



Bidwell Pulse

Quarterly Newsletter of the City of Chico's Park Division

Rangers Serve Many Park Roles

City of Chico Park Rangers provide a friendly presence, educate visitors, enforce rules, and also play an important emergency response role.

Numerous agencies across the country entrust Park Rangers to protect, promote, manage and enhance our cultural and natural resources.

The job duties of rangers vary as much as the parks they work in. Some rangers have a focused and limited scope of duties and training, while others, known as generalists, perform multiple roles, including: enforcement, emergency response, visitor assistance, resource management, and education. The City of Chico Rangers follow the generalist concept.

Seasonally, the type and level of park use changes, which shifts the roles and priorities of the rangers. Monitoring, outreach and project development take the forefront during the winter months. As the weather warms and recreation season

approaches, rangers focus on visitor contacts and education. Rangers help foster an appreciation of good stewardship of resources and a proactive approach to rules compliance.

The rangers also perform critical emergency response roles. During the summer months, the number of accidents, injuries, and search and rescue operations increase. Each year, rangers respond to—often as the first on scene—to a variety of emergencies. For example, rangers were the first response to a fall victim at the Peregrine Point Disc Golf Course and to the hydraulic fluid spill into Big Chico Creek. Rangers also assisted with wildfires, as well as rescues at Bear Hole, Salmon Hole, Monkey Face, and on the



Rangers are spending more time on bike patrol, allowing for more visitor encounters and better

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A fast spreading wildland fire burned nearly 30 acres in Middle Park this past month.

Fire Danger High In Bidwell Park

Smoking has long been banned in Middle and Upper Bidwell Park from May thru October. With meager precipitation, dry vegetation, and hot temperatures, this summer poses an extreme fire danger for the Park.

Smoking is one of the leading causes of wildfires. Still lit cigarettes or butts can smolder for hours before erupting into a fire. The Park Division uses controlled fire as an important management tool, but uncontrolled fire poses danger to park visitors and damages the Park. Fire can exacerbate erosion, kill wildlife, diminish water quality, and favor invasive species. Note that areas of the Park may be closed this summer to vehicles during “red flag days.” The National Weather Service issues red flag warning when conditions merit (high temperature, low humidity, high winds, dry fuels).

Let's protect our Park. Comply with the smoking ban and closures. Report any suspicious activity or observance of smoke or fire.

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The Bidwell Park Pulse

The Bidwell Park Pulse is a quarterly newsletter of the City of Chico's Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways, and Preserves Division. The Parks Division is part of the General Services Department, and is responsible for maintaining and operating City parks, open space, and recreation areas including Bidwell Park, Children's Playground, Depot Park, City Plaza, Lindo Channel, Little Chico Creek Greenway, Teichert Ponds, and other preserves. Parks Division programs include: Maintenance, Ranger, Lifeguard, and Volunteer Programs.

**City of Chico Mission**

To protect and enhance our community's quality of life for present and future generations.

Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC)

The BPPC is vested with the supervision, control and management of many public parks and playgrounds within the City. **Commissioners:** Mary Brentwood, Clay Craig, Lisa Emmerich, Mark Herrera, Jim Mikles, Jim Moravec, Richard Ober (Chair). **Staff Liaison:** Lise Smith-Peters, Administrative Analyst.

Contact

Questions, comments, or photo contributions?

Contact us:

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Email: parkinfo@ci.chico.ca.us

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Guardian Trail.

While the focused efforts on pro-active visitor contacts have seen measurable results, there is always work to do in introducing new users to the park and reminding long time users of park rules.

The Park Division is lucky to have a friendly, professional corps of rangers that are ready to serve and educate the public. Cultivating an appreciation of the Park's resources will help us improve stewardship of the City's Parks and Greenways.

The rangers love to meet visitors and are a wealth of knowledge about the parks' plants, animals, facilities, and history. So next time you see a ranger, stop and say hello, and ask a question.

~Jessica Erdahl, Senior Park Ranger

Event:**National Night Out in Bidwell Park**

Come join the Chico Creek Nature Center (CCNC), the City of Chico Police and Parks Departments in celebration of the 29th annual National Night Out (NNO) event!



Tuesday, August 7th
6:00 – 9:00 PM

Chico Creek Nature Center

1968 East 8th St.
Chico, CA

lifeguards will host a water balloon toss and watermelon eating contest. Park rangers will be on hand to provide an "insiders" take at some of Bidwell Park's most intriguing history. The Park Services Coordinator will have information about volunteer opportunities. Chico Police are also scheduled to stop by with exciting surprises.

This event is a wonderful opportunity to take an evening stroll or bike ride. You are sure to meet like-minded people who are taking an active part in helping to ensure that our neighborhoods are safe and crime free.

For additional information, please contact the City of Chico Park Division, Park Ranger Shane Romain at 530-896-7800.

NNO is a fantastic, nation-wide, annual event where neighborhoods come together to heighten crime prevention awareness, form stronger ties with local police, and meet new friends.

A fun-filled and informative evening is planned for all to share. The CCNC will have an "open house" where visitors will be able experience the live animal museum and tour various displays, including Kristie's Nature Lab. Bidwell Park's

very own



The Chico Police Mounted Unit is just one of the many specialty teams that attend National Night Out events.

Park Postcard:

Where is it?
Chico Firefighters mop up after a fast moving wildfire on June 10, 2012. Do you know where it is? Answer on p.4.

Volunteer:

Park Volunteer Highlights

- This summer the Park Division is overseeing the work of four interns. **Rick Helgerson**, CSUC Recreation and Parks Management major, is working toward his graduation requirement of a full-time work experience for 16 weeks. His tasks include coordinating the Upward Bound High School daily park work sessions (6 weeks); Volunteer Fridays; the Privet Removal and Logistics Plan funded by Friends of Bidwell Park; Monitoring/mapping the Park's volunteer restoration sites; and coordinating the Upward Bound Service Day. **Rachel Libby**, Natural Resource Management student at Butte College, is writing plant profiles for some of the Park's invasive weeds and updating BPPC meeting actions. Emily Dymond, a CSUC political science student, will research the potential for facility energy savings using solar power and natural gas, along with other GSD projects. Heidi Ortiz is a CSUC Recreation and Parks Management major, with a focus on facilities management. She is inventorying the Park's bench conditions (needed to implement the new donation policy) and mapping park signs in Upper Bidwell Park as part of a larger Signage Inventory project.
- Teacher Allyson Welch's **Blue Oak Elementary School** 8th grade students adopted picnic site #6 in December 2011. The class has conducted 3 major vinca clearing sessions, and had Ranger and Park Services Coordinator presentations at their site. The students finished up the season by planting mugwort and Santa Barbara sedge. One student will write a background description of site 6 to post for park users to read.
- Crew Leaders **Elaine Ellsmore**, **Desi Hatton**, and **Elizabeth Daniels** are leading sessions at picnic site 8 on Wednesdays. **Michael Bruhn** will offer some Saturday work sessions and Rick Helgerson will lead Volunteer Fridays. **Janet Ellner** led work sessions removing yellow starthistle from Upper Park trails. **Susan Mason** continues weekly removal days in the Park and in City greenways.
- Many thanks go to Susan Mason for the creation of invasive weed and native plant demonstration signs for the Park Division. These will be used for tours and other educational efforts.
- Check out the Bidwell Park Volunteer Work Session Calendar on the Park Division webpage.



Blue Oak Elementary's 6th Grade Class adopted picnic site #6 — where they have removed vinca and planted native mugwort and sedge.

~Lise Smith-Peters, Park Services Coordinator

Invasive Plant Profile: Italian Lords and Ladies

Common name(s): Italian Lords and Ladies

Scientific name: *Arum italicum*

Family: Araceae

Native To: Europe, North Africa and Western Asia

Current CA Distribution: Northern and Central CA, from 0 to 1,640 feet

Means of Introduction: Introduced as an ornamental

Status/Weed Rating:

Statewide impact: Not listed on CAL-IPC

CDFA Noxious Weed List: Not listed as CDFA weed

What does it look like?

- *General:* Tuberos perennial woodland species growing 10-24" tall.
- *Leaves:* Dark green, arrow-shaped leaves with cream veining



emerge in early fall.

- *Flowers:* Small white flowers in the spring.
- *Fruit:* Tall clusters of orange-red berries

Reproduction and Dispersal: Sexual reproduction through monoecious flowers, as well as asexual reproduction through corms.

Where is it found invading? CA (Chico, Bidwell Park); OR; WA; IL; MO; and NC.

Why worry? It is rapidly spreading in the Bidwell Park and other Chico greenways.

How can it be managed? Corm removal is possible, but it is difficult to remove them all and completely enough to prevent reproduction. Herbicides are a possibility.

What is being done in Bidwell Park? Research into effective control methods is underway. A pilot project using herbicide will be conducted in the near future.

Where do I go for more information? United States Plant Inventory Database online: <http://plants.usda.gov/>



Park Division
General Services Department

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Park Division to provide the public with timely information using Social Media.



The Parks Division recently added social media as another way to connect with Park users.

Currently, many users find information about Park related issues from a variety of sources such as news releases, the City web-page, the trails phone, and even park signs.

Over the next few months, Parks will utilize social media to provide timely

reminders or updates on Park related issues. Trail closures, facility repairs, or park-related

events will be updated on Facebook and Twitter.

For example, park users will be able to receive updates on trail closures on their smart phones before they hit the trails.

releases, on the City webpage or in Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC) reports.

Citizens are reminded that they can sign up to receive BPPC

agendas and reports by contacting us.

As we move forward with this program, please give us feedback on what information you

would most like to see.

Connect with the Park Division

Facebook: City of Chico—Parks Division.

Twitter: @ChicoParks

Phone: (530) 896-7800

Trails/Disc Golf Closure Hotline: (530) 896-7899

Email: parkinfo@ci.chico.ca.us

Web: http://www.chico.ca.us/general_services_department/park_division/home_page.asp



MIDDLE PARK: Celestial Events Attract Thousands

Middle Park's open skies, broad vistas—and the Chico Community Observatory made it *the* destination for the recent "Super Moon", annular eclipse (picture above courtesy of the Observatory), and transit of Venus. For the eclipse, the observatory estimates that 480 people attended a pre-event lecture while 2,000 observers witnessed the eclipse in the immediate area of the observatory.



Answer to "Where is it?": Approximately 30 acres burn in the channel and at the Hooker Oak Recreation Area in Middle Bidwell Park.