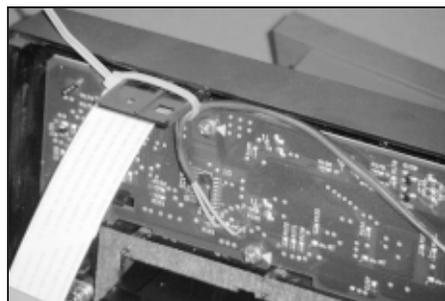
With a little care it is possible to modify a player to operate via an external pushbutton.

the disc. It is crucial that these instructions work with your setup. If you use an external controller, mastering is as simple as laying down the video with frame numbers. The controller can then be programmed to play any series of video frames at the push of a button. Other discs are mastered to automatically play a short "attract loop" and wait for the "play" button to be pressed. This is how the disc is mastered that plays in the unit shown above.

If you would like more information on this subject you can contact me directly at bcahill@parks.ca.gov. 🐾



The controller (right) can be obtained through Museum Technology Source, 50 Cross Street, Winchester, MA 01890 (800) 729-6873 or see www.museumtech.com



Wires can be soldered to the contacts for the "play" button and connected to an external switch to start the program.

Just One Dose of Junior Rangers

By Cara O'Brien
Interpreter I, Angeles

The Junior Ranger program is for the benefit of all children in the State of California, but sometimes I think the interpreters giving the programs are the ones who have the most fun! Who wouldn't want to take a break from the average interpretive program with a mixed age-group audience with over 30 people in attendance to really concentrate on a specific fun-loving group of no more than 15 participants!

Imagine a group that doesn't care about your credentials, the scientific name of that plant or whether or not you have the answers to the secrets of DNA. Picture a group that would rather hold your hand, smell the roses or just laugh hysterically with you at a passing stink beetle; a fun-loving group that's willing to sit on the ground, share stories and that really knows how to explore! You won't have to convince this audience that they are discovering because for them every leaf, every rock, every tree is an adventure. Go ahead pull that Junior Ranger manual down from the highest shelf of the park library, open it up and pick the program that's most fun-looking program to you.

Look at the easy sample program in that subject and add a few personal and local examples and give it a try! Put on your shorts; take out your magnifying lenses, hand puppets and maybe even your plastic scat. If you do choose to accept this interpretive challenge, don't forget to give out



Junior Rangers are a fun-loving group willing to sit on the ground, share stories and they really know how to explore!

those cool Junior Ranger bumper stickers to each participating family to see extra smiles at the end of the program.

This year we are asking you to go through your supply cabinets to find those old blue and green logbooks to give out. Have fun using up those old supplies by letting children pick their favorite color of logbook, pin or style of certificate. If you do find yourself short of any supplies, please ask your District Interpretive Coordinator to see if another unit may have enough to get you through this summer. Or if you find an extra stash of patches or other supplies you can share, let your District Interpretive Coordinator know so he or she can ensure every unit has enough supplies. And then

look forward to a new Junior Ranger logo and awards to come out for Summer 2003. Help us use our old style of supplies this summer, so we can launch the new program for next summer! Any questions, please call John Werminski @ 916-653-8959.

Warning: Giving Junior Ranger programs has been known to cause happiness, extended star-gazing, a feeling of light-headedness and an unwillingness to return to the office. If any of these side-effects apply to you after just one dose, please return to more mundane tasks in order to avoid possible habit-forming interpretation.

Have **you** given a Junior Ranger program lately? 🐾

Cultural Diversity: California's Heritage And Legacy

Jose Ignacio Rivera

The Heritage (Part 1):

"Remember, in nature diversity is good, diversity is healthy. Diversity is good because different species support one another." When school children came to Mt. Diablo to learn about California's ecosystems, this was an important point I made. It is this rich tradition of diversity that attracted me to California both academically and professionally.

California's environmental diversity is what attracted many people to the state in the first place. The Northwest coast is very different from the Southern deserts. The great valley is very different from the snow topped Sierras, just as the eastern Sierra Nevada is very different from the Southern Californian coast. Growing up in the Los Angeles/Ventura area, we joked how one could get sun burnt on the coast in the morning, and frostbite in the evening while in the mountains – all in one day. California's indigenous people were just as diverse as their environment.

In California many consider Hokan to be the oldest linguistic stock in California, such as the Chumash and Kumeyaay (sometimes called the Diegueños). A truly fascinating point is, every linguistic stock spoken in North America, with the exception of Eskimo, was spoken

in California, even Algonquian. The Wiyot and Yurok are both Algonquian speakers. Usually Algonquian speakers are located in the New York and Great Lakes area. Why such a large gap between these places and Northern California?

Another California language, Penutian, is related to the Mayan language of Southern Mexico. Thus even California's indigenous languages came from a tradition of diversity.

Trade was very brisk in Indigenous California, and it was not uncommon to meet people who could speak two or three languages.

Culturally, the Northwestern people of California were more closely related to the Northwestern people of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. In the eastern Sierra Nevada, the Shoshonean people are culturally Great Basin people extending into Utah, Nevada, and Idaho. The Southern Californian people shared much in common with the tribes of the Southwest and old Mexico, as well as traded and intermarried with them. Seashells from Old Mexico, especially the Sea of Cortez (Gulf of California) were popular trade items in California.

Trade was very brisk in indigenous California, and it was not

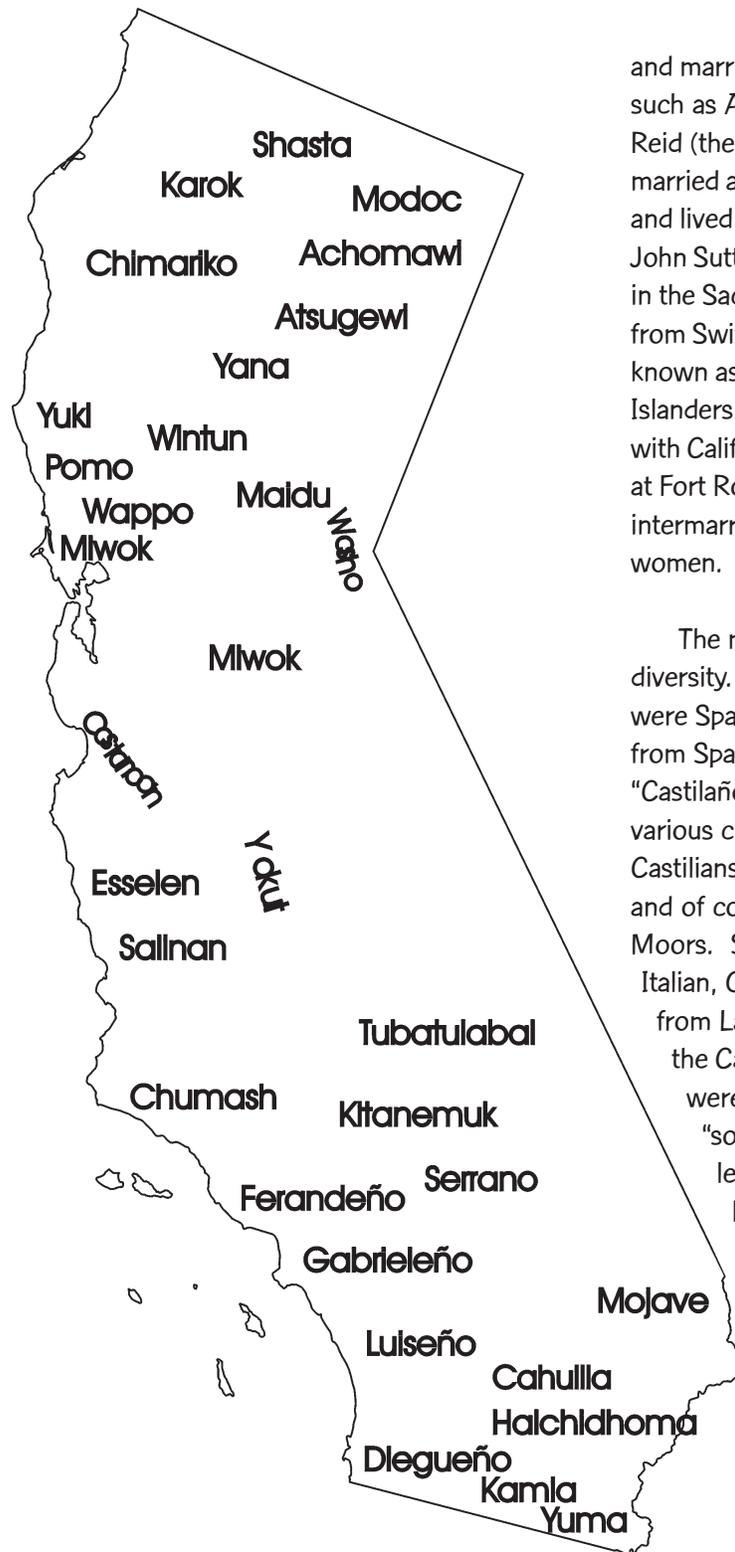
uncommon to meet people who could speak two or three languages. It is interesting that in the Northwestern part of California we have various linguistic groups living in close proximity. However, their material culture is so similar that it takes an expert to tell the difference between them. Why? Of course, even though they spoke different languages, they all lived in the same environment, with the same resources available to them.

The territory for the "classic cultures" of California started around the Los Angeles area, up the coast to just north of San Francisco Bay. From the coast line and the Channel Islands to the crest of the Sierra Nevada, all that lay within this boundary are considered to be classic Californian cultures. Anthropologically, diversity is an indicator of prolonged and extensive habitation, an important point. At Olompali State Historic Park it was thought until recently that the Miwok village dated to about 500 AD. However, with a recent dig we have discovered that the experts were off by about six thousand years. The California Indian

people would say, "that's nothing, we were created here." In fact, that is what makes Mt. Diablo State Park so important and sacred to the California Indian people, for Diablo is considered the *Miwok point of creation*.

Now we enter the Latino period, which includes the Spanish and Mexican eras. Even during this Latino period California's population was diverse. At the top of the caste system were the Spaniards who were born in Spain, and then under them were the Spaniards who were born in the Americas. The Mestizos were under the Spaniards, for they were half-Spanish and half-Indian. There were other designations, such as Mulatto, or half Spanish and half Black, and Sambos or Coyotes that were half Indian and half Black. The newly converted Indians were known as "neophytes," but legally responsible people were considered "gente de razon," or a person of reason.

During this time period, there were people from all over Latin America in California. The famous Bandini family from Old Town San Diego was Peruvian. The famous



bandit Juakin Murilletta was said to have been a Chilean miner at one time. Then there were retired Boston sea captains who settled in California,

and married local Mexican women such as Abel Stern. There was Hugo Reid (the Scottish Paisano) who married a Tong-va (Gabrelino) woman and lived in the Los Angeles area. John Sutter had a Mexican land grant in the Sacramento area and he was from Switzerland. Native Hawaiians, known as Kanacas or Sandwich Islanders, settled and intermarried with California Indians. The Russians at Fort Ross and their Aleut hunters intermarried with Pomo and Miwok women.

The missions themselves brought diversity. Not all of the missionaries were Spanish, and even if they were from Spain they were not all "Castilaños." In Spain there are various cultural groups like the Castilians, the Basque, the Catalaño, and of course the Jews, Gypsies and Moors. Some missionaries were Italian, German, Prussian, Irish, or from Latin America. The soldiers at the Californian Presidios (forts) were mainly the Catalan "soldados de cuedo," or the leathered armored soldiers. Portuguese were also present in California, from Vizcaíno the early explorer to the Canary Island immigrants. In fact, most of the original Portuguese immigrants were exclusively from the Canary Islands.

Part 2 of this article will deal with California's legacy of diversity from the Gold Rush to the present, with ideas for the future. 🐾

The Road Less Traveled

by J. Mendez

Not so very long ago - and with these familiar words from a poem of the same name penned by Robert Frost echoing in my mind – I found myself at a personal crossroads. Would I – like the poet – choose to take that road less traveled knowing that if I did not I may never have the opportunity to come back this way again? Would I then stay on my chosen path and not regret the choice I was about to make, or would I only pause – look wistfully down that beckoning trail – and then sadly pass it by?

Oh, how I agonized over which path I should take. Even after boldly taking that first step on the road to a more challenging and fulfilling career and following that first step with ever increasing and more purposeful strides-I still periodically question the wisdom of the choice I made. Would I have gone down that path had I known that it would take me so far away from my home and make it so difficult to find the way back? Would I have chosen that path had I known that my journey would be measured in years rather than weeks and months?

Yes, I would still have set my foot upon that path for if I had not I would have missed the opportunity to meet and work with the many dedicated and talented people of our state and local parks. I would have never experienced the beauty of the desert, the serenity of the mountains, or the pleasure of families enjoying and

discovering the wonders of nature in their own back yards. I would also never have been introduced to an often unrecognized and definitely under-appreciated branch of the interpretive field – the interpretive tour guide. It was my own introduction and experience as a tour guide that brings me to the purpose of this essay.

In this space in the coming months I will be taking not just myself – but all of you – down many of California's less traveled roads and byways. You will be going – not past

- but right into the many cultural and historical parks, sites, and monuments frequented by interpretive tour guides. You will not only be introduced to the places but – more importantly – to the men and women who do so much more than just show these treasures to the American public.

So readers – click off those computers, cell phones, and TVs; put on your comfortable walking shoes, and don't forget your hat! Join me as we discover the joy of being guided down "the road less traveled". I know you won't regret it! 🐾



California's Tapestry

A Section of *The Catalyst*

Office of Community Involvement

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The Diversity Ladder

One of the "Strategic Initiatives" of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to progress in the area of diversity. This includes developing a work force that reflects the cultural diversity in the state as well as providing services for an increasingly diverse population. The Department's Diversity Steering Committee has been looking into ways to measure where we are and what we are doing concerning diversity. A tool, like ones that have been used for cultural literacy and service delivery, is being piloted at several employee focus group meetings. The *Diversity Ladder* includes measures for the Department's programs for the public, most of which we call interpretive programs. The *Ladder*, or something like it, may become one of the ways by which we measure the extent interpretive programs address diversity.

With regard to programs and facility design, here are the initial descriptions used for the five step *Ladder*.

5. Diversity Proficiency: The perspectives of different groups are incorporated into park design,

facilities and services. Programs encourage members of the public to share their cultures, experiences, perspectives and histories with one another. They celebrate differences and find commonalities for positive outcomes.

4. Diversity Competency: Within the context of State Parks, facilities are adapted for use by different groups. Diverse groups are actively sought out to participate in the development and implementation of park programs. Programs are generally free of cultural bias and allow the participants to form their own opinions.

3. Diversity Blindness: Facilities are available on a passive basis to diverse groups and uses. They are designed in a traditional manner. Programs welcome diverse groups and there is some effort to show different perspectives.

2. Diversity Incapacity: Facilities are built to accommodate traditional uses; other uses are tolerated. Programs provide little consideration for the diversity of participants and tend to hold stereotypical perspectives.

1. Diversity Destructiveness: Facilities provide little to no flexibility

for different types of users or groups. Programs tend to be one-sided and promote the perspectives of a single group.

How would you rate the park unit you are in? What changes at your unit are needed to move up the ladder? These descriptions may need more clarification, explanation and examples so that the ladder can be more useful at your unit. For now, it can serve as a tool to give us an internal assessment of how we are doing.

Resource protection issues are sometimes raised when trying to serve diverse groups or designing facilities that accommodate uses other than those normally found in State Parks. It may be helpful to remember that the two, resource protection and diversity, are not exclusive of each other. Often they can complement each other and be mutually beneficial.

There is no better time than now to think how the Diversity Ladder or some other tool like it may help the Department's programs become more relevant and inclusive for all Californians. How should it be applied to what you do in planning and evaluating your programs? Send your comments to the Diversity Steering Committee.

Submit articles and comments to: Jack K. Shu, Park Superintendent,
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Diego Drive, San Diego 92108, Ph# (619) 220-5330.

Catalyst Summer 2002 Contents

Catalyst Wins Prestigious Award!	Page 1
From the Editor	Page 3
Interpreters' Resources	Page 4
Dear Master Interpreter	Page 5
Interpretive Quickies	Page 6
Celebrate the Solstice with Energy!	Page 8
"Thematic Units" Featured at Calaveras	Page 10
Interpreting the Flag	Page 12
Icons	Page 14
Free at Last	Page 16
Pushbutton Activated DVDs	Page 18
Just One Dose of Junior Rangers	Page 19
Cultural Diversity: California's Heritage And Legacy	Page 20
The Road Less Traveled	Page 22
California's Tapestry	Page 23



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