

The Thin Green Line, June 2017 - Volume 29 of the quarterly International Ranger Federation (IRF) Newsletter (English version).



The Thin Green Line

From the President

This year we will celebrate 25 important years of The International Ranger Federation (IRF). From that pivotal moment in 1992, on a loch in Scotland, we also now look forward to taking the IRF to its next level in representing Rangers and our profession across the globe. It gives me great pleasure to introduce our new full time Executive Officer, Louise Reynolds. This position was made possible by the hard work of many on this and the previous IRF Executive and with generous support from donors. Importantly it signifies a new marker in the ground of greater support for IRF members, potential members and the overall mission of the IRF.

You will see a revamped IRF Newsletter, titled The Thin Green Line (started by IRF co-founder Bill Hallinen), which I encourage you all to contribute to and distribute far and wide when you receive it; you will see greater co-ordination between our member Associations via the twinning program; you will have greater access to grants for your Ranger projects; and greater support from the Executive Officer, your

Regional Representatives and the IRF Executive team overall. However, as is always the truth, the IRF is only as strong as its members' contributions. I applaud all of those Rangers keeping their Associations active and functioning and I implore those Rangers, not yet an active member of an Association or perhaps thinking or getting together with Rangers in your area to start one, to delay no longer. Help make your federation, the IRF, an even stronger voice and advocate for your profession and your passion.

In closing, please look to recognise your World Ranger Day this year, July 31st, with your colleagues and community and download the information pack when it is ready in early July. Keep up your truly amazing work protecting the world's natural and cultural wonders, best wishes to your families and please stay safe out there.

Yours in solidarity

Sean Willmore
President
International Ranger Federation



Regional News

Africa

From Chris Galliers, the IRF African Representative: The last few months have unfortunately seen a number of Ranger deaths in Africa. This has been tragic, with many being as a result of committed individuals taking up the challenge of defending important conservation areas from globally connected criminals. We share the grief with all their families and Ranger colleagues. Wherever possible, the Thin Green Line Foundation (TGLF), which is the charity arm of the IRF, continues to support the families of fallen Rangers.

There are a number of other important Ranger support interventions, such as training, which have been taking place across many parts of the continent. We need to continue up-scaling the skills of Rangers to help counter the threats that they face. We continue to engage with Rangers to see where and how best we can support them.

With support from the IRF, we are also looking forward to the establishment of the Benin Ranger Association. Well done Dode Heim Myline Houehounha for initiating it and driving the process.

Asia

The IRF Asian Representative, Rohit Singh, has been busy driving initiatives in Asia. He was involved in a large project (as well as many others) that led to the creation of the Anti-poaching Training Guidelines, which describes how to improve job effectiveness and safety for Rangers who work in protected areas in which poaching and illegal trade of natural resources occur and need to be controlled (visit the IRF website to access this document).

He has also been assisting existing and/or potential new member Associations like the Ranger Association of Nepal.

Central America

Leonel Delgado Pereira, the IRF Central American Representative, has been involved in many initiatives recently including assisting in the creation of the Park Ranger Associations of Guatemala, Panama and Costa Rica. He is also currently involved in the planning of the Latin American Ranger Congress which will take place in 2018.

Europe

Frank Gruetz, the IRF European Representative, has been working hard on behalf of Rangers in Europe; he's been working on the following initiatives:

- The 4th IRF European Ranger Congress 2017 in Litomerice, Czech Republic which was held between 9 – 13th May, 2017.
- Liaising with Rangers throughout Europe including Rangers in Kosovo, Poland, Russia and the Baltic States.
- Mediation and supporting of a training/exchange program for Israeli Rangers in Germany.
- Assisting with the official registration of the European Ranger Federation as an Association which involves liaising with 22 national Ranger Associations.
- Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders like the IUCN South Eastern Europe and EUROPARC Federation. As a result, he has been invited to attend the EUROPARC Federation Congress in Portugal where he will present and hold a workshop.

North America

From Bill Westerfield, the IRF North American Representative: Over the last few months I have continued to try to make contact with the member organisations. In March, I attended the U.S. State Department's ceremony recognising World Wildlife Day in Washington D.C. With me were the IRF Secretary, Jewel Johnson, and Board Member of the Thin Green Line Foundation, Andrew Batt. It was good to see the Rangers from around the world being recognised for their duties.

One of my goals is to get the wildlife management agencies from North America to participate in the IRF, since the majority of the IRF's activities around the world are directed towards the protection of wildlife.

The North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association is planning an international meeting to be hosted by the Wyoming Game Wardens' Association in Wyoming, in July 2018. Some of their activities will be held at Curt Gowdy State Park (one of many parks) so I think I will have plenty opportunity to visit their Association; they are predicting 500 to 1,000 attendees.

This Summer the state of Wyoming will be directly in the path of a solar eclipse which goes directly over four Wyoming State Parks. There have been predictions of up to 500,000 visitors coming to Wyoming to view the eclipse. Not bad for a state with a population of only 580,000!

Oceania

Peter Cleary, the IRF Oceania Representative, has been involved in several initiatives including the following:

- The Council of Australian Rangers Associations which will be held between 15 -18th August, 2017 in Nitmuluk National Park, Katherine in the Northern Territory; it will be hosted by the Northern Territory Ranger Association.
- Parks Victoria decommissioned digital cameras will soon be sent to Romania, New Caledonia and Costa Rica.
- Ranger visits: A New Caledonian and Argentinian Ranger recently visited some parks in Australia as part of their professional development. These visits were made possible by utilising worldwide Ranger networks.
- The Indigenous Ranger Program: Peter will represent the IRF for this initiative which comprises of an African Ranger exchange with 10 indigenous Australian Rangers.

South America

We are looking forward to the Latin American Ranger Congress which will take place in 2018. Watch this space for further details.

IRF Initiatives



From left to right: Johann Cerisier (French Ranger from the Port-Cros National Park), Mbina Christian (Gabonese Ranger), Guy-Philippe Sounguet (Gabonese Ranger) and Gilles Garnier (French Ranger from the Port-Cros National Park).

The IRF Twinning Program

The IRF Twinning program is an initiative that exists for the transfer of knowledge, experience and skills between IRF Member Associations. The French and Gabon Ranger Associations have partnered together as part of this program, both being French speaking and having different knowledge and skills, this was the perfect fit. The initiative started at the end of 2015 after the French Ranger Association partly sponsored the IRF membership of their counterparts. The twinning agreement was officially signed in May 2016 at the World Ranger Congress in Estes Park, Colorado, USA. Since the Congress there has been an exchange of knowledge and experience between the two, the French Ranger Association has assisted the Gabon

The International Ranger Federation/Thin Green Line Foundation Annual Awards Do you know someone who deserves recognition?

The Annual IRF/TGLF Awards recognise those individuals who have dedicated their lives to the protection of the natural world.

The three awards that will be announced on

World Ranger Day, 31st July 2017 are:

1. The *Dr Jane Goodall Hope and Inspiration Ranger Award* - This award is presented to an individual who, against all odds, has carried out a conservation related act that inspires and brings hope to others.

2. The *International Ranger Federation Lifetime Achievement Award* - This award is presented to an individual who has been involved in a career relating to the conservation, preservation, promotion and/or protection of the natural environment especially those whose actions have positively impacted Rangers (as per the definition).

3. The *International Young Conservationist Award* - This award is presented to a young individual who has demonstrated passion and commitment to conservation. It is a joint initiative of the IRF and the International Union for Conservation of Nature – World Commission of Protected Areas (IUCN/WCPA). The award aims to recognise and raise awareness of the outstanding contributions made by young people to the conservation of natural areas
What's the prize?

All finalists will be recognized internationally and the award recipients will receive funds to meet the reasonable travel and accommodation costs for the World

Ranger Association in implementing a Junior Ranger Training Program; they had previously created a similar program in the Scarpe-Escaut Regional Nature Park so they were able to provide some guidance and advice. At the end of 2016, the French Ranger Association also assisted in providing their experience, knowledge and skills to their Gabonese counterparts who are currently creating a Ranger training book. These two projects alone are great feats for the Gabon Ranger Association, having them in place will be a huge achievement. The ultimate goal for the program is to have a Ranger exchange between the two in either France or Gabon. We congratulate both Associations on their commitment to date and wish them all the best for the future.

Are you interested in twinning with another IRF Member Association? Do you have skills and knowledge that you could share with another member Association and want them to share their knowledge, experience and skills with your Association and members? Are you currently already doing it but don't have a twinning agreement in place?

If the answer is yes to any of the above then please contact the IRF Executive Officer, Louise Reynolds, as we'd like more twins in our Federation.

Parks Congress 2019 (up to a value USD \$4,000) to accept their award at a dedicated ceremony during the congress.

Visit the IRF website to nominate an exceptional individual (<http://www.internationalrangers.org/awards/>).

Note: Submissions close on the 30th June, 2017 and nominators are encouraged to apply in English.

The definition of a Ranger

The IRF, in conjunction with the IUCN, defines a Ranger as the person involved in the practical protection and preservation of all aspects of wild areas, historical and cultural sites. Rangers provide recreational opportunities and interpretation of sites while providing links between local communities, protected areas and area administration. Why is this important? The IRF understands that Rangers fall under many different titles and functions around the world and we want to ensure that we're including and providing support to all individuals that are involved in the conservation of our natural and cultural world.



Signing the agreement from left to right: Chris Galliers (African IRF Representative), Johann Cerisier, Guy-Philippe Sounguet and Sean Willmore (current IRF President).

In the News



The signing at Losehill Hall left to right: Steve Nunn (SCRA) Phil Page (ACR) and Rick Gale (ANPR).

The IRF Turns 25

During a gathering of Rangers at Loch Lomond in Scotland in the Summer of 1991,



Meet the new IRF Executive

Louise Reynolds has joined the IRF family as the new IRF Executive Officer. This position was made available by funding from the Thin Green Line Foundation, Parks Victoria (Australia) and the U.S. National Parks Foundation. Louise is a South African national but has been based in Melbourne, Australia for the last 6 years. Growing up in Africa, seeing many magnificent animals in the wild, has fuelled her passion for conservation. This passion led her to realise how crucial the role is that Rangers play in this challenging environment, and understanding that the IRF is the voice of Rangers worldwide attracted her to the role within the IRF. Her role involves supporting the IRF Executive team as well as existing IRF members but also developing the scope of the IRF worldwide. This will allow the IRF to better support Ranger Associations and therefore Rangers globally. Please join us in welcoming Louise to the team. She can be contacted by email on executiveofficer@internationalrangers.org.

Bob Reid (Scottish Ranger Association [SCRA]), Bill Halainen (Association of National Park Rangers [ANPR]- US) and Gordon Miller (Association of Countryside Rangers [ACR] - England and Wales), agreed to pursue the idea of a worldwide federation of professional Ranger Associations. After discussions, the three international Associations signed an Accord establishing the International Ranger Federation at Losehill Hall in the Peak National Park, UK on 31st July 1992, which is now celebrated as World Ranger Day. Gordon Miller was elected as the first President, Bob Reid as Secretary and Bill Halainen as Thin Green Line Bulletin editor.

The purpose of the IRF was agreed upon as: -

- To further the professional standards of Rangers throughout the world
- To advance the aims of the IUCN's World Conservation Strategy
- To share knowledge and resources
- To establish global communications among Ranger Associations
- To foster professional exchanges between Rangers
- To arrange and conduct international Ranger meetings
- To undertake joint activities to directly support each other's operations where necessary and feasible

To date, over 50 countries have joined the world family of Rangers and eight World Ranger Congresses have been held (and a number of continental conferences and meetings), as well as the IRF being acknowledged by the IUCN and other international organisations as the major representative body and voice of Rangers worldwide.



Getting Behind the Line

Each newsletter we will highlight a Ranger Association's fundraising efforts for their Ranger family around the world. This edition we look at the efforts of the South Australian Ranger Association.

The South Australia Ranger Association (SARA) has been a large supporter of the Thin Green Line Foundation (TGLF), which is the charity arm of the IRF, for many years, assisting with raising more than AU\$40,000 to date. Their fundraising initiatives include (but aren't limited to) the "Go Green For Rangers" initiative where a member of SARA dyed his hair green (raising AU\$5,000 for the TGLF), donating 10% of all annual membership fees to TGLF, encouraging individuals who use their park's facilities to donate to the TGLF and donating their time for several events that raised funds for the TGLF.

SARA has been a dedicated supporter of the TGLF because they recognise that the TGLF are raising awareness of the plight of Rangers around the world.

Derek Snowball, President of SARA, said "it was moving to see how much people, that are doing the same job as us, are sacrificing and how hard they have it. It puts things into perspective and makes us want to help people that don't have a fair deal." He also mentioned that seeing Sean Willmore, The Managing Director of the TGLF and the current IRF



Representatives at the signing of the Accord founding the IRF at Losehill Hall.

Want to become an IRF Member?

By joining the IRF, you and your Association will become part of the world family of Rangers, a worldwide network of frontline conservation individuals that allows for the sharing of knowledge, ideas, experiences and resources. The organisation also provides support by representing the voice of Rangers in the conservation debate. There are three types of membership:

1. Regular membership: This is open to all national, state or territorial Ranger Associations whose members are involved in the management of the world's protected areas; individual Rangers become members of the IRF through their Association.
2. Provisional membership: In countries where no Ranger Association exists, an individual Ranger or group of Rangers, may join as a Provisional Member until they have established an Association.

President, at the World Ranger Congress in Tanzania in 2012, hand over funds to widows of fallen Rangers as part of the TGLF's Global Fund for Fallen Rangers "was a really moving experience, knowing that the funds that we have raised are making a difference to people's lives".

Want to get involved?

The IRF and the TGLF would love all Ranger Associations to get involved to raise funds for their brothers and sisters around the world. Contact the IRF and/or TGLF on (executiveofficer@internationalrangers.org) or go to the TGLF's My Cause page (<https://www.mycase.com.au/registration/1917>).



Dedicated to the Cause

Lailson Camelo da Silva is dedicated to his work. The Brazilian Park Keeper is the sole care taker of a megalithic stone circle, the Rego Grande site (colloquially known as the Amazon Stonehenge), in the Solstice Archaeological Park which is located in the Amazon Basin, in Amapá State . It consists of 127 blocks of granite, each up to 4 metres tall, standing upright in a circle measuring over 30 metres in diameter, on a hilltop overlooking the bank of the Rego Grande river. Archaeologists believe that this site was built by indigenous peoples for astronomical, ceremonial and/or burial purposes. Lailson has cared for the site since 2005, now 75 years old, but has been based in

3. Associate membership: This is open to any individual or group who supports Rangers or protected areas. Visit the website to become a member (<http://www.internationalrangers.org/irf-membership/>).



Mr. Muhammad Akram as a young man.

A Dedication to a Fallen Ranger

There is an alarming amount of destruction of trees and forests in today's world for which environmentally focused individuals and organisations fight. Clearly the issue is one that means a lot to some people and is a cause that some select few extraordinary individuals are committed to. It can be said with certainty that there was at least one man who thought that it was. This

the area since 1998. Still dedicated to his work, he wants to ensure that this culturally significant site is protected for future generations.

The area recently experienced heavy rains and flooding; Lailson's house was partly destroyed and he was almost isolated as the river overflowed. A group of Rangers from the Amapá Rangers Association and Rangers Without Borders (RWB) initiative jumped in to help; they raised funds to provide him with much needed supplies and helped repair his house.

This is just one example of the many unsung heroes who have dedicated their lives to protecting nature and the cultural and historical sites that sit on it. As well as the strong bond that Rangers have; they're willing to help out one another in times of need. We'd love to hear from you: Do you have a colleague/know of someone that has gone above and beyond the call of duty? If so, then please let the IRF Executive Officer know so his or her story can be told.



The flooding in the area.

The IRF Honour Roll

It is key that we recognise the ultimate sacrifice that our friends and colleagues have made on the front-line of conservation. Their

man was **Muhammad Akram**, a Forest Security Guard in the mountains of Hawa Gali, a small town in Abbottabad, Pakistan who on the 3rd April 2015, at the age of 55, sacrificed his life for the protection of the forest.

He was a member of the Village Development Committee whose responsibility it is to protect the forest under the Joint Forest Management Committees formed by the provincial government. The Village Development Committees recommend a local person from the village for the job, Akram was assigned a job in the Ugi Range area.

Muhammad Akram was shot and killed by alleged illegal loggers who had tried to bribe him with no success. The alleged culprits were arrested and admitted to the killing advising that Akram was hindering their source of income however the family could not pursue legal action due to financial constraints.

According to Javed Khan, the President of the Village Development Committee, Muhammad Akram was a very honest person, 'this is the reason we had appointed him as a guard for the forest'. But no one knew how morally incorruptible he was, considering that his family was very poor, living in a tent rather than a house. The TGLF has provided the family with financial assistance, as part of their Global Fund for Fallen Rangers, which the family will use to cover the legal fees to date as well as living expenses. The family was very excited after receiving the amount which was "beyond their imagination"; Akram's wife said that "it was just like

efforts are a credit to the Ranger profession and it is our honour to recognise this, risking their lives to ensure that natural, historic and culturally important areas may be protected in the future is testament to their dedication to the cause. If you have a colleague, friend or family member who has died in the line of duty (and is not currently included in the Honour Roll on the IRF website (<http://www.internationalrangers.org/roll-of-honour/>) please send their details to the IRF Executive Officer.

Upcoming events...

Coming up in 2017:

- 17th July, 2017 - The Thin Green Line Foundation's 10th Anniversary, worldwide.
- 18th July 2017 - The Thin Green Line Foundation's 10th Anniversary Celebration, The Forum Theatre, Melbourne, Australia.
- 31st July 2017 - The IRF's 25th Anniversary, worldwide.
- 31st July, 2017 - World Ranger Day- 10th Anniversary, worldwide.
- 31st July, 2017 - The IRF/TGLF Awards – Winners to be announced on World Ranger Day, worldwide. Submissions close on the 30th June, 2017.
- 15 – 18th Aug, 2017 – 2017 Australian Ranger Forum, Katherine, Northern Territory, Australia.
- 4-8th September, 2017 - The 4th International Marine Protected Areas Congress, La Serena, Coquimbo, Chile.

man from heaven from them”, “I have not seen the people who have helped us, but I pray for them day and night and ask for blessings for them”. We honour the ultimate sacrifice that Muhammad Akram made and the dedication that he showed to a cause that he believed in.

Reminder: The submission deadline for the 2016/2017 project funding applications is 5th June, 2017.

IRF Merchandise

IRF Badges and pins will be available soon. If IRF members wish to use logos for any IRF merchandise please contact Louise directly.

**Global Fund for Fallen Rangers:
Did you know that the IRF,
through The Thin Green Line
Foundation, provides support to
dependants of fallen Rangers
worldwide?**

We all know that Rangers face many dangers on the front line, and that is why over 15 years ago a dependants fund concept was started by the IRF which became the genesis of The Thin Green Line Foundation (TGLF).

TGLF’s “Global Fund for Fallen Rangers” provides financial support to dependants and families of Rangers who have died due to their role in the conservation war.

Who is eligible and how do you apply?

Any dependant of a Ranger (as per the definition) who has died, due to his or her role as a Ranger, who has not yet received assistance from the fund. We encourage you to apply by visiting the website (<https://www.thingreenline.org.au/our-projects/widow-orphan-support/>) or via email: fallenrangers@thingreenline.org.au.

Do you have any suggestions?

Thank you to everyone who assisted with the creation of the newsletter, image credit Em Gatland. If you have any events, stories of interest or feedback please contact the IRF Executive Officer, Louise Reynolds via email: executiveofficer@internationalrangers.org.

If you need to contact a member of the IRF Executive team visit the website
(<http://www.internationalrangers.org/contact>) or contact:

Sean Willmore

President

International Ranger Federation

president@internationalrangers.org

Florin

Vice President

International Ranger Federation

vicepresident@internationalrangers.org

Jewel Johnson

Secretary

secretary@internationalrangers.org

Louise Reynolds

Executive Officer

executiveofficer@internationalrangers.org

Meg Weesner

Treasurer

treasurer@internationalrangers.org

Chris Galliers

Africa Regional Representative

africa@internationalrangers.org

Rohit Singh

Asia Regional Representative

rsingh@wwfnet.org

Leonel Delgado

Central America Regional Representative

ladp21@gmail.com

Frank Gruetz

Europe Regional Representative

europa@internationalrangers.org

Bill Westerfield

North America Regional Representative

northamerica@internationalrangers.org

Peter Cleary

Oceania Regional Representative

oceania@internationalrangers.org

João Jose Corrêa de Silva

South America Regional Representative

polostam@gmail.com