

THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER
ASSOCIATION

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OCTOBER 2011

SMOKEJUMPER

HONORING OUR VETERANS



Firearms of Early USFS.....	9
Musquez Family in Service of US	18
First NSA Scholarship Awards	28

CONTENTS

Message from the President.....	2
Former Jumpers Help Maintain, Rebuild Forest Trail in West Virginia.....	3
Annual Get-Together Pushes Cave Junction Base Museum Closer to Reality.....	4
Sounding Off from the Editor.....	5
The Magnificent Hole: A Tale of Smokejumper Culture in the 1950s.....	6
Blast from the Past.....	8
Firearms of the Early Forest Service.....	9
The Jump List.....	12
The View from Outside the Fence.....	14
There I Was.....	15
Atkins' Courage Likely Saved Lives of Squad Members.....	17
MacKinnon, West Point Graduate, Held in High Esteem by Comrades, Iraqis.....	20
Glory Days.....	21
Wrapping Up a Season On the Wing-Tip Fire.....	24
With Morale at an Extreme Low, USFS Needs Leaders Who Excel.....	25
New Camera Survives Shock of Landing Near Challenging Fire.....	27
NSA Selects Two for First-Ever Scholarship Awards.....	28
Two More Children of Smokejumpers and a Smokejumper Shined at Olympics.....	29
The Future of America's National Forests Depends on Revised Laws and a Restored U.S. Forest Service.....	30
A Real Kick in the Head: Knife-Wielding Jumpers Create Some Drama.....	32
Off the list.....	33
Odds and Ends.....	34



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Message from the President



by John Twiss
(Redmond '67)
PRESIDENT

I GOT TO participate in a National Smokejumper Association Volunteer Trail Rehabilitation Project this summer. It felt good to again use every muscle in my body and drag back to camp each evening dog tired. I slept like a baby.

It was wonderful to be back in the woods, chinking away with smokejumpers, the people to whom I have always been the closest. And it pleased me to be doing something very needed on one of our national forests.

Our age group ran 42 to 82.

Everyone told stories, smiled and laughed each day as we left our sweat on the trail. For a while we were in our 20s again digging fire line as a team. We were tough, cocky, and the world was at our fingertips.

The highlight of the week for me was listening to what these smokejumpers accomplished with their lives. The schoolteacher who worked with problem children, the Navy pilot who volunteered for multiple tours in Vietnam, the FBI agent who tracked Soviet spies, the forester who started his own forestry company ... and so many more. Often they talked about the role smokejumping played in their lives.

Thanks to the NSA Trails Committee for their wonderful leadership. For those of you who worked on an NSA Volunteer Trail or Facility Project this summer, my hat's off to you. For those who haven't, you may want to give it a try. Perhaps it is time for a winter project in the Southwest! 🌲

Help The NSA With Your Website Skills

Know your way around a website? Want to contribute to your favorite organization and profession? The National Smokejumper Association is looking for folks with technical and web experience to contribute to smokejumpers.com.

We would welcome HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Graphics, and/or database skills. Additional opportunities exist as well. Contact the Web coordinator at: webmaster@smokejumpers.com with your skills and interest.

Former Jumpers Help Maintain, Rebuild Forest Trail In West Virginia

by Rick Steelhammer

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DAVIS, W.Va.—Former firefighters who once parachuted to remote Western wildfires are spending some time on the ground in the Monongahela National For-

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Smokejumper base abbreviations:

Anchorage..... ANC	Grangeville GAC	MissoulaMSO
Boise NIFC	Idaho City IDC	ReddingRDD
Cave Junction CJ	La Grande..... LGD	Redmond.....RAC
Fairbanks FBX	McCall.....MYC	West Yellowstone WYS
		Winthrop..... NCSB

est, maintaining and rebuilding an eight-mile section of the planned 23-mile Heart of the Highlands Trail.

The 16 former smokejumpers range in age from 32 to 82, all members of the National Smokejumper Association. Among other things, the alumni group organizes volunteer work crews for weeklong repair and maintenance projects on U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands.

Their work on West Virginia's Monongahela National Forest is one of 21 association projects scheduled for this summer, and the first to take place east of the Mississippi, the Charleston Sunday Gazette reports.

Crew leader **John McDaniel** (CJ-57) of Falun, Kan., is a Grafton, W.Va., native and graduate of West Virginia University's forestry program. He spent three fire seasons as a smokejumper in Cave Junction, Ore.

"I used to come here, to the Blackwater Falls area, with my aunt and uncle," McDaniel said during a break from trail maintenance work on the Allegheny Trail. It will form part of the western arc of the Heart of the Highlands Trail.

"On this project, we have volunteers from Montana, Alabama, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington and New York," McDaniel said. "Everyone comes here at their own expense. Our motto is 'We work for food.'"

This summer's work includes the restoration of a two-mile section of the Allegheny Trail, known as the Davis Trail as it passes through Blackwater Falls State Park. The 330-mile Allegheny Trail stretches from Preston County's border with Pennsylvania to the Virginia state line at the edge of Monroe County.

All former smokejumpers taking part in NSA work projects must first pass a physical exam. "We have to keep reminding ourselves we're not 25 anymore," McDaniel said.

When the day's work is done, the volunteers retire to their cabins, "where we tell stories and drink lots of beer," McDaniel said with a smile.

"We're here partly for the camaraderie and partly for a little payback," said **Bill Tucker** (MSO-50) of Arlington, Va., who at age 82 was the senior member of the crew.

“Being a smokejumper means being part of a unique organization with a unique mission,” said Tucker, who started his stint as a smokejumper in 1950 at the U.S. Forest Service’s Missoula, Mont., Air Center.

Most NSA volunteers on the crew worked as smokejumpers to help pay their way through college, and then moved on to other ventures. McDaniel and

Tucker both pursued military careers, with McDaniel flying Navy fighter-bombers for 30 years and Tucker retiring from the Air Force as a lieutenant colonel.

The U.S. Forest Service initiated its smokejumper program in 1940, starting with a crew of 10. There are now about 400 smokejumpers based at nine Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management air centers across the West and in Alaska. 🌲

Annual Get-Together Pushes Cave Junction Base Museum Closer To Reality

by Jeff Duewel

(Copyright 2011, The Grants Pass Daily Courier. Reprinted with permission. The Siskiyou Smokejumper Museum is one of the NSA Restoration Projects.)

The former Siskiyou Smokejumpers branched their hammers and paintbrushes for the annual work party in mid-June, and the museum honoring their work is a step closer to completion.

People can now take a walking tour, with eight new interpretive signs, at the former base at the Illinois Valley Airport just outside Cave Junction, Oregon. The museum became a reality when Josephine County commissioners last year granted museum backers a lease.

“It’s not where we want it to be yet, but a lot of progress was made during the week,” said **Gary Buck** (CJ-66), former smokejumper and Cave Junction resident. “We’d like to be open for steady hours, by August, five or six days a week.”

Buck said about 40 people participated each day, building a wheelchair-accessible sidewalk, fixing roofs, repairing walls, and doing anything else needed to restore the place to its original state.

The work party has been held each June for the past few years.

The base operated from 1943 to 1981, one of three original bases in the country for the rugged men who jumped out of planes to fight remote wildfires. They called it “The Gobi” for the rocky landscape.

Buck said restoring the historical A-frame loft

where parachutes were repaired and rigged is the next phase, now that businessman Jack McCornack has moved to the former warehouse next door.

The first day of the work party involved building rigging tables just like the originals.

Historian **Roger Brandt** (Associate) noted that as many as 17 Singer sewing machines were needed to keep the chutes in working order, and the parachute loft was featured in Singer’s company magazine in 1956.

When the former dispatch office opens, visitors will be able to see old photographs and also see more photos and buy food and drink at the former mess hall.

The interpretive signs each have a number of old black-and-white photos, telling a different part of the story.

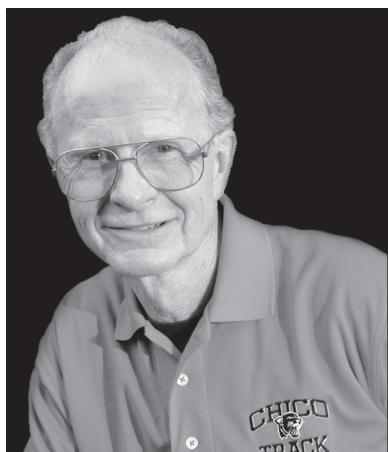
One tells of **Tommy Smith** (CJ-61), the jumper who drowned in the Illinois River returning from a jump. Another shows one of the original moon trees, grown from seeds taken to the moon by astronaut **Stuart Roosa** (CJ-53), who was a smokejumper before going to flight school and later commander for Apollo 14.

Another sign shows the work in the parachute loft, another details the training, and another shows the barracks and mess hall. One large interpretive sign discusses the entire loop.

To reach the museum, take Redwood Highway (U.S. 199) south from Cave Junction to the Illinois Valley Airport and turn right at the second entrance, marked “Smokejumper Way.” 🌲



SOUNDING OFF from the Editor



by Chuck Sheley
(Cave Junction '59)
MANAGING EDITOR

I WANTED to try something a bit different for this issue in honoring smokejumpers who have served in the military. Veterans Day is November 11, 2011, and the October issue is appropriate for this purpose.

The NSA database has over 5,000 listed smokejumpers, and the number who have served in the military must run over a thousand. There is no way possible that I could list all of those individuals.

As a representation of all jumpers who have been in the military, I chose MSG U.S. Army (Ret.) **Ben Musquez** (MSO-56). As you can see from the excellent centerfold done by our Photo Editor **Johnny Kirkley** (CJ-64), the Musquez family has a long-standing tradition of military history. There were even more relatives, but we had to limit our space to the centerfold section.

Two of our members have lost sons in Iraq. I was very hesitant to approach these gentlemen on such a sensitive subject, but both **Jack Atkins** (MSO-68) and

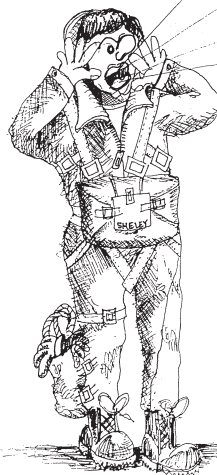
John MacKinnon (MSO-57) have been gracious enough to let us tell the stories of these young men. Thanks to **Carl Gidlund** (MSO-58) for writing up the articles on Capt. Michael MacKinnon and Staff Sgt. Travis Atkins.

The cover photo is of **Jim Allen** (NCSB-46), our highly respected leader at Cave Junction. With this photo, I thought back to an article in the April 2000 issue of *Smokejumper* by **Gary "Tex" Welch** (CJ-60). Tex was telling about his thirteenth jump on the dreaded Umpqua N.F. The Umpqua was the land of the "big trees" where a 150-foot letdown rope was usually carried.

From the article: "Project Air Officer Jim Allen asked about the tree landing. Keep in mind that we were mostly 21-25 years old and thought that we were the roughest, toughest specimens on earth. We accepted it with humility.

"I gave Jim the report, mentioned that it was my thirteenth jump and that I was due a little excitement. (*His letdown rope was 50 feet short of the ground-Ed.*) Jim said he also remembered his thirteenth jump. 'Yeah,' I said, 'What was it like?' My bubble burst and the wind left my sails when he said, 'I was 21. It was September 17, 1944, Operation Market Garden (*A Bridge Too Far*) in Holland and a couple months before Bastogne."

As a final part of this issue I went through our database and



checked out all deceased jumpers for comments in their listings. I know this list is not complete, but here is what we have:

Smokejumpers Killed While in the Military

William R. Beasley (IDC-60): September 25, 1966. Helicopter pilot in Vietnam. Died in crash.

Malvin L. Brown (PNOR-45): August 6, 1945. Member of Triple

Nickles. First Smokejumper killed in line of duty, Umpqua N.F., Oregon, while making a letdown.

Ralph Cordes (NCSB-48): Killed during Korean War.

Steven Henault (MSO-46): February 1971. Alaska Air National Guard aircraft crash.

Jerry Hofer (MYC-43): Pilot during Korean War. Failed to return from mission.

Hugh Jenkins (MSO-49): April 25, 1953. KIA Korea. Awarded the Silver Star.

Robert Kester (CJ-55): Crash of his Marine Corps F8U fighter.

Richard McClung (MSO-42): Pilot MIA South Pacific WWII.

Richard Pratt (NCSB-66): December 8, 1967. KIA Vietnam.

James Putnam (NCSB-48): Died of wounds, Korea 1951.

George "Ken" Sisler (NCSB-57): February 7, 1967. Died of wounds suffered in action, Laos. Awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Please send any update or corrections so we can make our NSA records as accurate as possible. ☮

The Magnificent Hole: A Tale Of Smokejumper Culture In The 1950s

by Bill Breyfogle (Missoula '55)

This story is a happening in the late 1950s and told as remembered after more than 50 years. It reflects a time when the average smokejumper was 22 years old, and he jumped for an average of two and a half years. Most of the jumpers in Missoula stayed in the dorm at the fire depot, that was more like a college dormitory than a Forest Service facility.

Let the story begin: In those days, the main parachute a smokejumper used was 28 feet in diameter, and when he – there were no female smokejumpers in those days – hit the ground, it was said the impact was equal to a free fall from 16 feet.

Landing properly was essential to keep from breaking an ankle or worse. Because of this, during a jumper's first year – I never heard the term “rookie year” used then – one hour a day for three weeks was spent in practice making a proper landing called the “Allen Roll.”

In his book “Young Men and Fire,” Norman McLean says: “If a jumper lands on flat ground at all, it is something like jumping off the roof of an automobile going 25 miles an hour, and in 1949 he finished his jump by the ‘Allen Roll,’ landing sideways, with his right side from his hips down taking the shock, the upper part of his body continuing to pivot to the right until his body falls on its back and then rolls over on its knees. As a jumping instructor once said, the roll is to spread the pain over all the body.”

We practiced the roll standing on the ground, jumping off platforms, running off platforms, or using a device called the “Canadian Swing,” which could make us roll forward or backward. We practiced and practiced, but we still broke our ankles. As I remember, the number of broken bones in Missoula in 1955 was more than 30, including one broken back and a permanent leg disability.

So, in 1957, to help perfect the proper landing, a new apparatus shaped like a large letter “A” was constructed. It consisted of a large A-frame held upright by a concrete anchor, a pulley system, a gasoline engine, and a transmission from a Crosley automobile.

A jumper's chute harness was attached to some risers. He was pulled up to the cross arm of the “A,” the transmission was taken out of reverse and put



The “A” Frame (Courtesy B. Breyfogle)

into a forward gear, and the jumper was pulled to the ground. The idea was that the rate of descent could be controlled by what gear was used in the transmission.

Some jumpers taking refresher training were given the opportunity to try this new training device. Even in low gear we hit the ground harder – much harder – than on a normal landing. Given the opportunity to try it a second time, I think we all declined the honor.

The A-frame was never used again as a training device.

In 1958 the A-frame was gone, but the anchor, which held it in place, was still there. It was a piece of concrete, eight feet by eight feet by two feet thick. It had no purpose.

In the 50s there were 150 jumpers in Missoula and if there were no fires, most of the jumpers were sent out to ranger districts on projects. The projects consisted of such good deals as trail work, cruising timber, hanging phone line, cutting helicopter landing spots, or anything else the ranger wanted done. The

“good deal” was that the ranger district did not have to pay the salary of the jumpers – fire control did that – but the district did furnish the jumpers with room and board.

When there was a fire bust, all the jumpers were recalled to Missoula, and if the fire bust fizzled, there were a lot of jumpers at the fire depot without anything to do.

When this happened, the “overhead” had to come up with some creative ideas to keep us earning our pay.

Some of the jobs were essential to keep the base in operation: such as checking parachutes and other gear returned from fires, and packing fire packs, but many of the jobs were put in the category respectfully called “Mickey Mousing.” These consisted of jobs that were designed to keep us busy and make the government feel we had earned our pay, even though we had done things of little importance.

From these jobs we would take time off each morning and afternoon for physical training, called volleyball.

Back to the anchor. It could provide an opportunity to keep some jumpers occupied as they waited for a fire call. With this in mind, four of us were sent to dig a hole at least eight feet by eight feet by more than two feet deep to bury the A-frame anchor.

Now four people in the same hole, digging at the same time, could be unsafe; so to make sure that no one was hurt, it was decided (by us, not the overhead) that for safety’s sake, each of us would work for 15 minutes and take 45 minutes off. And so on the first day the hole was started.

The next morning, the “overhead” was assured that the work on the hole was progressing, and armed with our shovels (and a radio and some reading material), we proceeded to our work site and continued our work. To ensure that more work was done, we decided that we would work two hours on and six hours off – with time out for physical training, called volleyball.

So we listened to the radio, read, napped, played volleyball and worked on the hole. The next day, and the next, progressed in like fashion. The hole got deeper, and nobody came to see how we were doing.

The fire depot is located on the bed of old Lake Missoula, and as the hole got deeper, we dug through different layers of sediment, and the hole became very interesting. We liked it and we dug faster and deeper. Because the hole was in the bottom of the old lakebed, and there is much clay and gravel in the soil, there seemed to be no chance of a cave-in.

We needed steps to get in and out of the hole, and we needed buckets and rope to lift the dirt out of the hole. There wasn’t time to read or rest. The hole was

magnificent and we were very proud of it. We continued to work and hit water at 16 feet, as I remember it.

This was great, but no overhead came to see the magnificent hole. We were disappointed. Now we had ideas for this hole other than a burial site for a concrete anchor – maybe we’d get it filled with water and use it for swimming.

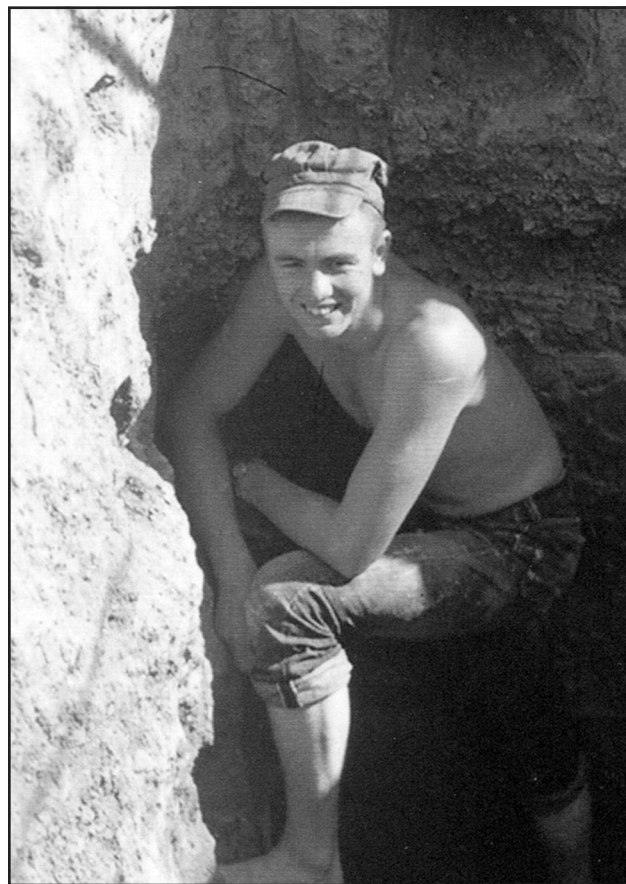
But all good things must come to an end. We got a fire call.

When we returned from the fire, we volunteered to return to our project. The offer was refused with some language, which I will not repeat. It seemed that after we left, another crew was sent out to work on the hole, but they had no imagination and could not see the endless possibilities of working on this hole out of sight and mind of the overhead.

What were they thinking? They went back to the overhead and asked the foolish question: “How deep do you want that hole, anyway?”

Thus ended one of the best “Mickey Mouse” projects ever undertaken.

By the way ... how the eight-by-eight-by-two concrete anchor was moved into the hole must be a different story, but because we were on a fire, we missed the “hole” thing. 🦉



The Magnificent Hole (Courtesy B. Breyfogle)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

The First Doctor Trained By Smokejumpers For Rescue Work

by Jack Demmons (Missoula '50)

THE DAILY MISSOULIAN paper on Sept. 19, 1941, had an article that read: "The saga of a fearless girl, an intrepid doctor, dauntless airmen and hardy rescue workers (including smokejumpers), ended at the Missoula airport here Thursday afternoon when Barbara Streit, pretty 20-year-old Missoula co-ed, was lifted carefully from an airplane and placed in a waiting ambulance.

"Thus ended a 95-mile, 24-hour-long trip on an improvised stretcher and through the air for Miss Streit, shot through both knees in mid-afternoon Wednesday while on a hunting trip in a remote forest wilderness deep in the heart of the South Fork primitive area, about 75 miles by airplane northeast of Missoula.

"Bob Johnson had flown Dr. Martin and nurse Cathryn Ward to the Big Prairie strip, and from there they started up the trail with three Forest Service personnel from the ranger station. They met the members of the hunting party from the Tamaracks Lodge at Seeley Lake, of which Barbara Streit was a member, six hours later, 18 miles up the trail, and at 3:30 a.m. the reinforced party arrived at the Hahn F.S. Guard Station, about 10 miles above Big Prairie.

"Dr. Martin said her condition was critical until she was given a blood transfusion at the lonely Forest Service cabin. She was believed to be near death from shock before the transfusion was administered. 'She snapped out of the shock immediately afterwards,' Dr. Martin said.

"New of the accident had been telephoned from Big Prairie late Wednesday afternoon. It was then that Johnson flew Dr. Martin and nurse Cathryn Ward to Big Prairie, where they started the hike towards Hahn Creek.

"Dick Johnson then flew smokejumpers Karl Nussbacher (MSO-41), Roy Mattson (MSO-41), Bill



Musgrove (MSO-41) and Wag Dodge (MSO-41), along with Miss Streit's father, Norman C. Streit, to Big Prairie in another Travel Air 6000.

"This group had been delayed because a 60-mile round trip had been necessary to secure parachutes and jump suits at the Forest Service headquarters at Nine Mile, when it was thought the men would jump, but that did not materialize.

"At 7:30 a.m. these men, along with several Forest Service members, met the party bringing Miss Streit to Big Prairie three miles above the ranger station. They had a mule-drawn, rubber-tired cart to which she was transferred.

"Pilot Bob Johnson said that the rescue could have been effected much more quickly if it had been known from the first that the girl was far up the trail, instead of at the ranger station, as had been reported.

"If this had been known, Dr. Martin, a trained parachutist, and several smokejumpers could have been dropped, possibly at the Hahn Creek Guard Station, and that would have saved many hours, Johnson said.

"After Miss Streit's arrival at the ranger station, the two Travel Air aircraft and passengers quickly took off for the 75-mile return flight to Missoula.

"Others in the hunting party when the accident occurred included Bud and Pel Turner of the Tamaracks Lodge [author's note: Bud later became a Marine Corps fighter pilot flying in the South Pacific during World War II] and several guests from the lodge. The one who wounded Miss Streit was not from that party."

"It hurts my pride," Barbara Streit later said, with a grin, "to have somebody mistake me for an elk."

She survived and today lives in the Missoula area. I have talked to her several times about the accident. ♣

Continued from 12

The Jump List

model; better training in all aspects of the job; better equipment, such as fire-resistant items, hard hats, communications from jumper to aircraft and probably to the ranger station (we, of course, had no communication other than colored panels); and no hires without considerable fire experience." ♣

Firearms Of The Early Forest Service

by Karl Brauneis (Missoula '77)

"A ranger of any grade must be thoroughly sound and able-bodied, capable of enduring hardships and performing severe labor under trying conditions. He must be able to take care of himself and his horses in regions remote from settlement and supplies."

– U.S. Forest Service Use Book, 1908

When President Theodore Roosevelt and his Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot reorganized and consolidated forestry in 1905 under the United States Forest Service, their first aim was to develop a qualified and competent corps of forest rangers.

Political appointments had been the standard practice of previous administrations, resulting in a less-than-desirable work force. That all changed with Roosevelt and Pinchot and their selection process designed around a civil service testing system to get the best new rangers.

The rangers test

The new rangers test consisted of a classroom written test and a field practical. Part of the field test consisted of marksmanship with both rifle and pistol. The ranger candidate had to supply his own horses, tack and firearms for work.

Forest Ranger Henry L. Benham was later interviewed and quoted: "Then they tested to see what you knew about handling a gun, so you didn't go out and shoot somebody with it the first day. And you had to put a pack on a horse, a bunch of cooking utensils, bedding, bedrolls, and a tarp to cover it with – and a rope to tie it on with. I'd learned all that before I went into the Forest Service. I didn't have much trouble."

In the early days no two rangers looked alike. Considerable variety was the norm with a common western "cowboy" thread and bronze Forest Service badge that bound the rangers together. Most of the rangers were Western men skilled in woodsmanship and livestock.

Even today, field officers follow the old cowboy ideal that "you might not have a lot, but your outfit darned sure better look good."

Ranger Fred Herrig

Many men were known simply by their outfit and the firearms they carried. Fred Herrig punched cows for Teddy Roosevelt on his ranch in North Dakota. He was also one of the first men to whom Roosevelt turned when he formed the Rough Riders (1st Volunteer Cav-

alry) and was there with his "cow boss" as they stormed up San Juan Hill.

Fred was later appointed a forest ranger by Roosevelt, himself, and was known for his "outfit." W.J. Yenne, in his book "Switchback," gave this account: "Fred's spurs were silver, and his horse wore a silver-studded bridle and martingale. He carried a 45/70 rifle in his saddle scabbard and wore a .38 revolver, a gift from his friend, President Roosevelt."

Ranger Bill Bell

One ranger, made famous in the story by Norman Maclean in "USFS 1919: The Ranger, the Cook, and a Hole in the Sky," was Bill Bell of the old Elk Summit Ranger District on the Selway National Forest in the Bitterroot Mountains. Later, Sam Elliott played Bell in the Echo Bridge home-entertainment movie of 2006. But it was forester Bud Moore who brought more of ranger Bell to light in his book "The Lochsa Story – Land Ethics in the Bitterroot Mountains."

Like most rangers, Bell carried a single-action Army Colt .45 with a seven-inch barrel. When some tough miners from Butte, Mont., had enough of the Bald Mountain Fire, they gathered around Bell, who was mounted on his black horse.

The leader said: "We're taking your pack train" to ride out of here. Bill hauled his long-barreled, single-action .45 pistol from the scabbard on his belt, thumbed back the hammer and responded, "Ye might take my pack train. But five or six of you ain't goin' out." Thus ended the miners' idea of a free ride out of the wilderness.

Ranger Walt Perry

Walt Perry's life as a forest ranger is well-documented in "Walt Perry – An Early-Day Ranger in New Mexico and Oregon" by Les Joslin. Like Bell, Ranger Perry packed a single-action Army Colt .45 with the long barrel. In the backcountry of the Carson Forest, Walt was forced to shoot a horse he found that was hobble-burned, cut bloody and raw with his hoof turned back.

As the ranger later wrote: "Then something happened which I have never been able to explain. Stepping up to within eight or ten paces of the horse, he standing still looking straight at me, I drew a bead just above his eyes where the bullet would range into his brain and fired. He never even wiggled an ear! I blinked a couple of times, then drew the same bead again and at the crack

of the gun he fell stone dead, never so much as to move a foot, with a bullet exactly where I had aimed. But what became of that first bullet – if any? Certainly I could not miss at that short distance. If someone had drawn the lead from my first cartridge – I am still looking for the son-of-a-gun! I expect that gun to throw lead, and throw it straight, any time and every time I pulled the trigger. Quien sabe?”

Ranger Clyde Fickes

Some rangers opted for innovations in firearms. Clyde Fickes was famous in the Forest Service for his work in developing a pre-fabricated lookout station (Fickes 14-foot-by-14-foot L-29 design) that could be packed in by mule and horse to be assembled on site. Ranger Fickes was also instrumental in developing and managing the Remount Depot at Nine Mile west of Missoula, Mont. Through his work, the Forest Service would now have a dependable supply of mules and horses for backcountry use and resupply.

But within the Forest Service, Clyde was known for his choice of a personal sidearm – the German Luger semi-automatic. The Luger cost Clyde \$25 in 1908. Other rangers also opted for the lighter-weight .38-caliber revolvers, but soon went back to the big-frame 45s after encounters with bears and other big or dangerous game. Not until the development of the 357 magnum would rangers have a powerful alternative to the old single-action Army Colts.

Lookout-Smokechaser Bill Reimer

Bill Yenne tells the story of his friend Bill Reimer and his encounter with a grizzly in 1930. Bill was the lookout on Nasukoin Mountain on the Blackfeet National Forest during the summer of 1930. About dusk Bill discovered a fire and left the lookout with his smokechaser pack to fight it.

When he reached the valley floor, he soon became aware of an animal approaching him in the darkness. He shed his pack and beat a hasty retreat, but tripped in the darkness. A large grizzly was instantly on him. The bear seized one of his feet and lifted him into the air to where his shoulders barley touched the ground, dislocating his hip.

As this was taking place, Bill unfastened his holster strap and got out his .38-caliber revolver. He fired three shots low into the bear's body, afraid to shoot higher at the risk of hitting his foot. With each bullet the bear became more fierce and shook all the harder. Finally in desperation, he decided to try for a more vital spot, hitting his foot or not.

Accordingly he aimed toward the top part of the bear and fired again. This produced the desired results as the bear let go of his foot and ambled off into the darkness.

Bill was able to make it back to his lookout station and call for help before passing out. It was some weeks before he was able to walk normally, and it bothered him for years. Bill would often wake up at night screaming as he relived the horrible event.

Modern day

As a Missoula smokejumper in 1977 detailed to Alaska, I soon became acquainted with the firearm rules for jumpers up north. The lightest-accepted revolver was the .357 Magnum. Still, most jumpers carried the .44 Magnum or the new .41 Magnum. If you were faced with a bear problem and had time to react, a 375 H and H Magnum rifle was dropped to you by parachute. Today, the .12-gauge shotgun with rifled slugs is the preferred firearm of protection against bears.

We live in west-central Wyoming at the base of the Wind River Mountains. The entire ecosystem north of us may have more grizzly bears now than at the turn of the previous century. Throw in black bears, wolves and mountain lions and soon any discussion will turn to an individual's preference of firearm for self-defense.

Recently a grizzly was killed in self-defense with the standard GI-issue 1911 .45. Still, most opt for the revolver due to its failsafe design. However, no matter how large the handgun, it will always pale in comparison to the old Winchester or Marlin saddle rifles in 30-30.

The rifle

Rifles were carried as the preferred tool by rangers for everyday work and predator control at the time. Because the forest ranger was often the only law enforcement in the area, he was often deputized by the local sheriff or game warden.

Forest rangers have always had the authority to enforce state game laws on National Forest lands (Organic Act of 1897) and work in cooperation with the state game and fish departments.

The ranger's long gun of choice was the saddle rifle. Most often the Winchester or Marlin, chambered in the 30-30 or like cartridge, that could reach out and also be carried easily on a horse.

I had an old fire warden friend, Cap Lee, once tell me, “Never leave home ... never go anywhere without your 30-30.”

I find it humorous to read articles about the 30-30 that claim it is an Eastern deer rifle and seldom used out West. I suppose they have never read about Tom Horn's 30-30 or looked at the old cowboy pictures from the West. The advent of the smokeless powder 30-30 in a



Forest Assistant W. H. B. Kent. Taken on Huachuca National Forest—Now called Coronado National Forest, Arizona 1905. (Courtesy USFS)

light and easy-to-handle 94 Winchester truly gave the cowboy or ranger a solid, reliable working man's tool.

It is important to note there are no employees within the U.S. Forest Service. By the Organic Act of 1897, all within the agency are federal officers and can wear the "Bronze Pine Tree Badge."

In my career we considered the most basic classes to perform the job as that of law-enforcement training and fire-guard school. Without these two basic skills, the local forest officer is ill-equipped to perform the most basic protection functions of the agency.

Smokechaser Warren Yahr

Warren Yahr writes the classic tale of a bear encounter in his book "Smokechaser." The forest packer had walked into a lookout station with resupply only to be confronted by two black bears that had torn the place apart. The packer carried a .22 Colt Woodsman – more than a bit light for bear – and emptied the gun as the bears rushed towards him. Finally the bears broke through a window to make their escape.

It was believed that one of the bears died but the larger bear was alive and would soon return. The packer returned to the ranger station and reported the incident. The ranger then gave the young Yahr his Winchester 30-30 with one cartridge, but assured him that a box of 30-30s was at the Lookout. So the next morning Yahr headed the four miles to the lookout and was able to dispatch the bear the following morning.

Rangers R.D. Jones and Clinton Hodges

Unfortunately some of the work the rangers performed turned deadly. Rangers Jones and Hodges were deputized by

the sheriff to assist in trailing a cattle rustler. After tracking down the rustler, they approached him, along with the owner of one of the big ranch outfits. The rangers were both armed with their 30-30s.

Within feet and seconds, the rustler pulled his revolver ... the gun was out of the holster when the rangers fired. Jones and Hodges were later exonerated after a hearing.

The 1895 Winchester gave the ranger a more powerful rifle that could still be carried easily on a horse. Hank Payson, a local Lander, Wyo., district ranger, carried an

1895 Winchester in the .405 caliber. His rifle is on display at the Fremont County Pioneer Museum in Lander.

To affirm Payson, many 1895 Winchesters can be seen in old photographs throughout the area – a testimony to the need for more stopping power when confronting the grizzly bear.

Other rifles often used with “stopping power” were the older 1876 Winchester and the 1886 Winchester in the preferred 45/70 cartridge. The Savage lever action rifle was used by local Lander Forest Ranger Charlie Bayer of the Washakie National Forest in the 1910s. Today some of the agencies’ law-enforcement officers carry the 45/70 in a lever-action Marlin saddle rifle.

Conclusion

Early forest rangers used the firearms that they were most comfortable with in their prior work as woodsmen, stockmen and cowboys. First and foremost the firearm had to be reliable with sufficient stopping power and ease of handle. Although a variety of arms were used, the standard of judgment was the Colt Single-Action Army .45 and the Winchester Model 1894 or Marlin 1893 in .30 WCF (30-30), 38/55 or .32 Winchester Special.

Opinion

Today, each forest supervisor authorizes the firearm use for forest officers on that forest. For a rugged back-country wilderness forest like the Shoshone in Wyoming – where pack stock, grizzly, black bear, mountain lion and wolves are the norm – a firearm presence should be of common practice.

Most forest officers are avid hunters and many participate in shooting sports. Their familiarity with and actual use of firearms is often superior to that of the average citizen or city police officer.

When mounted on horseback, a ranger should be armed with a handgun for fast use in defense or to put down injured stock. In other instances, such as all-terrain vehicle and pickup truck travel, a rifle can be stored for use in a scabbard, rack or case. The rifle is an accepted norm of Western Americana and does not invoke the image of an armed police force. To the contrary, a rifle presents the quintessential image of a western-working culture and the traditions of the U.S. forest ranger.

“The well equipped ranger would hardly consider riding out over his district without his rifle and six-shooter. The guns were as necessary a part of his equipment as his tools for firefighting.”

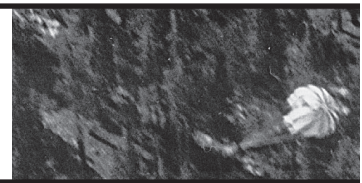
– Tucker / Fitzpatrick, “Men Who Matched the Mountains”

The author wishes to thank Sarah Stiles of the U.S. Forest Service’s Washington office and Jack States of Lander, Wyo., for their assistance in securing the historical photographs used in this article. 🌲

Karl Brauneis served in his Forest Service career as a smoke-chaser, hotshot, smokejumper, forester, range conservationist and fire management officer. Throughout his career he worked in law enforcement as a collateral duty like all the early rangers.



THE JUMP LIST



The Jump List is intended to bring you up-to-date on your fellow NSA members. Send your information to Chuck Sheley; see his contact information on page 3 of this magazine.

Joseph Saltsman (Missoula '46)

Now living in: Chevy Chase, Md.

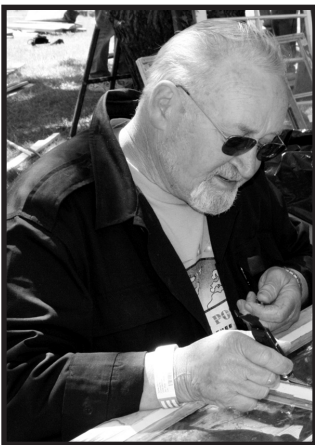
Jumped: MSO 46

Since jumping: Joined smokejumpers in Missoula following a year in college and two in U.S. Army, serving as infantry private in Europe; began Forestry school at University of Montana, January 1946, graduating in 1948; served as assistant ranger in Beaverhead, Flathead and Cabinet National Forests; went to Alaska as logging camp boss on Dahl Island, 60 miles west of Ketchikan; then worked for the CIA 42 years,

almost all of it in Africa, Middle East and Europe; now retired.

Joe says: “In forestry school, I heard about smoke-jumping and it sounded great. I contacted **Fred Brauer** (MSO-41) and was hired after a very brief interview for Missoula in the summer of 1946 rookie class. I had virtually no qualifications; I had never seen a mountain except for a few weeks at Camp Carson, Colo., and I’d never seen a wildfire. My only qualifications were a general familiarity with farm tools and horses. I was the right age (21), healthy, strong and a forestry school student. I don’t know much today about the jumpers, but they have better chutes than the Derry 1946

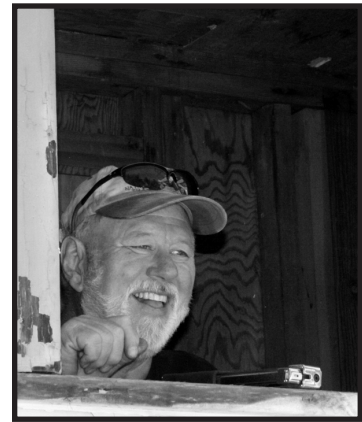
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Jim Fritz (CJ-59)



Office Restoration

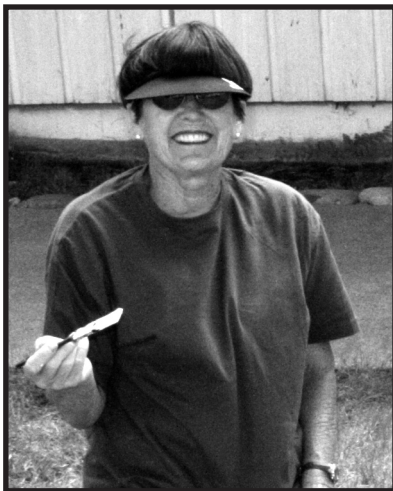


Roddy Baumann (CJ-70)

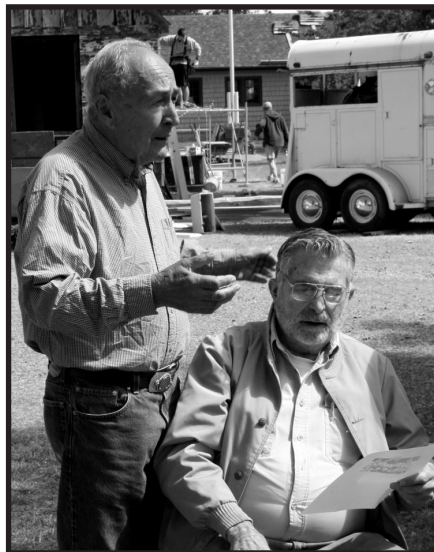


Gobi Restoration Project

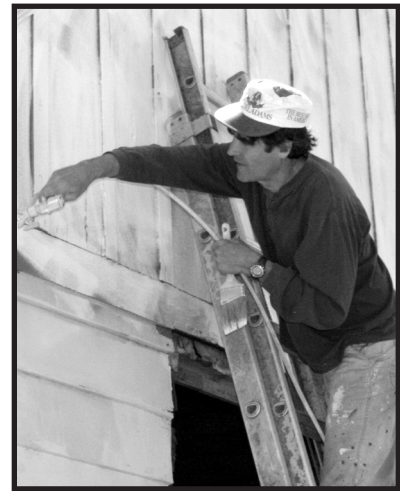
Photo's Courtesy Roger Brandt



K G Sheley



Bob Snyder (CJ-48) & Bob Nolan (CJ-47)



Mike Hardy (MYC-75)



Gary Buck (CJ-66) & Wolf Emonds



Roofing Crew

Layout Design, by Johnny Kirkley (CJ-64)

THE VIEW FROM OUTSIDE THE FENCE



by **Chris Sorensen**
(Associate)

IN MAY, THE Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, held a hearing about the U.S. Forest Service Budget. Sitting at the witness table was the chief of the Forest Service, Tom Tidwell.

Two topics related to wildfire management were discussed during the hearing: a major budget cut and the future of the heavy air-tanker fleet.

Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) grilled Tidwell on budget cuts in the fuel-reduction program and the proposed cutting of more than 1,800 positions in the Forest Service – presumably replacing many of these positions with contractors.

Here is an excerpt from the exchange:

Tester: You touched on something that drives me crazy in government, and that we reduce the workforce on one hand and we replace it with contract labor on the other hand. The cost is more than the workforce that

existed before. That's not going to happen here?

Tidwell: No. No, I—I believe we'll probably be doing less contract work in 2012 to be able to, you know, maintain our existing workforce.

It's great to see a politician who understands the true cost of hiring contractors. The Forest Service couldn't function without using contractors and consultants, but using contractors to replace full-time employees doesn't make good fiscal sense or policy.

By the time this issue reaches you, yet another air-tanker study will be out. The latest study is by the Rand Corporation, which was due in January. I am at a loss to answer why it was necessary to hire yet another consultant to pump out yet another study on air tankers for an untold amount of money.

You will recall the 2002 "Blue Ribbon Panel," chaired by the former NTSB Chairman Jim Hall, who has since passed away. He was held in high regard by the aviation community and by those who worked for him, including a friend of mine who is a 737 captain.

We can only speculate if this study by the Rand Corp. will gather dust on obscure library shelves like the Blue Ribbon Panel report, or if management will actually implement the recommendations forthcoming from the Rand Corp.

You can find the Blue Ribbon Panel report here: www.wildfire-lessons.net/documents/BRP_final12052002.pdf.

According to the 2009 "Forest Service's Replacement Plan for Firefighting Aerial Resources," after 2012 "air tankers currently approved for use by the federal agencies will be either too expensive to maintain or no longer airworthy."

One of my friends in the aviation business says the only real solution is to build a dedicated standalone air-tanker platform designed and built for the task at hand.

When the Las Conchas fire broke out in late June and the evacuation of Los Alamos was ordered, I tried to find information on the Los Alamos County website. The site had crashed and was unavailable during the early stages of the fire and evacuation.

This brings up a concern of mine: an overuse of cellular telephone and a dangerous dependence on these – and the Internet – during major emergencies.

After the Interstate 35W bridge collapse in Minneapolis a few years ago, cellular service was lost in the first 10 minutes. During a sniper incident in Glasgow, Mont., cell service was lost in about the same amount of time.

In my jurisdiction there is a latent refusal by responders to use ICS forms for any purpose, especially during exercises. There is a dominant attitude that "we can fix anything in two hours."

I assembled two portable file boxes last winter – including multiple copies of all of the Federal ICS forms – and gave one box to the local CERT team and the other to the local Amateur

Radio Emergency Service.

Other forms in the boxes include the Coast Guard oil spill ICS forms. There is a refinery in our jurisdiction, and CERT and ARES may provide support of

the refinery during a spill or other emergency. Looking back, the first generation “ICS Box” seems a little crude, but I am working on improvements for the next generation.

It seems that a lot of people in emergency management think they’re going to have unlimited cellular and Internet service and power is never going to be lost during a disaster. 🐼

There I Was

by Rich Halligan (McCall ’76)

July 1979. We had jumped a sweet little six-manner up north of Fairbanks on Beaver Creek. **Lynn Flock** (MYC-68) and I shared your basic Alaska jumper hootch consisting of a cargo strap tied between two black spruce trees with a cargo chute hung from the strap to make a skeeter-proof shelter and a piece of visqueen draped over the top to keep everything dry.

I was awakened at about 5:30 a.m. by a “snuffling” sound outside our hootch. Suddenly, I saw the wall of the hootch above Lynn’s feet pushed inward a few inches, and a set of huge claws (at the time I estimated them at 3-4 feet in length, though, in retrospect, I suspect they may have been somewhat shorter than that) poke through the nylon. The claws raked down, tearing a large hole.

I prodded Lynn awake and told him, with considerably more aplomb than I was actually experiencing, that we had a bear problem and pointed toward the foot of the hootch. Lynn rolled over onto his back, just in time to see the bear double the size of the opening by raking the fabric a second time. The bear stuck his head in through the hole.

I was extremely scared. A debate raged in my mind as to whether I should shout and make a racket to scare the bear off or remain silent and motionless and hope that he would ignore me. As it turned out, I remained motionless, but I don’t know if it was a conscious decision or if I was just too scared to move.

Lynn apparently came to the same conclusion as I did because he remained motionless, also. During this time I had occasion to notice the size of the bear’s teeth, as well as his claws. Having some medical training as an EMT, I contemplated the pathophysiology of death by mauling. Such thoughts added greatly to my anxiety.

The bear stepped in through the hole and stood on Lynn’s sleeping bag with his front legs. He then began pawing at the sleeping bag, which, I might point out, still contained Lynn. After trying three or four times to hook it with his paw, the bear reached down, grabbed

the sleeping bag with his teeth, and dragged it out of the hootch.

I briefly had a vision of Lynn remaining in the sleeping bag and taking his leave with it. Instead, he lifted himself onto his elbows, and the sleeping bag slipped out from beneath him.

I was able to see the bear through the hole and observed him chewing on the sleeping bag for a couple of minutes. He eventually lost interest and ambled off in the general direction of the rest of camp. Lynn and I yelled, “bear in camp” a couple of times to warn the others.

I lay there in the hootch considering whether to get up and get dressed or remain in the false security of my sleeping bag. Lynn, quite sensibly, elected to get dressed, as the “remain in the sleeping bag” option no longer existed for him.

As it turned out, the bear walked over to check out the next-closest hootch, which was occupied by **Brian Fitzsimmons** (MSO-70). We could hear the visqueen crinkle and tear as the bear pawed at Fitzsimmons’ hootch.

Brian hollered, in a rather annoyed voice: “Knock it off!” and “Hey, you guys. Quit it.” He had heard our warning about a bear in camp but thought we were joking (like I’m going to get up at 0530 to B.S. someone).

A moment later, Fitz let out the most bloodcurdling scream I’ve ever heard in my life: “GET HIM OFF OF MEEEE!” The scream abruptly stopped, was followed by a brief period of silence, and then the sound of the bear padding through the tundra back toward our hootch.

Whatever the hell else may have been happening in the world at that time, I knew only the following: A bear had torn up my hootch, went to the neighbor’s hootch, killed the occupant, and was headed back toward my hootch with, I assumed, homicidal intent. I didn’t know whether to crap or go blind; I may have done a little of both.

I remember looking up at Lynn, and the expression on his face did nothing to reassure me; I doubt that he

saw much confidence in mine. As I had mentioned earlier, Lynn had enough sense to get dressed and was now standing, hunched over and tying his boots.

With sounds of the bear's footfalls getting closer each second, my fear was escalating exponentially. I finally made up my mind to get dressed and die with my boots on (as well as my clothes). I reached for my jeans.

The bear was now immediately outside the hootch, and I could hear him breathing. I was on the verge of panic. I then heard two sounds almost simultaneously – the first was a loud slapping noise on the visqueen, and the second was a short, sharp, gut-wrenching scream.

That pretty much did it for me. Without looking back to confirm my good friend's apparent decapitation, I shot out from my sleeping bag, under the edge of the hootch, took two rapid strides, and ran full speed into one of the spruce trees to which the hootch was tied. The impact with the tree interrupted what no doubt was the fastest, most fluid and complex movements I have ever made.

I then leapt back to my feet, adroitly dodged the tree and ran into camp. I grabbed a fusee in one hand and a Pulaski in the other. I lit the fusee and began dancing around dripping molten sulfur onto my bare feet and blood from my fractured nose onto my T-shirt. Skeeters began feasting on my scantily clothed body.

The "lull" in the action gave me an opportunity to reflect on my abrupt abandonment of Lynn while he was being killed by the bear. I rationalized that "at least it was quick" and he didn't suffer. I figured that if our positions had been reversed, he too, would have bravely and quickly departed the scene to seek additional assistance.

I saw the bear again a few moments later. He was moseying through camp, quite unconcerned with the carnage he had wrought and the din now rising from the survivors. Someone, who had it together better than I, finally threw a lit fusee at the bear. It hit him in the ribs and bounced to the ground.

The bear stopped, whirled around and took a big sniff of the burning fusee laying next to him. He let out a bawl and took off running. Four minutes later we saw him crossing a ridge about a mile away, still running at full speed.

When the dust settled, the smoke cleared, and I had put some pants on, I was able to sort out the death and destruction:

Fitz survived his encounter with the bear, unscathed. He had been asleep, face up, when he was awakened by Lynn and me hollering. The bear pawed at his hootch a couple of times, then apparently reared up, placed its front paws on the top of the hootch, and began bouncing up and down on the cargo strap.

The weight of the bear was causing the trees, to which

the cargo strap was tied, to bend toward each other. Fitz finally realized it was a real bear when he saw a couple of inches of claws sticking through the nylon. He claimed at one point that the bear's claws were within an "inch or two" of his face.

Lynn also survived his encounter alive, much to my relief. His head and shoulders had been hitting the top of the hootch while he was tying his shoes. The bear apparently noticed this and reached out and slapped at the movements. Lynn was struck lightly on the shoulder by the bear and sustained no injury. He exited the hootch at a high velocity through the hole that the bear had made on his first visit.

I, however, ended up with a fractured nose, multiple small, second-degree burns on the top of my feet, and a whole lot of s— flicked my way, compliments of **Jim Anderson** (MYC-74), who had observed the festivities from his hootch.

Lynn claims that the scream heard when he was slapped by the bear came from me. I'm here to testify that that is a blatant falsehood. You must bear in mind (no pun intended) that Mr. Flock is now a pilot, and we all know what liars pilots are. You know the routine – a 50-acre Meadow with a single snag in the middle, your firepack and two saw packs are hung up in the top of it, and the pilot swears he "wasn't aiming for the snag."

I will, however, accede that I may have joined in a two-part harmony immediately after Lynn began the original. 🦋

McDaniel Looking For Recruits For West Virginia Project

This summer will again see a major trail project on the Monongahela N.F., WV. Following a very successful project on the Allegheny Trail at Black Water Falls, Davis, WV, plans are being made to take on a four and one-half-mile Loop Trail in the Monongahela NF Wilderness near White Sulphur Springs, WV. In addition, the trail team will replace flooring in the U.S. Forest Service office at the Blue Bend Recreational Area. No specific date has been established, but June 2012 is the most likely. There is a need for a cook for 20-30 workers and a skilled carpenter to oversee the flooring project.

Interested Jumpers and Associates should contact John McDaniel at: jumpercj57@hotmail.com or by mail at P.O. Box 105, Falun, KS 67442 for specifics on the project.

Blue Bend is a beautiful camping area and has a great swimming hole near by. 🦋

Atkins' Courage Likely Saved Lives Of Squad Members

by Carl Gidlund (Missoula '58)

Staff Sgt. Travis Atkins, son of Elaine and Jack Atkins (MSO-68) of Bozeman, Mont., was killed June 1, 2007, by a suicide bomber who detonated an explosive near a mosque in al-Yusufiyah, Iraq. He was 31.

A member of the 10th Mountain Division, Atkins was on his second tour of duty in Iraq. Because of his leadership skills, he led a squad of 15 soldiers.

Atkins and several other U.S. soldiers were on patrol when they observed four suspicious Iraqis. The Iraqis tried to run away, but Atkins caught one and took him to the ground. The man detonated a suicide bomb attached to his vest, killing himself and Atkins.

A second Iraqi man then began to run at the other soldiers. He also detonated a suicide bomb, but killed only himself. The other two men fled.

Atkins died the way he lived: aggressive, tenacious and eager to get his job done.

When his father heard the details, he wasn't surprised. "I said to myself, 'That's Travis. He's not going to let that son of a bitch get away.'"

"He loved the Army. He did an excellent job," said his mother. "He was well thought of by his subordinates and his superior officers."

Atkins attended Bozeman High School and Kemper Military School in Missouri, eventually earning his GED. After high school he worked as a painter, poured concrete and worked in a snowmobile shop.

He enlisted in November 2000 and, according to his mother, "When he joined the Army, that's when he found his niche."

Atkins was initially sent to Iraq for 10 months beginning in March 2003, the start of the war. Following his first tour there, he left the Army, attended the University of Montana, and worked in the building trades. He re-enlisted in the Army in December 2005 and was sent back to Iraq in the summer of 2006.

Atkins had already survived two roadside bombs, so he knew the risks of being in Iraq, said his father, a Vietnam veteran.

Atkins joined the Army because he wanted to serve his country, according to Nancy Sander, an Army Reserve nurse who had known him since he was in the fifth grade.

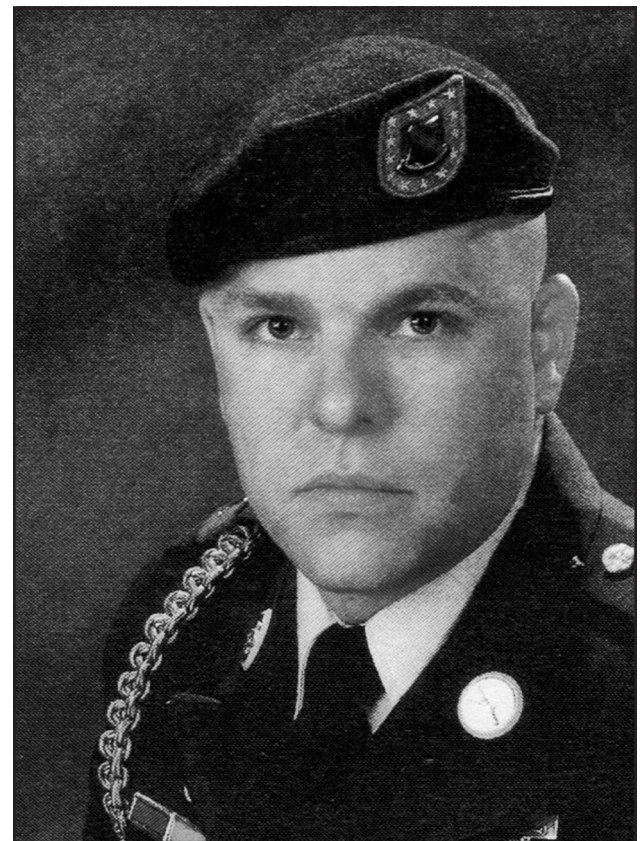
"He also enjoyed the discipline and camaraderie the Army offered," she said, "and he was a good, hard-working guy. He was totally courageous. He probably saved those other guys from being killed."

Atkins wasn't very big – perhaps 5-foot-7 and about 150 pounds. He didn't tower over a crowd, but people still looked up to him, according to Marcus Graf, who served with Atkins in Iraq.

"I looked up to him and respected him more than anyone I ever met," Graf said.

Travis has received the Distinguished Service Cross. Travis's other awards and decorations include a Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Combat Infantryman's Badge and Air Assault Badge.

In addition to his parents, who live in Bozeman, and a sister who lives in Washington state, Atkins left an 11-year-old son, Trevor, who lives in Minnesota. 🇺🇸



Travis Atkins (Courtesy Jack Atkins)



MSG Ben Mus
Photo's Courtesy Ben



Inez Jr. (Brother)



Rudy (Brother)



Armando (Brother)



Leroy (Nephew)



James (Nephew)



Efrain (Nephew)



Angie (Daughter)



*Ben Musque
U. S Arm*



Justin (Great Nephew)



Adrian Lee (Nephew)



Roman (Nephew)



Ruben

In The Service of the United S
Commemorating Veterans

Layout Design: John

quez & Family
Musquez (MSO-56)



z (MSO-56)
y (Ret.)



(Son)



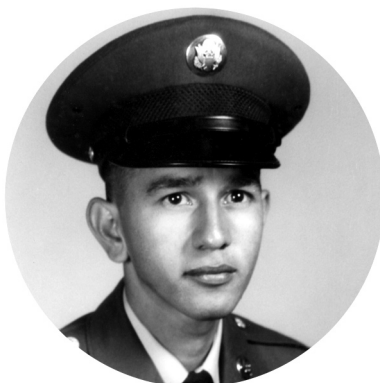
Eddy (Brother)



Lydia (Daughter)



Anthony (Nephew)



Angel Sr. (Brother)



Dio (Brother)



Angel Jr. (Nephew)



Rachael (Niece)



Johnny (Brother)



Jimmy (Nephew)



Kenneth (Grandson)

States of America Since WWII
s Day November 11, 2011

any Kirkley (CJ-64)

MacKinnon, West Point Graduate, Held In High Esteem By Comrades, Iraqis

by Carl Gidlund (Missoula '58)

Capt. Michael MacKinnon, son of John MacKinnon (MSO-57) of Helena, Mont., was killed near Baghdad on Oct. 27, 2005, when an improvised explosive device destroyed his Humvee. He was 30 and left a wife, a son and a daughter.

Michael was 3 months old when his mother died, so he was raised by his father, who never remarried, and his three sisters. A straight-A student, he was class valedictorian at Helena's Capital High School and was in the top 20 percent of his West Point class when he graduated from the academy in 1997.

He swam, skied and fished but preferred football, baseball and rugby. "He liked teams," his father said.

Michael chose to serve in the infantry, graduated from Ranger and Airborne schools, and was initially assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division with which he was deployed on missions to Haiti and Egypt.

A later assignment took him to the 3rd Infantry Division. He served with that division during his two Iraq deployments.

Michael was serving as a company commander with the 3rd when problems arose within a California National Guard brigade. Several officers were reassigned or relieved, and Michael was pulled from his Regular Army division to command a California Guard company. He was serving with that unit when he was killed.

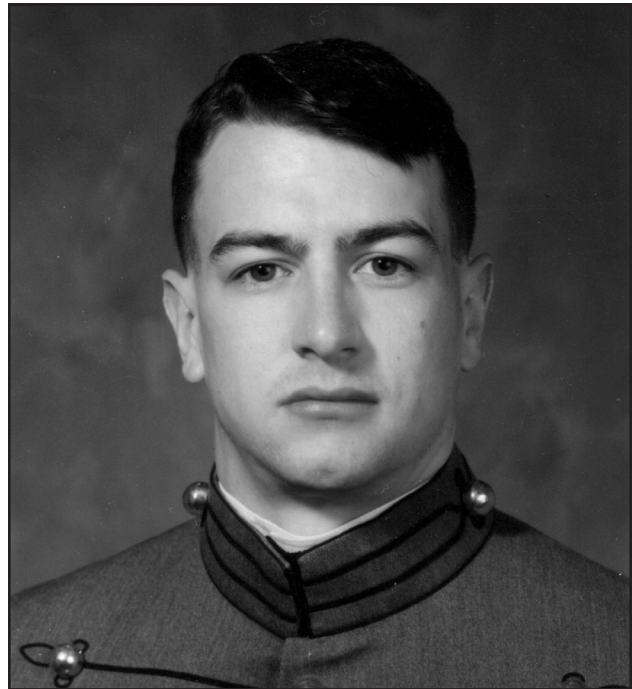
Of his only son, Army veteran John MacKinnon, said, "He loved leading men, but he wasn't a 'by the book' soldier. He cut slack, but demanded responsibility and came down hard if anybody was out of line."

One of the men he commanded, Jamie Wells, wrote in a eulogy "Capt. MacKinnon was the best damned ranger there ever was. Even the Iraqis liked him. They called him 'Captain Mike.'"

David Bout, who served as the California company's executive officer under Michael, wrote, "He was a natural-born leader whose tactical skill, diplomatic prowess and raw charisma had turned around Haifa Street, one of the worst neighborhoods in northern Iraq.

"Now on his second tour to Iraq, Mike led our company into the area around Arab Jabour, one of the toughest areas in the Sunni Triangle. With Mike in command, we knew everything was going to turn out all right.

"Mike left me with a parting gift – the realization that



Capt. Michael MacKinnon (Courtesy John MacKinnon)

leadership is about being able to see beyond yourself and your own needs."

His awards and decorations included the Bronze Star with one oak leaf cluster, Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Joint Service Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals, Ranger Tab, Senior Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, and the Expert and Combat Infantryman Badges.

Michael wrote a letter that was to be delivered to his wife Bethany and their children if he was killed. In part, he said: "I believe there is a heaven and I think I have been a good enough man to be there. I'll watch you and I'll watch the kids grow up with a tear in my eye, wishing I were there to see with my own eyes. Someday we will all be together again.

"I don't care to be remembered as a smart guy, an athletic guy, or a good soldier. I want people to say, 'That Mike really did love his family.' I am proud, I am happy; I have been filled with so much love. I will always be there in your hearts." 🕊

Glory Days

by Don Havel (Fairbanks '66)

*"Yeah, just sitting back trying to recapture
A little of the glory of— well, time slips away
And leaves you with nothing, mister, but
Boring stories of glory days."*

— Lyrics by Bruce Springsteen

I trained in Fairbanks in 1966. I guess you could say it was a good year for me. First of all, I made 21 jumps. Secondly, I put in my first year in Alaska, and they say that after one year in Alaska you are hooked; you can't stay away, the country becomes part of you and you of it. And so it happened to me.

Often on a fire jump I would stand looking over the country and tell myself that I was standing on a spot where no one had ever stood before—well, maybe a mastodon or saber-toothed tiger.

Moose, dall sheep, gold, the Yukon Valley, Eskimos, Anaktuvuk Pass, Denali, and grizzlies. The rivers: Yukon, Chandalar, Anaktuvuk, Noatak, Kobuk, Unalakleet, Iditarod, Anvik, Nulato, Koyukuk, Tanana, Chena, Goodpaster, Kuskokwim. The Brooks Range, the Wrangells, too. Yes, I can still feel all of this.

I have many memories of my five years of jumping in the Last Frontier, but 1967 is notable to me for two reasons. The Bureau of Land Management had a section of the Fairbanks International Airport reserved for our jump ships, retardant planes, and various other aircraft. The spring lineup included B-25s, B-17s,

PB4Ys, two Grumman Gooses, two DC-3s and some helicopters.

One sunny day what should come roaring out of the blue sky but one noisy little bird, practically spitting fire. It was a P-51 Mustang. It was painted pink and it was called the "Pink Lady."

The owner introduced it to our BLM bosses with the idea that it could be used to fly over a lot of country, like following a lightning storm across the Yukon valley looking for fires and then reporting those fires back to base.

They gave it a try. If I recall, I think it was found to be not too effective. And again if I recall, the pilot cart-wheeled it down the runway at McGrath. The only jumper to ever ride in it was the late Larry Cravens (FBX-64), who hopped a ride from McGrath to Fairbanks.

The grand event, though, was when another aircraft came settling onto the airstrip. It didn't evoke excitement in me like the P-51 did, but rather mouth-open awe. It was a World War II A-26B Invader attack bomber.

The dual engines thundered and the props were as big as a full moonrise across an October prairie. The tricycle gear shifted down, and the plane taxied to a spot in the BLM lineup. The clamshell canopy opened and the pilot stood up and stretched.

This aircraft, too, was brought to us to see if it



B-26 Smokejumpers Alaska 1967 (Courtesy Don Havel)



1967 BLM Jumpship today as restored by the Hill Aerospace Museum, located near Ogden, Utah. (Courtesy Alex Lloyd and Kim Cook)

could fit into our firefighting efforts. There were a lot of ideas presented, but one thing was for sure: nobody wanted to give it up. So a plan was developed to outfit it as a jump ship and, because of its speed and range, it would be loaded with jumpers and used to patrol likely lightning-strike areas.

It would stay out and not come back until the load had jumped. If we ran low on fuel, we landed at a village dirt strip, rolled out 55-gallon drums of fuel and fueled up. Sometimes, we could fuel at the Air Force base at Galena. I remember the old-timers gathering around it there to marvel. I'm sure they had their memories, too.

Our new jump ship was designated N600WB and it has a documented history. The original A-26s came off the assembly line in 1944 and were sent to the European Theater of the war. A second run was designated the A-26B, which was an improved model. It went to the Pacific war effort.

Our plane was delivered to the Army Air Corps

– predecessor to the U.S. Air Force – in May 1945. There were 2,452 A-26s produced, of which 1,355 were A-26Bs.

It was 50-feet long, had a wingspan of 70 feet, and was 18 feet, 3 inches high. The engines were Pratt & Whitney R2800-27 double-wasp radials at 2,000 horsepower each. The maximum attack speed was 355 mph with a cruise speed of 284 mph. The range was 1,400 miles without wing tanks. The rate of climb was 1,250 feet per minute. It would go from the ground to 10,000 feet in 8.1 minutes. It held a crew of three: the pilot, the navigator/bombardier/loader, and the gunner. It cost \$192,457 in 1945.

The A-26B was the only combat aircraft that was used in three wars: World War II, Korea and Vietnam. There were several configurations of armament used. One consisted of eight Browning M2 50-caliber machine guns mounted in the nose, 4,000 pounds of bombs in the bomb bay and 2,000 on each wing.

It could be rigged with as many as 18 50-caliber

machine guns. Picture that coming at you at a 355-mph strafe. It could also be outfitted with a cannon and rockets or a mix of any of the above. During the Vietnam War it had a capability added to detect the enemy at night.

Our N600WB – serial number 44-35617 – was eventually converted for the military to a RB-26C, which was a photo recon aircraft. It was retired from the military in 1958 and had several civilian owners after that. At some point it was converted by On Mark Corporation into a luxury plane.

It was owned by Mid America Air Transport in 1966 and sold to Red Dodge Aviation of Anchorage in 1969. There were other owners after that. It was impounded by U.S. Marshals in 1983 during a drug raid in California and was found to be loaded with marijuana; a federal judge ordered that it be turned over to the Air Force in 1984.

It is now at the Hill Aerospace Museum at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. There it was restored to its original military configuration, and its new designation is “The Devil’s Own Grim Reaper.”

Only a few of us trained to jump out of that plane. I don’t remember many of the names of those jumpers, but **Chuck Sheley** (CJ-59) told me he made his first fire jump in Alaska out of the A-26B. I also think the late **Gary Dunning** (FBX-66) jumped out of it.

In my log book dated June 11, 1967, I noted that I jumped Fire Y-32 out of it. We left on patrol at 1640 and jumped at 1800. **Don Gordon** (MSO-59) was the fire boss. I believe we hauled six jumpers and a spotter, plus the gear. If I recall, we jumped one-man sticks out of a small doorway, in which we sat with our feet dangling alongside the plane, and when the spotter slapped us, we merely pushed ourselves off. The plane didn’t slow up like a DC-3 or a Goose, but we were tough.

I hope you all enjoyed this story. I’ve read many references—well, I guess about 7,236 – to the Missoula fellows jumping out of that old Ford Trimotor, and I guess I have to admit I would have liked to have jumped out of it, too. But we had the A-26B Invader attack bomber. We flew it, we ate our C-rations in it, we slept in it, we soared, we dove, and we jumped out of it. Glory days.

*“Glory days – well they’ll pass you by
Glory days – in the wink of a young girl’s eye
Glory days, glory days”*

– Lyrics by Bruce Springsteen 🎸

A special thanks to Randy Wilson of the Commemorative Air Force for his guidance in seeking data for this article.

Mark Your Calendars

Redmond Smokejumper Reunion

September 21-23, 2012

More information will be sent out as the details are finalized.

Any questions, contact any of the following:

Charley Moseley 918-448-5994 charleymoseley@yahoo.com
Mark Corbet 514-280-8076 mcorbet97756@gmail.com
Erin “Kate” Springer ekspringer76@yahoo.com

NSA historian **Larry Longley** is putting together a book with your RAC jump stories for the reunion. Send or email them to Larry at:

16430 Marine Dr
Stanwood WA 98292
LDLongley@gmail.com

Wrapping Up A Season On The Wing-Tip Fire

by Carl Gidlund (Missoula '58)

My jump partner, **Milt Knuckles** (MSO-61), insists that I wore wing-tip shoes that day. I don't recall the style for sure, but I know they were low-quarters.

The story of the Wing-Tip Fire really begins a couple of days earlier, on the Nez Perce Forest's Boston Mountain Fire. That mid-morning jump on Sept. 9, 1966, was out of a Grangeville Ford, and man, was it windy. I was on one of the first sticks, and we were blown to hell and gone.

I've no idea how fast I was going when I hit the ground butt first, but when I quit revolving base over apex and shakily stood, I felt duff beneath my left foot. I backtracked a few dozen feet and found a vibram sole, lately the property of my White's boot.

Now don't ask me how I got it because I don't remember, but I somehow secured a roll of tape, probably from the first-aid kit. That was how I reunited the wayward sole with the rest of my boot. However, I knew that wouldn't endure the rest of this late season fire bust; it worked out all right for line digging, but it leaked duff so it would be a tad uncomfortable for mopup.

After observing five of us on the ground scattered and staggering about, our spotter, **Larry Fite** (MSO-60), wisely dry-ran the rest of the load. But just before dusk when the wind had calmed, **Tim Aldrich** (MSO-62) roared out of Missoula on the Doug and dropped 14 badly needed reinforcements.

After groundpounders trekked in to relieve us the next day, we hiked out to a road where a Forest Service stake truck and driver were waiting. He drove us to Grangeville where we boarded a DC-3 for our return to Missoula, where I turned in my boots for repair.

Knuckles was part of that second load to Boston Mountain. When he returned to the base, he took himself off the jump list because he was going to report in a day or two to Hamilton High School, where he taught social studies and math.

Did I mention a bust? Indeed it was. In those days Missoula's complement was 150 jumpers, but by the late afternoon of Sept. 11, Milt and I were the only two left.

He was packing his gear and I was rigging a chute

when foreman **Fred Cavill** (MSO-54) rounded us up and escorted us outside. He pointed to a spot on the side of Miller Creek Mountain just south of Missoula and said, "See that smoke?"

To tell the truth, I couldn't, but he assured us that, according to a call from the Lolo Forest's Missoula District, a snag was burning halfway up the mountain. And, he said, the district was plumb out of ground-pounders.

Milt explained that he had to be back the next day to leave for his teaching job, and I told Fred I was at the base only because I was bootless.

"It's just a little fire," he explained. "You ought to have it out tonight. Then, Milt, you can be on your way."

To me, he said, "And you're an old jumper, Gidlund." (By that time I'd made 129 Forest Service, Army and free-fall jumps). "You don't need boots." So Milt and I suited up and climbed aboard a Twin Beech.

After we gained altitude, the flight to the fire took about five minutes. My diary notes that we jumped at dusk in heavy air and that it was an easy downhill landing. I'd been concerned that, without the high heels of my White's, my low-quarter shoes would fly off on the opening shock. They didn't.

Milt and I sawed down the smoking ponderosa pine with our crosscut and spent an hour or so chunking dirt. After feeling the now-cold treetop and surrounding duff with our bare hands, we saddled up for our packout, probably just a mile or so into the Miller Creek Canyon.

I slipped some on the slick soles, but made it safely. We hit the road in the canyon's bottom, then hiked a bit more until we came to the entrance to a ranch. As we passed under the horizontal log marking that entrance, I noted a three-bladed propeller mounted on top of it.

We woke the rancher, explained our situation, and Milt phoned a non-jumper buddy, Doug Mason, who showed up in his Thunderbird about a half-hour later to deliver us to town - Milt to the jumper dorm and me to my home.

While we were waiting for our ride, I asked the rancher about the prop. He explained that he'd sal-

vaged it from the wreck of a B-25 bomber that had crashed on Miller Peak in 1945. A neighbor's son had been an Army Air Corps pilot during World War II.

At war's end, the Army had given the young veteran, who had flown more than 30 P-40 missions in Europe, permission to fly the plane to Missoula where he would debark for his discharge. The bomber crashed while buzzing the ranch.

I learned later that two smokejumpers, **Bill Wood** (MSO-43) and **Wag Dodge** (MSO-41), and **Capt.**

Amos Little (MSO-43), an Army doctor who had been trained to parachute by the jumpers, were dropped to the wreck to give aid. However, all three aboard had been killed in the crash.

As I recall, Milt and I were in our respective beds by midnight, but strangely, my Forest Service diary notes that we finally got off that Wing-Tip Fire – for some reason, the Forest Service named it the Miller Creek Ridge Fire – at 3 a.m.

There's more than one way to earn overtime. 🔦

With Morale At An Extreme Low, USFS Needs Leaders Who Excel

by Barry Wynsma

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The following article created a lot of interest among NSA members and is reprinted for the benefit of all our readers. (Ed.)

As I near retirement following 33 years working for the U.S. Forest Service on two forests and two districts in Idaho, I feel that I have been blessed by being able to work as a caretaker of our nation's forests. I hope that I've made at least a small contribution to maintaining the health of our forests while serving the public needs for forest products and services. I have many fond memories of my time with the agency and the people who work within it.

When a 2009 survey of federal agency morale and ranking of the "Best Agencies to Work" came out – <http://bestplacetowork.org/BPTW/rankings/detail/AG11> – I was dismayed, but not surprised, to see that the Forest Service was ranked 206th out of 216 agencies.

The same survey conducted in 2010 raised the ranking to 203rd. Leadership was among the largest reasons for the low morale among employees.

I'd like to provide my thoughts about what causes low morale. I'd also like to offer real-life examples and suggestions on how leaders have created high morale and also how they can improve agency morale.

Over the course of my career, and to the best of my recollection, I have worked under the leadership of at least six chiefs, five regional foresters, five forest supervisors and ten district rangers.

From my own perspective, some of these leaders excelled in their position and commitment to federal land management while many were average, and a few, my opinion, should never have been put in a leadership position.

What I'd like to do is provide a list of leadership qualities and actions which I believe make an excellent leader. I have either worked directly for or witnessed individual leaders who have displayed at least some of these excellent attributes.

I can personally attest that working for these kinds of leaders helped to boost my confidence in agency leadership and made me proud to be a part of the Forest Service team.

In honor of one of my favorite rangers, I'll do this using "bullet statements."

- An excellent leader focuses on the Forest Service Mission of Caring for the Land and Serving the Public. This requires a strong commitment to actively manage our forests, and a true leader understands that they will have to overcome both internal and external barriers to accomplish this mission.

- Excellent leaders support the people who work for them and get to know them on a personal level. "Family meetings" don't count. Excellent leaders take the time to visit their employees one-on-one in order to understand what their job really entails and what they need from the leader to make them successful in accomplishing the agency mission.

- Excellent leaders provide guidance to their employees on how to do their jobs effectively and efficiently without wasting taxpayer dollars by allowing

them to conduct excessive analysis and report writing. Excellent leaders lead by example whenever possible.

- Excellent leaders don't micromanage. They trust their people and empower them. Excellent leaders let employees think outside the box and allow them to try new ways to accomplish work. Excellent leaders embrace failure as adaptive management but don't allow employees or themselves to repeat those mistakes.

- Excellent leaders get to know the communities they live in and work for. Attending public meetings don't count. Most leaders have access to a government vehicle and a license to drive, and excellent leaders load up and drive into their communities and visit the forest products businesses that are located in their communities. Excellent leaders ask to tour these facilities so they can better understand what is needed to keep them operating in their communities. Excellent leaders use this knowledge to formulate a management plan for their district, forest or region that meets the needs of their communities and the piece of national forest of which they are the caretakers.

- Excellent leaders don't compromise when it comes to forest management. Some public "stakeholders" have ideals about public land management that oppose the agency mission that has been mandated by laws. Excellent leaders do the right thing for the land, not what they think they can get away with without being appealed or litigated. In my opinion, collaborative groups have been created as a need to discuss the terms of welfare of communities and the health of surrounding forests. These groups are not on equal footing with all other collaborative members due to their penchant for appealing and litigating projects when they don't "get their way." I believe leadership and Congress need to equalize this imbalance.

- Although lobbying Congress is not a permitted activity for employees and leaders while they're representing the Forest Service, excellent leaders inform Congress and the Administration that natural-resource management laws have grown into a malignant morass of conflicting rules and regulations that have killed the ability of the agency to perform its mission. Agency leadership needs to continuously request help from Congress to provide legal solutions that will restore the agency's ability to actively manage the public forests once again. If leaders can't accomplish this when they're "on the clock," they need to do it on their own time by writing or calling congressional representatives and by writing letters to the editor of their local newspapers or online publications.

- Start a national public-education program that shows new forestry at work. Don't be afraid to display loggers and logging equipment cutting down trees and

making forest products, including renewable energy from biomass. The agency can utilize existing forestry education websites – such as the Evergreen Foundation – to submit public-education articles.

- Ranger districts are the engines of the agency. When it comes to budgets, fund the districts first and make sure they have the personnel needed to accomplish on-the-ground work.

- To save taxpayer dollars, eliminate supervisors offices and restructure into a Washington office, regional offices and districts. With today's communication technologies, I believe supervisor offices are obsolete. However, the need still exists for district offices to remain in order to manage our forests and provide services to the communities – such as maintaining roads, campgrounds, trails, issuing forest product permits, etc. Savings from closing down supervisors offices can be transferred to district offices that can use the funds to more fully staff the districts.

- Hire more foresters, forestry technicians and interdisciplinary resource specialists needed to support forest management. These are the folks who actually help generate money for the taxpayers through timber sales and at least help to reduce the cost of management. If we actively manage more acres we will generate more money, increase fire resiliency of our forests, reduce the level of fire suppression costs and increase fire fighter safety.

- Without strong land management leadership, the health of our communities and our forests will decline, along with agency morale.

These are just a few suggestions of how I think morale and leadership within the Forest Service could be improved. My hope is that people in leadership positions will take these suggestions to heart and take actions that will result in raising our current rating from No. 203 to No. 1. 🐿

Please Tell Us When You Change Your Address

The postal service does *NOT* forward your copy of *Smokeyjumper* when you move or leave home for an extended time period. It is returned to us and the NSA is charged an additional first class postage fee. With 30–40 returns per mailing it gets expensive and takes a lot of time. Please let Chuck Sheley know if you have any change in your mailing address. His contact information is on page three.

New Camera Survives Shock Of Landing Near Challenging Fire

by Jack Rowse (Missoula '62)

We were trying to jump from east to west, shooting for the open area on the west side of the ridge of the Goat Haven Fire, Aug. 25, 1962. In the time between the last group and ours, a strong easterly wind came up.

When I opened up, I saw the top of the ridge disappear under me.

I managed to hang my canopy over the top of three trees. The No. 2 jumper did a 20-mph barrel roll between two huge boulders, and the No. 3 guy hooked a line on the top of a snag, which did not break off, fortunately.

I'd just spent a lot of money on a new camera. I had it wrapped in a shirt tucked inside my hard hat in my personal gear bag, which clips under the reserve chute. I snapped my personal gear bag to the D-ring on my jump suit and proceeded to make my letdown from about 30 feet.

My letdown rope unsnapped my PG bag with the camera, and I watched as it dropped and bounced off a big rock. When I got to the bag the hard hat had a dented rim, but the camera survived – thus the photos.

Now the rest of the story: There is absolutely no dirt on the side of the mountain. We were next to a small lake, so we brought in Pacific Pumpers and set up a pond halfway up the hill and basically just washed the fire off the mountain.

After a couple of days it snowed on us. It was August and nobody had brought even a light jacket.

Before we got the pumpers, a supervisor assigned us to put out a blast furnace of a fire in the base of a big ponderosa. We had to walk about 50 yards just to find a place where we could scrape some dirt on the tip of our shovels. When we threw what we could manage to get on the fire, it just burst into flame. We just left in frustration and waited until the pumpers arrived.

We were facing the hike to the Moose Creek airstrip, which is 19 miles from the fire, when a helicopter became available. The decision was made to fly out all the frozen pumper hose before us frozen jumpers. I guess the hose complained less than we did.

We tied the first hose bundle under the helicopter and watched as he left to see the bundle starting to rotate. The cable did not have a swivel, so the rotation unwound



*L-R: Mike Smith, Roger Siemens Goat Haven Fire 1962
(Courtesy Jack Rowse)*

the cable, and we watched as the bundle dropped into the woods. This meant he had to fly back to Missoula to get it fixed.

On his return he informed us that he could only fly eight hours. After every load of hose he gave us a time status. The good news is he got us all out, so we didn't get to see Moose Creek.

As **Tom Black** (MSO-62) pointed out, someone swam out into the lake to retrieve a cargo chute. I was up on the hill and watched to see as he started to swim back that the chute inflated under water. That was one tough swim.

We only had paper (disposable) sleeping bags, so when it started to snow, I put a cargo chute in my bag. It worked great but I had kept getting tangled up in all the shroud lines. I have a photo that I have not found yet with a bunch of guys standing around with the flaps from the bags on their shoulders as rain guards. ☹

Jack can be contacted at 1233 E Krista Way, Tempe, AZ 85284 or ajrowse@msn.com.

NSA Selects Two For First-Ever Scholarship Awards

With smokejumping more than seven decades old, the National Smokejumper Association's roster features members dating from the present all the way back to the 1940s. The majority of these members have been away from jumping for quite a few years.

In an effort to relate to current jumpers, the NSA has instituted a scholarship program for those actively jumping and members of the association, or direct family members of active NSA jumpers. This is the first year of the \$1,000 awards to students committed to obtaining advanced education.

The NSA's scholarship committee chose two active jumpers to receive the funds. In order to be eligible, the applicants needed to be currently enrolled in an accredited program that will lead to a college degree or accreditation.

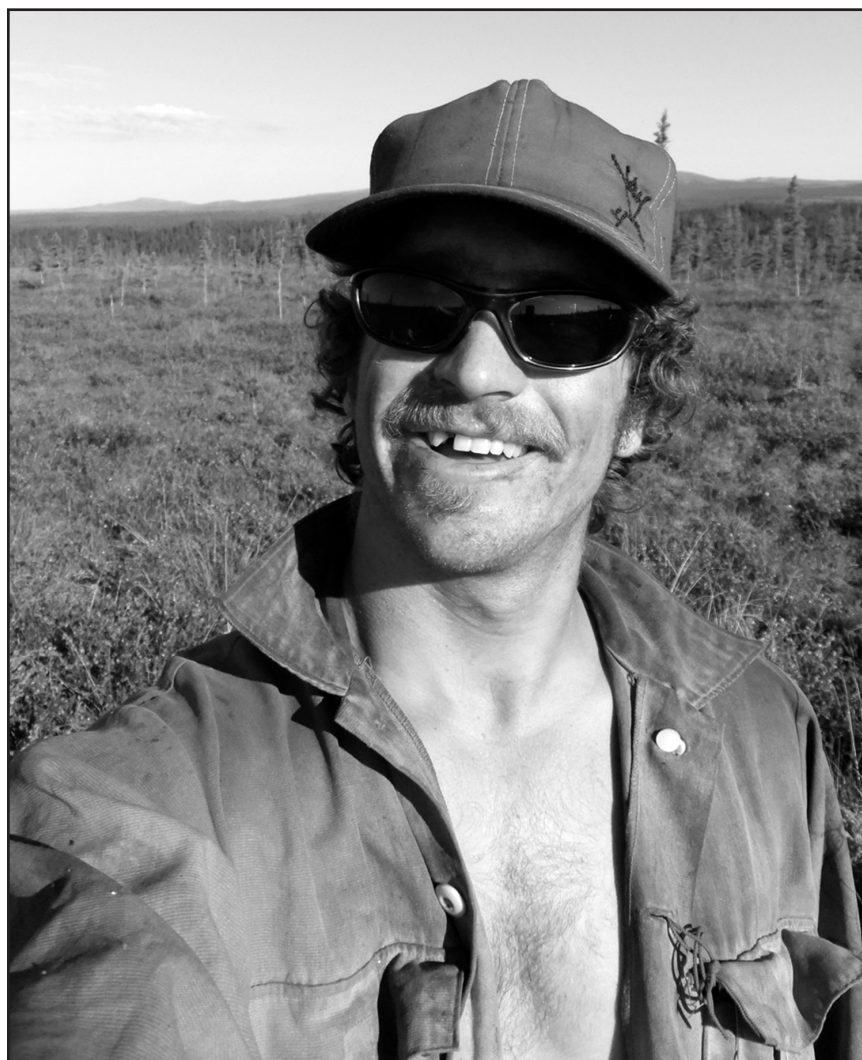
Applicants were required to – among other things – demonstrate financial need, have at least a 2.5 grade-point average at his/her college or university, and explain how he/she plans to use the degree or training he/she is seeking.

Here's a summary of the two scholarship recipients.

Joseph Philpott (NIFC-09)

Starting his collegiate work at the age of 24, Philpott likely already had more work experience than many of his freshman classmates at Northern Arizona University. That included two seasons jumping at Boise and three seasons on a hotshot crew.

Now, Philpott has a sharp



Joe Philpott (Courtesy J. Philpott)

interest in learning about forestry management and ways to keep American forests healthy. He transferred to Colorado State University this fall, studying forest and fire management.

"I am currently working on several task books to complete to further my management practices involved with forest fires," Philpott explained. "I am also looking into fire ecology clubs involved with the university to possibly aid in the completion of

the task books.

"The elite program has graciously allowed me to go to school full-time, while keeping my position as a smokejumper for the three-month summer break. This, however, gives me limited time to provide enough funds for the off-season for a full-time education."

Matthew Castellon (MYC-08)

Felled by illness, Castellon was unable to return to smoke-



Matthew Castellon (Courtesy M. Castellon)

jumping for the 2010 season. The “silver lining,” however, was Castellon’s renewed vigor to complete his degree in Fire Science from Columbia Southern University – for which he is just 15 units short.

Castellon entered the Butte College Fire Academy near Chico, Calif., after high school and learned the basics of wildland firefighting while earning his emergency medical technician (EMT) license.

“I discovered that I get a huge satisfaction out of helping other people,” said Castellon, who has worked on fire crews throughout the Western states during the past 11 years.

“My plan is to take these five classes this fall after the fire season and fulfill my dream,” he said. “Rest assured this scholarship will not only help me monetarily, but will help make me a better firefighter, and give me the tools to help others in their time of need.” 🙏

Two More Children Of Smokejumpers And A Smokejumper Shined At Olympics

by Ed Booth (Associate Editor)

We’ve received a lot of thanks and congratulations for our story about smokejumpers’ children who became Olympic athletes.

That article appeared in the July 2011 edition of the magazine. It highlighted Olympians Eric Heiden and Beth Heiden, whose father is **Jack Heiden** (CJ-52); Tommy Moe, son of **Thomas Moe** (MSO-63); and Launi Meili, daughter of **Hal Meili** (CJ-52).

We hoped there were more we’d hear about, and our readers did not disappoint us.

On top of that – despite the fact we said we knew

of no smokejumpers who’d become Olympians – there indeed has been at least one. **Jack Daniels** (MSO-54) earned a silver and a bronze medal in the modern pentathlon. That competition comprises riding, shooting, fencing and running.

Chuck Sheley (CJ-59), the magazine’s managing editor, got a message from **Gayle Morrison** (Associate) to let us know that Daniels had competed in the Olympics in Melbourne (1956) and Rome (1960). He has also authored several books and has recently completed his autobiography.

Jack is the older brother of Jerry “Hog” Daniels (MSO-58). Jack earned a silver medal in Melbourne, along with his team, though he finished 13th as an individual. Then he came in eighth overall as an individual in Rome where his team earned the bronze medal.

Erik Hansen (MSO-62) sent us a note to mention his son, Kevin, a setter on the U.S. Men’s Volleyball National Team. Kevin completed an impressive four-year run at Stanford, finishing third on Stanford’s list of career leaders with 5,036 assists. He was only the third player in the school’s men’s volleyball history to amass 5,000 career assists.

He was also a four-time All-Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF) selection, ranking ninth all-time among Stanford setters by averaging 12.89 assists per game. Hansen then took his skills to the professional level, playing in Russia’s “Superleague” as a member of Fakel Novy Urengoi.

All of this, of course, in addition to his Olympic experience. Hansen helped the United States win the gold medal in Beijing in 2008 as the backup setter to Lloy Ball. He started a match against China and played all three sets and also played in matches against Venezuela and Japan.

Hansen helped the U.S. Men win their first World League gold medal that year as well.

We then heard from **Craig Lindh** (MSO-59), whose daughter, Hilary, won a silver medal in the 1992 Winter Olympics to augment five U.S. championships, three World Cup victories and a World Championship title.

Hilary, now 42, started her ascent to success when she

was a high school freshman, enrolling in the Rowmark Ski Academy – part of Salt Lake City’s 110-year-old college preparatory school Rowland Hall-St. Marks.

Lindh began traveling with the U.S. Alpine Ski Team’s Development Team in 1985 at age 15.

At 16, she was racing on the U.S. national team in Europe. In 1986, she won the first of five U.S. championships at Copper Mountain, Colo., in the downhill race. A week later, she stunned the ski world by becoming the first American to win the downhill title at the World Junior Championships.

She won another four U.S. Championships: 1989 downhill, 1992 combined and 1997 downhill and Super G. In her first Olympics, the 1988 Games in Calgary, Lindh didn’t place in downhill, was 23rd in combined and 26th in Super G.

Lindh won a silver medal at the Olympics in Albertville, France, in 1992.

In the 1994 Olympics at Lillehammer, Norway, Lindh again battled injury and finished seventh in downhill and 13th in Super G. That year she also won her first World Cup victory, the 100th win by an American racer.

At the 1996 World Championships in Sierra Nevada, Spain, Lindh won a bronze medal in downhill and fifth in Super G. At the 1997 World Championships in Sestriere, Italy, Lindh was the only American to medal, winning gold in the downhill.

She retired on March 13, 1997. Her 11-year total on the World Cup circuit is three wins, five podium placements, and 27 top ten finishes. 🏆

The Future Of America’s National Forests Depends On Revised Laws And A Restored U.S. Forest Service

by Les Joslin (Editor OldSmokeys newsletter)

Few would dispute the notion that the National Forest System and the U.S. Forest Service are impaled on the horns of a dilemma of dysfunction.

On one horn is the lack of a clear-cut role for the national forests. On the other is the lack of an agency staffed by professional forest officers at all levels competent to efficiently and effectively manage those lands.

As a consequence, one of our nation’s great treasures, the 192-million-acre National Forest System

established by President Theodore Roosevelt and Forester Gifford Pinchot early in the 20th century and managed for its citizen-owners by the Forest Service for the past 105 years, is at risk.

At risk with them are the commodity resources – clean water, timber, livestock forage, wildlife habitat, along with amenity resources including scenery, outdoor and wilderness recreation, and more – that benefit all.

In the West, close to 70 percent of domestic water

originates in the forests. Also at risk is the economic survival of hundreds of rural communities that depend on the forests for jobs created by renewable resources and by recreation.

The role of the National Forest System, of course, is a matter of law. Indeed, of laws – too many and often conflicting laws. Evolution of a clear-cut role for the national forests is as critical as it would be complicated. It would depend on a successful legislative review and revision of these myriad laws to produce a more workable definition and implementation of that role. This is a challenge to the political will of our nation.

Successful meeting of this challenge would produce a revised and realistic legal framework for the National Forest System and for the smaller, more efficient and effective Forest Service necessitated by the get-real-about-deficit-reduction future faced by the U.S. Government and the American people as the United States careens toward national bankruptcy.

This would support a revised forest planning rule that would prioritize and implement the community relations and resource management field work that needs to be done and would not be driven by selfish interests and peripheral considerations.

Whatever the role of the National Forest System, a truly viable U.S. Forest Service would have a well-defined national forest management mission implemented by leaders who lead effectively and followers learning to lead effectively. It would have a professional corps of line and staff officers with field savvy and agency panache who understand and practice the art and science of, as the Forest Service's own motto puts it, "caring for the land and serving people."

This would be a corps of capable and competent "forest rangers" present and visible in the forests, rather than hidden away in offices; supported by, rather than subservient to appropriate technologies; doing jobs, rather than outsourcing them.

This would be a corps that capitalizes on, rather than squanders its proud heritage and attracts, rather than alienates, those who would serve in it, rather than just work for it. This would be a corps worthy of the admiration, respect, and support of the National Forest System citizen-owners, who should be served and would be served by it.

The functional Forest Service of yore grew its own corps of forest officers – dedicated professionals and technicians – on mostly rural or remote ranger districts on which the district ranger depended on each and every member of his small crew to ride for the brand and pull his or her own weight to "get it done" together.

But most such ranger districts have been lost to

consolidation, urbanization and cultural change.

On top of that, the generalists they grew have been replaced by more narrowly focused specialists.

Developing such a corps is the essential challenge for the Forest Service leadership and its U.S. Department of Agriculture masters.

Without such ranger districts offering the formative experiences and training they once did, the Forest Service should train qualified men and women selected to serve as forest officers at a national, residential, U.S. Forest Service Academy situated on a national forest that could accommodate, provide and materially benefit from – much as teaching hospitals do with medical students – a wide range of rigorous academic and field experiences. This academy would comprise an entry-level officer candidate school and a mid-career advanced course.

At the officer candidate school, those recruited to be the line and staff professionals and leaders of the Forest Service would learn to be forest officers, first, and specialists in one or more relevant disciplines – in which they already would have academic degrees or significant experience – second. The challenging course would inspire the will, inform the intellect, and develop the physical, practical and philosophical wherewithal of a corps of professional and technical members – not employees, but members – who would be the able, willing and dedicated forest officers required by the Forest Service.

After significant career assignments and experiences, these forest officers could return to the academy for mid-career training to further their preparation for district ranger and senior line, as well as staff assignments. The academy would be an intellectual and cultural wellspring of the Forest Service, an institutional home of the resolve and resourcefulness the Forest Service needs to succeed at any well-defined mission revised laws would prescribe.

Now is the time to act. It's too late for a business-as-usual, study-it-again-sometime, put-it-off-until-somebody-else-is-president-or-secretary-or-chief approach. The national treasure that is the National Forest System is at risk now, the Forest Service is *in extremis* now, and the time for action – real action leading to early results to save both the System and the Service for the citizen-owners of the former and the good people of the latter – is now!

Audacious? Yes! Expensive? Yes! But certainly not too expensive for a U.S. Government that allocates hundreds of billions of dollars to rescue Wall Street and spends more than \$2 billion (in 1997 dollars) per copy for B-2 Spirit stealth bombers. Indeed, the entire proposed U.S. Forest Service overhaul process

could be funded and the entire proposed U.S. Forest Service Academy could be established and operated for a decade or two for half the cost of just one of those bombers.

Expensive? Yes, except when one considers that the value of the national forests to their citizen-owners is in the trillions of dollars, and that these lands are the source of life-supporting water for millions of people and myriad other values for millions more.

Expensive? Yes, except when compared with the millions of dollars spent on wildfires and the billions of dollars in damages to the land and citizens resulting from these holocausts.

Expensive? Yes, except when compared with the opportunity costs of the bureaucratic equivalent of

“fiddling while Rome burns.”

Isn't a truly effective investment in the future administration of the National Forest System and all the benefits derived by its citizen-owners in terms of commodity and amenity resources, as well as jobs and more stable communities, worth at least that much?

Impossible? Only if we tell ourselves it is, roll over, and give up. 🐼

Les Joslin is a retired U.S. Navy commander and former U.S. Forest Service firefighter, wilderness ranger, and staff officer. He teaches wilderness management for Oregon State University, writes Forest Service history, and edits the Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association's quarterly OldSmokeys Newsletter. He lives in Bend, Ore.

A Real Kick In The Head: Knife-Wielding Jumpers Create Some Drama

by A. Glen “Ace” Nielsen (McCall '46)

You'd think that after 50 years about everything back then would be forgotten or at least too vague to write about. Not this, however; it seems like only yesterday.

The “Ray” in my story will go unidentified so as to protect the not-so-innocent.

It was a Saturday morning and the smokejumpers still in camp were restless. It's no secret that a jumper's fondest hope is to jump a fire on a Friday afternoon, so as to have the entire weekend to draw overtime pay. As the day wore on, however, the emphasis shifted.

We were willing to sacrifice some overtime just to be in town for the parties and fun we came to expect in McCall on a Saturday night. We wanted to be there to welcome the endless parade of beauties coming up from the valley on weekends.

This, I was to realize later, bothered Ray. He needed the extra money either for flying lessons or a new motorcycle, but he didn't want to miss the parties. So when a call came in for 16 jumpers for a fire just over the mountain north of Cascade, Ray told us we could probably put the fire out and still be in town that night.

It was evident when we got over the fire that Ray was going to miss out on a lot of Saturday night fun. It was just the right size to keep us out until Monday morning.

I don't know if they named the fire Dollar Creek after hearing our conversation before the jump, or if it already had a name. Anyway, Ray was growing more irritable. It

turned out he had promised some gal he'd be in town.

If you're unfamiliar with Dollar Creek, it's in the Gold Fork area, so you know it's not far from town. Ray and I were in the first of two Ford Trimotor loads of eight jumpers each. The spotter recognized that the air was very unstable – especially after two jumpers, my brother **Bernie Nielsen** (MYC-47) and **Leo Compton** (MYC-47), collided soon after leaving the plane.

Ray was actually hoping to hit an updraft and that the wind coming out of the east would blow him back over the mountain.

Ray and I were the last two to jump. I jumped first. Big mistake. It was the spotter's opinion that Ray's chute was slow in opening, and with his extra weight, he came down on me like a raptor on a mosquito.

He slid off my chute and down through my shroud lines, hitting me so hard that it smashed in the side of my protective helmet. I was stunned, so when I came to and saw Ray waving his emergency chute knife, in my dazed condition I thought my life was in danger. He had concluded that if he did not get free of my lines, he was doomed.

I couldn't remember it later but I, too, had unsheathed my knife and started to defend myself. Ray was preoccupied with trying to cut my lines, so he was slow in realizing my intentions.

I really got his attention when he saw that I'd cut into his heavy canvas jump suit in a couple of places. Just as

he was preparing his own offense, the chute suddenly inflated and he was out of there.

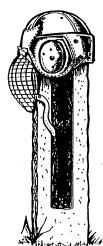
Ray was mad – really mad, now – when he realized what I had done and what I was attempting to do. So when he found himself looking down on me in our descent, he hauled down on his front risers and made a pass at me in an attempt to cut me or my chute.

To his credit, as he claimed later, he wanted only to cut enough lines so I would have a hard landing.

Before anyone was hurt, we were on the ground, and I was able to explain to him that in my dazed condition

I thought he was trying to do me in. He was to say later that when we collided, he thought by cutting my lines he would save himself and believed that there was an outside chance that I too would survive.

Smokejumper stories, as I understand it, must meet certain standards of authenticity. However, as the years go by, these standards are somewhat relaxed. If the story is at least 50 years old – this one is 53 – then the authenticity need only range between 25 and 50 percent. Facts sometimes get in the way and, as jumpers are quick to admit, can get in the way of a good story. 🦋



Off The List

Remember and honor fellow jumpers with a gift to the NSA Good Samaritan Fund in their name. Hard times can fall on many of us at any time. The NSA is here to support our fellow jumpers and their families through the Good Samaritan Fund. Mail your contribution to:

Chuck Sheley
10 Judy Lane
Chico, CA 95926

Vernon Sylvester (Missoula '47)

Vern, 87, died June 18, 2011, in Stevensville, Montana. He earned a degree in Forestry in 1950 from the University of Montana following a five-year stint in the U.S. Navy, which he joined shortly after

the bombing of Pearl Harbor. As a part of his assignment, Vern tested radar in airplanes to detect German submarines off the East Coast. He jumped at Missoula in 1947-48 before embarking on a 30-year career with the U.S. Forest Service, from which he retired in 1980.

NSA Good Samaritan Fund Contributions

Contributions since the previous publication of donors, July 2011

Donor

Roland "Andy" Andersen (MSO-52).....

In Memory/Honor of

Wilbur "Micky" Burke (MSO-49), Glenn Hale (MYC-57), Billy K. Hester (MSO-58), Dave Schas (MYC-48)

First GivingMike Overby (MSO-67), Philip Difani (MSO-67)

Bruce Marshall (BOI-71).....Neil Satterwhite (MYC-65), Bob Steiner (BOI-71)

Eddie Yosick (MYC-81)Scott Hudson (BOI-79)

Ben Musquez (MSO-56).....In memory of Richard U. Ortiz

First GivingMike Overby (MSO-67), Philip Difani (MSO-67)

Robert W. Pell (NCSB-56).....In honor of airtanker pilots who are "off the list"

Total funds received for the NSA Good Samaritan Fund, as of June 30, 2011 – \$32,604

Total funds dispersed to smokejumpers and families since 2004 – \$15,800

Mail your Good Samaritan Fund contributions to:

Chuck Sheley, 10 Judy Ln., Chico, CA 95926

Vern traveled to Russia, Africa, South America, China, Mongolia, Mexico, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. He was zealous in his care for the environment and was a member of several conservation organizations.

Jeffrey “Jeff” Bardwell (Pilot)

Jeff, 40, died April 21, 2011. He graduated from Clearbrook High School in Clearbrook, Minnesota, in 1988 and joined the Air Force. He was honorably discharged after a four-year stint. Jeff attended flight school in Crookston, Minnesota, and earned his pilot's license, flying charters and for UPS before becoming a smoke-jumper pilot at the controls of a DC-3 in Missoula.

Mike Seale (Pilot)

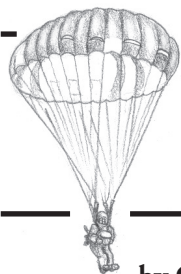
Mike, 70, died May 6, 2011, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. He earned a degree in Business from the University of Idaho, following stints at San Diego State University and North Idaho Junior College. His education followed a tour in the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division as a paratrooper, a path he chose after failing the vision test in his bid to enter the United States Military Academy at West Point. While attending Coeur d'Alene High School, Mike earned his pilot's license; he later flew for Air America for seven years in Vietnam and Laos. He was a smokejumper pilot in Alaska for three seasons before a spinal injury forced him to retire at 37. He was a life member of the NSA.

Theodore “Ted” Dethlefs (Missoula '47)

Ted, 85, died May 7, 2011, in Salem, Oregon. He served in the Navy Air Corps after joining at age 17. Ted was commissioned a Lieutenant Junior Grade just as the war ended; he served briefly in Hawaii shuttling troops and equipment back to the states. Ted jumped from Missoula in 1947 in between years at Washington State, where he earned a degree in Business, followed by a Master's degree in Therapeutic Recreation. Following retirement from Oregon State Parks, he and his wife completed their goal of visiting all 50 states in their camper van.

Norman Kauffman (Missoula '45)

Norman, 87, died June 6, 2011, in Kalispell, Montana. He attended Hesston College in Kansas before earning a degree from Eastern Mennonite College in Virginia. He was a conscientious objector during World War II and served 13 months in Idaho in the Civilian Public Service before jumping from Missoula in 1945. Norman joined the crew of the U.S.S. Mount Whitney in 1946 and helped transport horses to Poland as a part of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Act. He then became a teacher and school administrator, continuing until 1970, when he became a pastor in the Mennonite Church. He enjoyed church volunteerism capacities following retirement from the pulpit, including service with Gospel Echoes Prison Ministries. 🙏



ODDS AND ENDS



by Chuck Sheley

Congratulations and thanks to Chauncey and Christy Taylor of Johnson's Corner who have provided a tremendous amount of support for the NSA Trails Program and just became our latest Life Member(s). In addition we want to thank the following new Life Members: H.B. “Doc” Smith (MSO-59) and Brian T. Miller (RDD-85).

John McDaniel (CJ-57) NSA Membership Chairman: “When you take out a 10-year membership (\$180.00), renew an already 10-year membership or upgrade from a lesser term,



we will send you (free) a distinctive Smokejumper license plate frame for your car or truck, several NSA decals for your vehicle or wherever you want to put them, and (while they last) a copy of *Cold Missouri Waters* CD.

“We also want to remind all of you to keep us updated if you change or add an email address. This can be done via the ‘Jump List’ on the website or by contacting me or Chuck Sheley (CJ-59).”

Bruce Marshall (BOI-71) in a note with contribution to Good Sam Fund in honor of Bob Steiner (BOI-71): “Bob and I trained together at the McCall base as we began our rookie

year for the Boise N.F. The following summer we shared an apartment near the Boise State University campus along with **Walt Smith** and **Larry Steele**, also from the BOI-71 class. The experience of living with this group in that social setting contributed heavily to the summer's memories. We had a great time! During the fire season of '75, Bob and I also roomed together in Fairbanks for our final summers as smokejumpers. We knew each other well.

"As always, what exceeds the recollection of the adventures are the friendships created and the experiences shared. Bob Steiner will always be a part of my smokejumper memories."

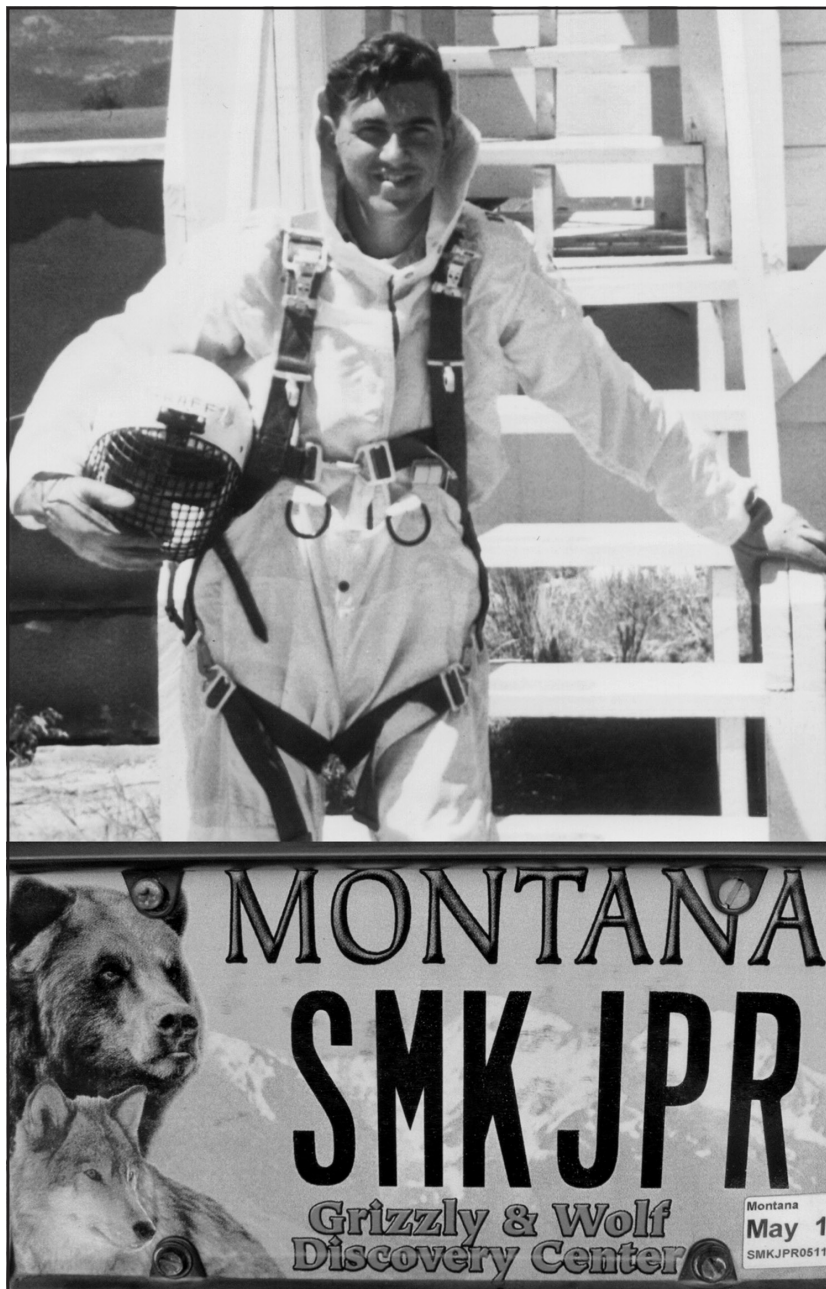
Andy Stevenson (RDD-65) sent along a copy of a rather unique birthday card made for him by his daughter done with photos taken off our smokejumper website. Great job. Happy birthday Andy.

Here is an interesting happenstance. Pete Hutchinson (not a jumper) found a **Missoula 50th Anniversary belt and buckle in an airport**. The buckle was #30 and had a 2004 date stamp. Pete contacted me through the NSA website and would like to get the property back to his owner. You can contact Pete at: RPeteHutch@aol.com or (816) 931-5559. In any case, thank you, Pete, for going far beyond the extra mile.

Barrie Turner (MSO-59): "After 48 years of flying helicopters and 27,000 hours, I finally retired and now live in Thailand. Will always have a fond memory of a great bunch of guys. Enjoyed the summer project at Spruce Creek and the reunion in Missoula in '06. Any past or present jumpers going to Thailand look me up by Email: barrieturner40@yahoo.com."

Bruce Marshall (BOI-71) in a note with contribution to Good Sam Fund in honor of **Neil Satterwhite** (MYC-65): "It was with great sadness I read of the passing of Neil Satterwhite in 'Off The List,' and I offer this contribution to the Good Samaritan Fund in his honor. Neil was with the first group of smokejumpers I ever met and the impression was everlasting.

"In '70 I worked on a helitack crew out of Dixie, Idaho and was sent as initial attack to a fire in



Nice license plate-Dale Graff (MSO-60) (Courtesy D. Graff)

the Payette Forest. As we were being dropped off, a planeload of McCall jumpers were landing in a meadow on the far side of the ridge from the fire. Once the fire was contained, the jumpers began retrieving gear and hauling it up to an LZ on the ridge line.

"I remember being impressed by their team effort, camaraderie and how much they enjoyed what they did. As the last of the gear was packed up the steep slope, I noticed that a short, tough-looking character wasn't carrying gear, but had another jumper on his back. It was Neil Satterwhite carrying **Jerry Ogawa** (MYC-67) up from the meadow.

"This was also my first introduction to the game

of “heads out,” which Neil had just lost. I would have never guessed the following spring would find me in McCall for rookie training as a Boise jumper and Neil Satterwhite would be part of the training cadre.

“I remember how he enjoyed pushing us off the back of a pickup truck to practice our landings, and when someone hit so hard his helmet bounced into the air, I have never forgotten his harsh voice yelling, ‘If you’re looking for sympathy, you’ll find it in the dictionary between ‘shit’ and ‘syphilis.’ I still smile fondly as I recall the moment.

“On a weekend rookie trip to Boise, we came across a Superman t-shirt in a sporting goods store. It was dark blue with the big red ‘S’ and gold ‘Superman’ emblem on the front. We purchased the largest size we found as a joke, but were surprised when the chest and shoulders fit so well. Since that time, whenever I’ve seen a Superman logo, I’ve thought of Neil Satterwhite and always thought it appropriate.

“There must be volumes of ‘Satterwhite Stories’ and I would love to hear them all. His life was a remarkable journey, and I am truly honored to have known someone of his character.”

Gary Watts (MYC-64): “I was on the jump where **Ken ‘Moose’ Salyer** (MYC-54) and Skip Knapp were killed. For the life of me, I can’t remember who else was on that jump (4 of us). If anyone remembers and could share their memories with me, perhaps I could put together a story or article about it.” Contact Gary at: smokewatts@hughes.net or PO Box 1107, Julian, CA 92036.

Don Wallace (CJ-49): “In the current issue of *Smoke-jumper* magazine, in the ‘Off The List’ section, you have included an obituary for **Terry Fieldhouse** (CJ-47). I am writing to say I am quite sure Terry graduated in Forestry from Washington State University at Pullman, not the University of Washington (Seattle). (*Don is correct, it was WSU. Ed.*) Terry began his professional career organizing the startup of the forestry program for the government of the Dominican Republic.

“Terry was our chute packer and ran a one-man operation in the loft. He made each of us a fanny pack to strap to our belts to take on fire jumps. I was very appreciative of Terry’s consideration as I carried both dark-colored and clear-frame prescription glasses. He also flew with Pilot Ed Schultz in the L-5 to drop mail, etc. at the lookout towers in the Siskiyou. Terry was one of those quiet spoken and particularly unassuming good guys we run across in life from time to time.”

Luke Birkey (MSO-45): “The July issue just arrived, and as usual, I’ve read it cover to cover and enjoyed

it. The article about Dr. Little stood out to me. I had forgotten his name, but I was one of the jumpers that jumped in to help carry **Archie Keith** (MSO-45) out and what a trip that was. The jumpers that had jumped with Archie (**Jim Brunk**/MSO-45 was one) had carried him off the mountain, down to a good trail. This took all night, as they had to carry him down though a lot of brush with downed timber on the ground. Then the eight fresh guys jumped in early morning and carried Archie to the road. He was in great pain until the doctor jumped in, checked him over and gave him pain killing medication and monitored his condition all the way out.”

Dick Flaharty (MSO-44): “I wrote an article for *Smoke-jumper* in the July 2002 issue entitled ‘Let’s Hear It for the Packers.’ In it I described a fire jump **Ad Carlson** (MSO-43) and I made near the Wahoo Peak Lookout tower. We were instructed to stay on the fire until our packer arrived and help him close the tower for the winter.

“I took a picture of the young packer that was printed with the article. A short time later I received several inquiries about the identification of the packer. Since I wrote the article many years after the event, I could not recall the packer’s name. **Bob Schumaker** (MSO-59) spent almost a year trying to track down that name. We finally gave up.

“I was cleaning out my wife’s desk the other day (Betty passed away in 2006) and found a packet of letters I had written in 1944. The last letter covered the Wahoo Peak episode where I had identified the packer as “Tex” Taylor who had been released from the Army on a medical discharge.

“What is remarkable about this is that we have moved eleven times since WWII and Betty never parted with that pack of letters.”

Ron Thoreson (CJ-60): “Apropos of my *Smokejumper* article in the April issue concerning the changes in Missoula and CJ, there is an article in this month’s *Smithsonian* about Missoula by Rick Bass. He’s one of the writers who have relocated to Missoula to make it a literary and arts scene now.

“I went by Foris Winery when we were at the (CJ) reunion. The guy running the tasting room was not Ted (wouldn’t say who the hell he was) and was decidedly not impressed with the fact that I was the food and wine critic for *Smokejumper* magazine! I’m guessing that I have that title since I’m the only person who has ever written a food or wine critique in the magazine. You would think that having wine critics from the *Wall Street Journal* and *Smokejumper* magazine would be equally thrilling for them, wouldn’t you?” 🍷