Wednesday Morning Speaker Paul Berkowitz

Paul Berkowitz is the nation’s leading authority on the history and evolution of law enforcement in the National Park Service (NPS) and will be the featured speaker on Wednesday. He has served as an expert witness in federal court, and as a guest instructor at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. He is the author of several books about NPS law enforcement, including “U.S. Rangers – The Law of the Land.” Paul continues to write and serve as an instructor and guest speaker at police academies, colleges and universities, and seminars across the country. Visit his website to learn more https://thelawoftheland.net/about/

Paul served as a law enforcement professional for over 33 years. While attending college he worked as a seasonal ranger for the NPS. After graduation he became a full-time deputy with the Boulder County (CO) Sheriff’s Department. He was hired as a criminal investigator with the Department of the Interior in 1979. He has worked in a variety of field and supervisory assignments stationed across the country at sites as diverse as Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Yosemite National Park, Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, Washington, D.C., Grand Canyon National Park, and finally on the Navajo Indian Reservation in northeastern Arizona focusing on Indian Country crime. He retired as a supervisory special agent in 2007, and now spends much of his time writing and teaching about subjects related to law enforcement and criminal justice.

Paul will be speaking about the actual history of law enforcement in the National Park Service, dispelling many of the myths surrounding the “ranger image.” Contrary to widely held public perceptions, serious crime has existed in our parks from the very beginning, and it is rangers who have borne the responsibility of fighting that crime, often without the meaningful support of management. Highlighting incidents from the late 1800s to the present, Paul’s presentation will focus on how the image of the park ranger has changed over time, resulting in widespread misunderstanding of their legitimate law enforcement role and how that misunderstanding has exacerbated the dangers they face in the performance of their duties.