



OldSmokeys Newsletter

Newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Forest Service Retirees—Fall 2007

President's Message — John Poppino

Summer is behind us and it's Fall. The OldSmokeys had a great picnic with **Jim List** as our chair again.

Now I'm looking forward to the Fall elections—for OldSmokeys, not Congress! **Bruce Hendrickson** has agreed to put his name in as President-elect. You will find his biography and the ballot on page 10 of this newsletter. Thanks, Bruce!

The next item on my agenda was to find a replacement for Archivist **Dave Kolb** and **Jane**, his trusty computer operator. They have done a yeoman job on this assignment for the last several years. I was looking for someone to keep track of some old records (not all, **Bev** has a file cabinet full) and collect obituaries from many sources and get them to **Les** for the newsletter. Just as I was wondering who this might be, **Ray Steiger** volunteered! Thanks Ray!

Now the Archivist position is filled, we're looking for volunteers to "understudy" for some of the Board of Directors positions and committee chairs. **Jim List** would like to "mentor" someone in becoming an outstanding Picnic Chair. **Emil** and **Dorine** would be glad to show someone the ropes for the Banquet Chair. In a couple years, **Bev** and **Vern** could be looking for replacements. Give it some thought and be ready with a positive answer when the time comes any of you are asked to step up.

Another big volunteer effort is the Pacific Northwest Region centennial history project. We have a committee, an author in **Jerry Williams**, an agreement with Region 6 to cover most of our out-of-pocket costs, and we're on our way. The first four chapters are being reviewed, photographs are being gathered, and we're on track for a 2008 publishing date.

The Forest Service Reunion 2005 DVD is now available through an order form on the OldSmokeys web site. While we—the OldSmokeys—are not handling this project and are not deriving any funds from the DVD sales, we think it is important to inform everyone that the set of two DVDs showing the activities and participants at the reunion is available. The cost, which includes shipping, is \$15.00.

John Poppino

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Visit the Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association website at: www.oldsmokeys.org

Forum

Reflections on “An Agency to Match the Mountains?”

I fully endorse and support Les Joslin’s thoughts on what is needed to return the agency to one that *did* “match the mountains” (“An Agency to Match the Mountains?” *OldSmokeys Newsletter*, Spring 2007, pages 8-9). His emphasis on the need to emphasize identity by a return to the “green fleet” and the wearing of the uniform at all times is obvious to those of us who did so. I have the following thoughts to add to his thought-filled commentary.

The Forest Service I knew for 34 years no longer exists!

Will it again? Well, that depends on whether you are an optimist or a pessimist. Being neither, I can only hope so!

Should it? On that, I have a firm “You’re damn right!”

Why? Because the Forest Service I knew was the finest example of what the public should expect from all agencies it employs to serve them. It was peopled by dedicated, capable, and determined individuals who believed in and understood the honored traditions that preceded them. They signed on to “care for the land and serve the people” long before that became the official mission statement. I truly believe that today’s Forest Service personnel would flunk a test in Forest Service history. That is unfortunate since there is much to emulate and, of course, some to avoid repeating.

A reality. Since the time of undersecretaries Culver and Cutler, the Forest Service has become increasingly politicized until the current occupant of that office fancies himself as the Chief, with devastating results. Will that change? I don’t know, but the answer is a clue to whether we can return to the agency we once were.

What do I think would bring us back to that agency we once were?

First. Redevelop respect for the district ranger position as the key member of the Forest Service hierarchy. Who else has the “hands on” ability to care for the land and serve the people? The district ranger position is *not* a training position for entry into the “lowerarchy”—the S.O., R.O., and W.O. positions. I mean no disrespect, but only emphasize that these levels exist to support and inspire the district rangers and their people in achieving the *work* of the Forest Service.

Only top performing and experienced people should attain the district ranger position. It should be a career goal that is attained by outstanding performance and experience in previous assignments. The increase in grade for district rangers should be based on performance in place and not on transfer to the “lowerarchy.”

For too many times in my last years in the outfit, I heard the complaints of county commissioners, cooperating agency personnel, community leaders, and just plain folks that they didn’t even get to know the district ranger before he or she was transferred. This is not how it was, and this is not how it should be!

I also believe that anyone who accepts the responsibility of the district ranger position accepts the responsibility to live in the community where the ranger station is located. They must accept that, to be successful, they must be an integral part of—and in many cases, leader of—that community. That is how it was, and that is how it should be.

Second. The Forest Service must acknowledge that the annual appropriation by Congress is to achieve *work* on the national forests (on this I agree with George Leonard), and therefore it would be distributed on a first priority basis to the ranger districts that do that work. The remainder would be distributed to the support levels—the S.O., R.O., W.O. It becomes obvious where the appropriate and cost-effective cuts would be made.

Third. It is obvious that there is a vigorous non-harvest policy being pursued by some members of the “environmental” community. This should be exposed for what it is—“blind stupidity”! These forces fight any success to the contrary such as the “Quincy Library Group” or the “Santa Fe Coalition” which brought together citizens of differing views into compromise solutions only to be stymied by appeals and litigation. It is vital that the Forest Service aggressively pursue success in these local coalitions that withstand challenge and reverse this “do-nothing” effort.

A personal note. I have great confidence that the stupidity surrounding the management of our most treasured and productive natural resource—the National Forest System—will be refuted and common sense will prevail! I hope to live that long.

-- Dick Buscher

This page is for expressing your opinions or sharing your ideas.

Send your Forum inputs to the editor: Les Joslin, 2356 NW Great Place, Bend, Oregon 97701, or lesjoslin@aol.com.

“I may disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”

-- *Attributed to Voltaire*

OldSmokeys News

Carroll E. Brown to Celebrate 100th Birthday on December 8

OldSmokey **Carroll E. Brown**, supervisor of the Rogue River National Forest from 1957 to 1967, will celebrate his 100th birthday this year to swell the ranks of PNWFSA centenarians to two.

Carroll was born on December 8, 1907, in Vancouver, Washington. As an Oregon State College student, he worked seasonally on the old Columbia (now Gifford Pinchot) National Forest and the Mt. Baker National Forest from 1928 to 1933. He graduated with a forestry degree in 1933, and was appointed in the U.S. Forest Service on the Nicolet and Chequamegon national forests in Wisconsin overseeing Civilian Conservation Corps crews and serving as an assistant ranger. He returned to Region 6 in 1938 to work on the Wenatchee, Mt. Hood, and Columbia national forests and in the R.O. in State and Private Forestry and Recreation.

Carroll became district ranger on the Hebo Ranger District, Siuslaw National Forest, in 1940, and later served as a staff officer on the Olympic, Fremont, and Gifford Pinchot national forests. He was appointed forest supervisor of the Rogue River National Forest in June 1957 and remained in that position until he retired in December 1967. After retirement, he remained in the Rogue Valley and wrote a two-volume history of the Rogue River National Forest.



Carroll Brown, Forest Supervisor, Rogue River National Forest, 1958

OldSmokeys Gather 143-Strong at August 10 Summer Picnic in the Woods

A beautiful, sunny, summer day greeted the 143 OldSmokeys who gathered at BLM's Wildwood Recreation Area for the annual OldSmokeys "summer Picnic in the Woods" on August 10. This year, without a wildfire closing Oregon Highway 35 and an accident slowing traffic on U.S. Highway 126 across the Warm Springs Reservation, everybody was able to arrive on time!

It was, thanks to picnic organizer **Jim List** and all his co-organizers, a picnic to remember. The traditional good fellowship of the Forest Service family prevailed as OldSmokeys from throughout the Pacific Northwest swapped stories of the past, caught up on each others' lives and adventures, and enjoyed the usually outstanding picnic fare provided by caterer Dave Dalton.

The one planned event that didn't come off was the scanning of historic Forest Service photographs OldSmokeys were encouraged to bring for the PNWFSA history of Region 6 book project and archives. Because of a last-minute schedule change, Tom Iraci, who was to scan the photographs, wasn't able to make it. Other arrangements for scanning photographs will be made.

The tall future OldSmokey in the green uniform who joined us was District Ranger Bill Westbrook of the Zigzag Ranger District, Mt. Hood National Forest, whose Zigzag Ranger Station is just a few miles east of the Wildwood Recreation Area on U.S. Highway 126.



Among the "mini-reunions" at the picnic was this gathering of all the foresters on the Detroit Ranger District in 1955: Robbie Robertson, Carl Juhl, Wendall Jones, and District Ranger Al Sorseth.

OldSmokeys Attend September 8 Bend Silviculture Laboratory Reunion

About 35 former Bend Silviculture Laboratory researchers and technicians—including OldSmokeys **Jim Barrett** and Helen, **Carl Berntsen** and Mary, **Bill Hopkins**, and **Russ Mitchell** and Evie—got together in Bend for a September 8 reunion and celebration of the publication of their story in *Ponderosa Promise: A History of U.S. Forest Service Research in Central Oregon* by OldSmokey **Les Joslin** (see "Books" on page 17) just published by the Pacific Northwest Research Station.

After a quick welcome by Joan Landsberg, project leader at the Lab from 1986-1992, Carl Berntsen—who came all the way from Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, to attend, and who was project leader at the Deschutes Research Center and during the Lab's construction and early years—spoke of its history and accomplishments. Les, who actually worked as a technician at the Lab for one month in 1990 and whose wife Pat worked there in the late 1980s and early 1990s, commented on the process of researching and writing *Ponderosa Promise*. And, after that, all resumed getting reacquainted and caught up on old times and current lives.

Waldport Area Forest Service Retirees Help Save Waldport Ranger Station

Special to OldSmokeys Newsletter by Loyd Collett, U.S. Forest Service, Retired

For the past four years or so, U.S. Forest Service retirees living in the Waldport, Oregon, area have met monthly for breakfast and a couple hours of spirited chatter at a floating diner on the Alsea River just east of Waldport. Most of the group has retired from the Waldport Ranger Station or the Angel Job Corps Center, but retirees from other national forests, the R.O. in Portland, and the W.O. who have retired in the area have added new dimensions and personal stories. The group operated on a no-host, no-agenda policy until, in 2005, it felt compelled to take on a local political campaign called “Save Our Ranger Station.”

As part of the giant National Forest System consolidation effort, there was a move to merge or co-locate the Willamette and Siuslaw national forest supervisors’ offices in Eugene, Oregon. Along with that plan, it seemed logical to lump several Siuslaw ranger districts and establish a centralized ranger district office in Florence with direct Oregon State Highway 126 access to Eugene. This shifted the district office from the Waldport Ranger Station—which became a work center—to a rental facility in Florence. Waldport’s ranger was transferred off forest, and the former Mapleton ranger was placed in command. All this occurred in the dark of night with very little benefit of public knowledge or input.

By late 2005 or early 2006 it had been decided that the Siuslaw S.O. would not move to Eugene but stay in Corvallis. At this point it made sense, to some, to revisit the decision to move the proposed centralized district office out of Waldport. Although a fiscal and social analysis showed Waldport the better and less expensive location, an influential group of employees with long tenure and strong loyalties to the Florence area complicated the process while the Siuslaw shifted through three or four acting forest supervisors.

Meanwhile, the Waldport area retiree group believed the Waldport community should have a voice in the process. A subcommittee of four retirees and a fifth person from the community at large was formed to present the Waldport Ranger Station case to the city, all of Lincoln County, and state and federal representatives through letters, e-mails, telephone calls, personal visits, and a letter to the editor of a county-wide newspaper. The then-mayor of Waldport came to one of the group’s breakfast meetings and became a major supporter and facilitator. A meeting between the Waldport City Council and the newly-appointed Siuslaw forest supervisor and staff, Lincoln county commissioners, state and national representatives, economic development officials, and the local business community—at which the group’s spokesperson was on the agenda—addressed the case.

A few months later, Regional Forester **Linda Goodman** decided in favor of the group’s position and the office of the new consolidated ranger district is returning to Waldport. Pam Gardner, the new district ranger, arrived in May. The newly named Central Oregon Coast Ranger District includes the old Alsea, Mapleton, and Waldport districts and incorporates the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area—roughly 75 percent of the Siuslaw National Forest’s land base.

After the decision to shift the office to Florence had been made, Waldport Ranger Station buildings and grounds maintenance was deferred and neglected as the morale of the remaining employees went through the cellar. Now, there is a huge backlog of have-to-do maintenance and repair. One of Waldport’s most recent retirees has organized willing members of the Waldport area retiree group into a cadre of buildings and grounds keepers. Mowing, trimming, pruning, grubbing, hauling and painting have been recent activities.

The retiree group is making progress toward its goal of constructive cooperation with Forest Service managers. Ranger Pam believes the “old geezers” have some useful ideas, and declared July 18 as “all employees help the volunteers” day. This went so well that a fall follow-up is planned.

OldSmokeys Tackle a Variety of National Forest System Tasks

Some jobs just have to be done, and—as the Umpqua National Forest’s famous Motley Crew and other OldSmokeys around the Pacific Northwest have proven for years—some people just have to do them. This is certainly the case on the McKenzie River Ranger District of the Willamette National Forest where, the last week in June, with OldSmokey and retired Forest Supervisor **Mike Kerrick** in the lead, Mike’s wife **Sue** and retirees including OldSmokeys **Fred Dutli**, **Dick Grace**, **Wendall Jones**, and **Hal Legard**, helped members of District Ranger Mary Allison’s staff significantly reduce long-time “Guard” Jim Denny’s historic Fish Lake Guard Station and Remount Depot (*see “OldSmokeys, Friends Help Maintain Historic Fish Lake Ranger Station, Remount Depot, on pages 6-7 of Winter 2007 OldSmokeys Newsletter”*) job list during the last week of June.

As Wendall reported: “We tore out the remaining wire fence we did not get done in 2006; built a split rail fence around the Hall House propane tank; cleaned out the big barn and repaired the sliding door to the feed room; cleaned up, repaired, painted, replaced broken windows in the blacksmith shop and tack room; dug ditch for propane line to the old dispatch office; and did our share of forest fuel reduction around the site.” It wasn’t all work. On Wednesday of that week, according to Wendall, “Mary Allison and several of her McKenzie Ranger District folks...hosted a picnic lunch [at which] we exchanged personal backgrounds and...our ties to Fish Lake. OldSmokey **Robbie Robertson** joined us that day and talked about living at Fish Lake in 1954 while scaling logs for the Forest Service at Lava Lake.” OldSmokeys **Dick Kreger** and his dad, **Alvin Kreger**, were there, too. Also “a representative from the Oregon Department of Transportation talked about funding for Fish Lake in connection with the Oregon Cascades Scenic Byway, which serves as access to Fish Lake,” that could help continue the effort.

On the Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District of the Deschutes National Forest, OldSmokey **Les Joslin** coordinated the sixth full summer of a Passport in Time (PIT) project in which 15 uniformed Forest Service volunteer information and interpretation specialists staffed Historic Elk Lake Guard Station (see *“Uncle Sam’s Cabins”* on page 18), on the popular Cascade Lakes National Scenic Byway, between June 19 and September 11. During 84 consecutive days of operation, these volunteers served 840 hours to keep the station open for 630 hours and serve 3,396 national forest visitors. Also, with the help of OldSmokey **Ken Roberts**, Les fabricated and installed 18 new signs and campsite markers and reconditioned several others to complete the first phase of a planned-but-unfunded Devils Lake campground-parking lot-trailheads complex rehabilitation project.

Also on the Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District, OldSmokey **Paul Engstrom** is playing a key role in the current reconstruction of the Nordeen warming shelter that burned to the ground last winter. He was asked to help on the project because of his previous experience on the Santiam shelters (see *“OldSmokey Paul Engstrom Leads Reconstruction of Snow Shelters”* on page 6 of *Winter 2007 OldSmokeys Newsletter*). Coordinated by Deschutes National Forest trails specialist Chris Sabo in cooperation with the Bend Chapter of the Oregon Nordic Club, this project is benefiting from an REI grant and many community partners including Bend Metro Parks and Recreation District, Knife River (formerly Hap Taylor Construction), Mike’s Concrete, a YCC crew, and individual volunteers.

OldSmokey Jon Stewart Takes On the Continental Divide Trail

After spending the summers of 2003-2006 walking the 2,650 Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) from Mexico to Canada (see *“Jon Stewart Completes Pacific Crest Trail Trek”* on page 10 of *Winter 2007 OldSmokeys Newsletter*), he’s at it again! Deschutes National Forest retiree and OldSmokey **Jon Stewart** trekked 850 miles through Montana and Idaho this summer from the Canadian border to Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, to complete the first leg of his planned 3,000-mile journey from Canada to Mexico along the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDT). This took him through the Flathead, Helena, and Beaverhead/Deerlodge national forests in Region 1 and the northern reaches of the Salmon and Targhee national forests in Region 4.

This hottest summer on record in northern Montana has brought what Jon refers to “a new wave of landscape transforming fires that are rapidly changing the ecology of the region.” As he underlines his concern, “It was a shock to see how little regeneration had occurred in the Scapegoat Wilderness after it burned off in the Benchmark Fire of 1988 and see the same lack of seedlings over the immense burns on the Beaverhead/Deerlodge earlier this decade. Within a generation the open, park-like vistas that dominate the Continental Divide in southern Montana will be echoed all the way to the Canadian border.”

Zigzagging around wildfires in the Bob Marshall Wilderness before this year’s enormous fires totally closed this immense wilderness to the public, Jon relived his career in fire as he met smokejumpers, other firefighters, and trail crews while he hiked 14 to 27 miles a day along the trail. “The CDT is much more challenging than the PCT. Long stretches in Montana are often just a cross-country route, an eroded mining road, or a fence line,” he observed. “Springs and creeks are few and far between, and often cattle-trampled mud holes. Posts erected to mark the trail a decade or so ago have long since been flattened by cattle using them as rubbing posts. Because the trail is so ‘sketchy,’ it gets little use compared with other long-distance trails. In over a month and a half of hiking after leaving Glacier National Park, I met only ten hikers on over 700 miles of trail.”

For all the challenges, he said, “the scenery is incredible, Montana’s and Idaho’s small towns are quite friendly, and, most importantly, the Forest Service is doing its best to maintain this trail despite shrinking recreation budgets and ballooning fire activity.”

Over the next two summers, carrying a lightweight pack averaging about 35 pounds including food and water, Jon hopes to complete the remaining 2,150 miles of the CDT through Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico.

OldSmokey Jay Hughes and Marie Celebrated 65th Wedding Anniversary in May

OldSmokey **Jay Hughes** and his wife Marie of Pendleton celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on May 30, 2007, a feature article by Terry Murry in that day’s edition of the *East Oregonian* reported. “The Hughes were married on May 30, 1942, at the Westminister House in Corvallis” where both were Oregon State College students. “While Jay had grown up in a few locations, Marie had grown up on a dairy farm in the Wood River Valley near Crater Lake,” Murry’s article, from which the following is quoted or adapted, reported.

“I was one of the most frightened students entering Oregon State College,” she said of her arrival in Corvallis. “In high school, we had three rooms and, if everybody was there, there were nine in my class.”

“If she thought she was frightened when she entered OSC, how about getting married to a man who was a forester?”

“I knew I was marrying a forester, but I made up my mind wherever we went, I would make it a home,” she said.”

How did Jay and Marie meet? “Marie had to attend a barbeque during her senior year of college and asked Jay to escort her.”

“I invited him because I was sure nothing would come of it,” she said.”

But, of course, something did. Jay’s career as a Forest Service forester and Marie’s as a Forest Service wife took them to a small apartment in Lakeview, Oregon, and to a logging camp south of Bend, Oregon, before Jay became district ranger at the Unity Ranger Station on the old Whitman National Forest and then district ranger at the Rager Ranger Station on the Ochoco National Forest. Jay and Marie made their final Forest Service move to Pendleton in 1954 when Jay took over the old Pendleton Ranger District on the Umatilla National Forest. There, in Pendleton, they owned their first house. And there, in Pendleton, they still live.

Forest Service News

Transformation Program Process Is Defining U.S. Forest Service Future

An approach called the “Transformation Program” is the U.S. Forest Service’s evolving effort to comply with an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) mandate, issued early in the Bush Administration, to reduce the size and cost of the Forest Service by 25 percent. Many other federal agencies face similar mandates.

The mandate came with OMB guidance to eliminate Forest Service regional offices. The Forest Service responded with the Transformation Program commitment to retain but reduce the size of R.O.s and also reduce the size of the W.O. to help achieve cost reductions. “Current organizational design marching orders from the National Leadership Team to that end,” Margaret Petersen of the R.O. in Portland wrote on August 3, are “that the W.O. and R.O.s of the future will have core staffs in leadership and decision-making roles that look consistent across the agency.”

National mission support staffs that consolidate and eliminate duplication of some of the services to the field will be placed throughout the country. “These staffs will be co-located with Regions, Stations, Areas, and major detached units,” she wrote. The recent reengineering and relocation of the Forest Service’s budget and finance (B&F) and human resources (HR) efforts in Albuquerque are early moves in this direction.

Current plans call for “three geographical zones for sharing resources to fulfill mission support roles and responsibilities that are regional in scope. These zones will be: Pacific (R5, R6, R10), Intermountain West (R1, R2, R3, R4), and Eastern (R8, R9). They too will mirror each other organizationally.” These zone organizations will report to the regional foresters. The result of this program would be a significant reduction in personnel at the W.O. and R.O. levels

“State and Private Forestry will be integrated into [these zone organizations, and] the future of the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry unit [remains to be] determined after the next phase of design work,” according to Margaret.

That next phase of design work took place during three weeks in August when the “transformation core team and subject matter experts throughout the Forest Service” engaged in “developing more details to the organizational alternatives that will be submitted to the National Leadership Team in September” for Chief Abigail Kimbell’s decision on September 30, after this issue of your *OldSmokeys Newsletter* has gone to press, and presentation to OMB in October.

“This organizational change is not without great stress on the agency and its people, especially during a major fire season and other management demands on all three branches of the Forest Service,” OldSmokey **John Marker** observed.

Your *OldSmokeys Newsletter* will strive to keep you apprised of this process.

Prepared from August 3, 2007, write-up by Margaret Petersen, Regional Partnership Liaison, Region 6; minutes of the August 3-5, 2007, annual meeting of the National Association of Forest Service Retirees in Missoula, Montana; and input from John Marker.

Summit Meeting Considers Proposal to Turn Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument into National Park

Participants in an August 28 summit meeting in Longview, Washington, sponsored by U.S. Representative Brian Baird (D-Vancouver), changed the minds of some supporters of the proposal to change the U.S. Forest Service-administered Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument into a national park. Discussions during the three-hour meeting highlighted potential unintended consequences of the proposal. Baird, along with U.S. Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray and U.S. Representative Norm Dicks (D-Washington) in late July called on Undersecretary of Agriculture Mark Rey to determine the Forest Service’s ability to manage the 110,000-acre national volcanic monument over the long term.

Their original intention in proposing national park designation of the monument, spurred by Cowlitz County, Washington, commissioners urging the move, was in part to highlight the area and to shore up local economies surrounding the quietly erupting volcano. What summit participants discovered, however, is that there could be unintended consequences to such a move, and that moving the area from one federal agency to another still does not mitigate the lack of money for maintaining the infrastructure and running the programs.

At issue is the cost of running and maintaining the infrastructure of the national monument, designated by Congress in 1982 with a mandate to serve as an ecological living laboratory for the conduct of world class scientific research on recovery and rebirth after a volcanic event, and sharing that understanding through diverse interpretive services, unique recreation activities, and volunteer stewardship. Five topnotch visitor centers resulted from that legislation.

Forest Service management strategy for the national monument has always been to make careful—sometimes hard—investment choices. Over the years, changing patterns of visitor use and a backlog of deferred maintenance coupled with increasing annual maintenance costs have affected those choices and how the Forest Service worked to achieve the vision set by Congress.

Of course, an act of Congress would be necessary to transfer Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument from the Forest Service to the National Park Service.

Prepared from a special August 30, 2007, version of this story by Kathy Bowman, Editor, Region 6 Thursday Update, and press reports.

National Association of Forest Service Retirees Holds Annual Meeting in Missoula

Special to the OldSmokeys Newsletter by John Marker

The annual National Association of Forest Service Retirees (NAFSR) board of directors and membership meeting was held in Missoula, Montana, from August 3 to August 5, with retired Associate Chief George M. Leonard, Chair, presiding. Key participants Mary Mitios, Vice President of the National Forest Foundation (NFF), and OldSmokey **Dave Stack**, Vice President of the National Museum of Forest Service History (NMFSH), were joined by retired Chief Dale Bosworth, Deputy Chief Hank Kashdan, and Region 1 Regional Forester Tom Tidwell along with Jim Petersen, CEO of Evergreen Foundation and *Evergreen Magazine*, and Keith Argow, president of National Woodland Owners Association, publisher of *National Forestry* magazine, and NAFSR member.

The first order of business was recognition of four NAFSR leaders who are stepping down: founding Chair Doug Leisz, first CEO and OldSmokey **Dick Pflif**, founding Director Jim Freeman, and Director Bill Hurst. Each received a Forest Service Reunion 2005 DVD.

The agenda included a variety of National Forest System, Forest Service, and NAFSR subjects. Major topics were the Forest Service "Transformation Project" (see "*Transformation Program Process is Defining U.S. Forest Service Future*" on page 6), the fire budget, accomplishment of projects on the ground, support for active management of national forests, and the public's growing impatience with forest management conflicts.

Board members focused on how NAFSR might provide positive help to the Forest Service and forest management. The retired Chiefs, Jim Petersen, Keith Argow, and the current Forest Service leadership stressed the critical importance of retirees' support to the well being of the National Forest System and the Forest Service. NAFSR has substantially influenced fire budget, proposed national forest land sales, outsourcing, and other issues, and additional challenges will require more of the independent and experienced voice of retirees.

Expanding NAFSR's membership and influence is critical and a top priority for the coming year. A free subscription to *National Forestry* magazine, courtesy of Keith Argow, publisher, is one incentive to join. Members who contribute energy and experience based on wisdom to solving political, management, and budget problems faced by the Outfit are vital to the future of the forests, forest research, and the practice of forestry in the United States.

Improvement of communications and cooperation among groups concerned about the future of the National Forest System and the Forest Service was advanced by an agreement between NAFSR, NFF, and NMFSH to exchange information and newsletters and explore opportunities for joint ventures to support the forests and the Forest Service mission.

NAFSR will take the lead to develop, with other resource groups, seminars for administration and congressional staff members to provide them with better forest management knowledge, with a special emphasis on wildfire.

Full details of the meeting are available on the FSX web site at <www.fsx.org> or in hard copy from this writer.

The bottom line: Both the National Forest System and the Forest Service need retiree help to counter bad information and to develop public knowledge of and support for the purposes of the national forests and what is needed for these forests to serve all their citizen owners.

Forest Service Announces Regional Forester Leadership Changes

U.S. Forest Service Chief Abigail Kimbell announced on September 6 regional forester reassignments for the Intermountain Region and the Pacific Southwest Region.

Harv Forsgren has been selected to be the new regional forester for the Intermountain Region (Region 4). Randy Moore will be the new regional forester for the Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5).

"Both Harv and Randy have demonstrated outstanding leadership managing the many complex issues in the Southwest and the East and are superbly qualified to take on their new challenges in the Intermountain Region and in California," said Chief Kimbell.

Harv Forsgren has been the regional forester in the Southwestern Region (Region 3) since July 2002. Prior to that, he was the regional forester in the Pacific Northwest Region (Region 6). Forsgren will now lead the Intermountain Region headquartered in Ogden, Utah. Forsgren, who began his career as a volunteer on the Bridger-Teton National Forest, will replace Jack Troyer who announced his October 3 retirement earlier this year. The Intermountain Region consists of 13 national forests and one national grassland located in Utah, Nevada, eastern California, southern Idaho, and western Wyoming.

Randy Moore has been selected to lead the Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) headquartered in Vallejo, California. He will take over from Bernie Weingardt, who also planned an October 3 retirement. Randy has been the regional forester in the Eastern Region (Region 9) since May 2002. Prior to that, he was the forest supervisor on the Mark Twain National Forest. Moore began his career at the North Dakota State Conservationist Office and has a broad range of natural resource management experience. He has recently led Region 9 to successfully complete forest plan revisions within a two-year timeframe, and unprecedented accomplishment. The Pacific Southwest Region includes all national forests in California except for Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests lands that extend into the state from Nevada.

Reporting dates for both selections and names of new regional foresters for Region 3 and Region 9 had not been announced by press time.

Prepared from a September 6, 2007, U.S. Forest Service press release.

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Feature

Joe Higgins: From The Bronx to the Wilderness

Joseph F. “Joe” Higgins, an OldSmokey who died August 3, 2006, (see “Memories” on page 12 of Fall 2006 OldSmokeys Newsletter), left a short memoir from which Dorothy Higgins has allowed your editor to abstract this brief review of his Forest Service career. Joe’s memoir reflects a man of great faith and conviction, both reflected in that career. Thanks to Dave and Pam Trask for coordinating this article and to Dick Buscher for providing the photograph.

Joe was born in The Bronx, New York, on January 16, 1933, to an attorney, Joseph F. Higgins, and his wife, Alice Lind Higgins, attended Public School 71 and Christopher Columbus High School and regularly attended mass at Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church. Scouting fueled his interest in the outdoors; although his father wanted him to become a lawyer, “I wanted to become a forest ranger.” After service in the U.S. Marine Corps and finishing high school—from which he was called to active duty in 1950, Joe started Queens College at night, married Barbara Ann Montross in February 1954 after a two-year courtship, and transferred to the University of Maine at Orono where he graduated in 1958 “with highest distinction” in forestry.



Joe Higgins in the wilderness.

Photo by Dick Buscher

Our next stop was Middlebury, Vermont, and the start of a 34-year career with the U.S. Forest Service on the Green Mountain National Forest. I spent six years on the Green Mountain, one in Middlebury and five in Arlington, and I loved the work and the esprit de corps of the Forest Service. Vermont was a lovely place to live. We enjoyed all the outdoor activities our rather meager budget allowed, and I made some life-long friends. We had, in order, Jennifer in 1958, Jeanette in 1959, William in 1960, Robert in 1962, and Mary in 1963. Barbara developed aplastic anemia, at that time an incurable disease, while carrying Mary. Mary was born on Valentine’s Day, and shortly thereafter Barbara passed on to the loving care of Jesus Christ. This was the worst day of my life, and for the next six months only the need to love and care for my children kept me going.

My children were now in the loving care of my sister-in-law Monica and her husband Dick in New Jersey, so I transferred to the Forest Service regional office in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. In April 1964, after a six-month courtship, I married Dorothy Hoffken and we set up our household in Media, Pennsylvania. Dorothy and I had known each other for years, and she had served as a bridesmaid to Barbara. We bought our first house, and welcomed four of the six children living with Monica and Dick. I let them keep the two youngest because they were childless and were essentially the only parents Bob and Mary had known. In February 1965, we added daughter Catherine to our family.

In June 1966, as our Eastern Region office was being closed, I was transferred to the district ranger position on the Teton Ranger District of the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Montana. We spent three wonderful years in a poorly-insulated, 820-square foot house in Choteau as I managed 500,000 acres of some of the most beautiful country including part of the Bob Marshall Wilderness. The whole family learned to ski and swim and was introduced to western life in the great outdoors. I later told friends and family that I was sorry I ever left because I loved the land and equally rugged but kind people who welcomed us so completely. To this day, I recall leading a pack string under the Continental Divide, fishing for cutthroat trout under the Chinese Wall, and watching an adult grizzly rip through a downed log in search of grubs. What a treat for a city boy. For three years I was a *real* cowboy. I even helped ranchers who had grazing allotments on the Forest drive cattle between pastures and spent a day helping brand and castrate calves.

In June 1969 I was transferred to the Lochsa Ranger District of the Clearwater National Forest in Kooskia, Idaho, to take on administration of the newly-enacted Clearwater Wild and Scenic River as well as 250,000 acres of national forest land that included 100,000 acres of the remote and rugged Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. The Clearwater River was an “Instant River” under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, and it was our job to bring the Middle Fork of the Clearwater and the Lochsa and Selway rivers into conformance with the Act. This involved “freezing time” by buying scenic easements from private landowners along the rivers, a fun job until we bought an operating “house of ill repute” between U.S. Highway 12 and the Clearwater River. I gained the reputation of the ranger who had closed down “Maggie’s Bend” and I was held in much contempt by a vocal portion of the local population. We spent six years in Kooskia and made some long-lasting friends, but we never felt the affection we basked in while in Montana.

I loved traveling the wilderness and the adventure of exploring the rugged country and doing my best to keep it forever wild. I also noticed the abuses the Forest Service heaped on the rugged but fragile land with huge clear-cuts and destructive road building that resulted in thousands of tons of soil being deposited in once clear rivers. These observations started me on my avocation of being an environmental activist in an organization that generally exploited the available resource with a minimum of concern for the long term consequences. My future assignments reflected my desire to protect rather than exploit natural resources.

In 1975 I was promoted to a recreation-wilderness staff position on the Superior National Forest in Minnesota. I directed many changes in the management of the million-acre Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW). I wrote language included in

the Act directing BWCAW management, and directed implementation of a mandatory quota system that prevented overcrowding and assured visitors with permits a high quality wilderness experience. We bought sailboats and enjoyed sailing Lake Superior. Long winters prompted us to take up cross-country skiing.

In November 1978 I was transferred to the Regional Office in Portland, Oregon, as group leader for interpretive services and cultural resources. When Mount St. Helens blew, I helped plan the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. I received a commendation from the Secretary of Agriculture for this work. After completion of the plan, I was made program manager for wilderness and wild and scenic rivers—all congressionally-designated areas and dispersed recreation for the 20 million acres of national forest in Washington and Oregon. My working life was like one big vacation as I rode horseback in the wilderness, rafted the white-water rivers, backpacked the magnificent mountains, and skied and snowmobiled great trails. I also had a big hand in writing the Oregon Omnibus Wild and Scenic Rivers Act which vastly expanded protection of many of the state's finest waterways. I received a commendation from the Chief of the Forest Service and a personal letter from Senator Mark Hatfield for this work, and got a series of "outstanding" ratings for my overall work performance.

Sailing, downhill skiing, and scuba diving became our main recreation activities, and Dorothy and I traveled to exotic places such as Cozemel, Hawaii, Costa Rica, the Bahamas, the Caymen Islands, Yap, Palau, and Fiji. I always enjoyed working with wood, so stocked up with tools and oak boards and started making furniture.

I retired in 1992, and Dorothy and I have been enjoying doing what we want to do when we want to do it. I have been active in supporting and promoting environmental issues at the national and local levels and was, for a short time, a member of the board of directors of Wilderness Watch, a national wilderness advocacy group. During this time I appealed several U.S. Forest Service plans I thought detrimental to wilderness and won each one. Unfortunately, old age has brought on some problems we would just as soon not have.

Throughout his Forest Service career narrative, Joe shared the successes of his children. Toward the end, he reflected on life and its lessons. Some of these reflections are of particular interest to OldSmokeys.

The first ranger I ever worked for, John Maslack, often told me, after he made a difficult decision, that he would rather be right than popular. After being exposed to John for a couple of years and after watching many bureaucratic "yes men" operate, I adopted the same philosophy. When anybody asks me my opinion on something important, I tell him or her honest thoughts in the most tactful way I know. My version of the truth is often not what they want to hear, but they know I have not lied to them to curry their favor. This has often put me at odds with my supervisors and peers and I'm sure my Forest Service career and social life suffered to some degree because of my outspokenness, but I am comfortable with myself.

Wilderness is a passion of mine. By wilderness I mean a vast piece of undeveloped land with only primitive trails and tiny campsites with no permanent improvements and few, if any, signs. I have been fortunate enough to travel through many such places in my wonderful life. I have always found peace and fulfillment in such settings, and I fervently hope advancing civilization brought on by excess population growth will not destroy the remaining truly wild areas to the detriment of future generations. (As the father of seven children, I see the irony in this statement.) Much of my adult life has been spent advocating rationing of use of our remaining wilderness and wild and scenic rivers. I believe the wilderness experience is unique, and that we should preserve the remaining opportunities as truly special occasions. I see this as a quality over quantity issue, and I would be willing to use these unique places less often if I could be assured of a truly outstanding experience when it was my turn.

I am an introvert. I frankly prefer the company of trees and wildlife to associating with large groups of people. I guess this is one of the reasons I am a forester as opposed to being an attorney. As I have grown older, I have become more comfortable around people. I welcome this change.

When all is said and done, I would like those people who have shared some time with me to evaluate me as the Navajos evaluate their tribal members, and come up with the conclusion that I was a "valuable man."



Coming in 2008!

What Every Forest Officer Should Know, the thoughts of Stuart Bevier "S.B." Show, District/Regional Forester, California District/Region, from 1926 to 1946, about the professionalism of his rangers are shared in four installments beginning in the Winter 2008 issue of your *OldSmokeys Newsletter*.

"The best thing I've seen—put across in the best fashion."
—Walt Perry, U.S. Forest Service, 1910-1936

Election 2007

PNWFSA Board Taps Bruce Hendrickson for President-elect; Your Vote is Important

It's that time of year again—the time of year OldSmokeys pick one of their number to prepare to lead their Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association about fifteen months from now. As usual, and as required by the bylaws, the PNWFSA Board of Directors has nominated a candidate for your approval.

Bruce Hendrickson has been named to appear on the President-elect ballot (below) and to serve in that office when current President-elect **John Nesbitt** succeeds President **John Poppino** early next year.

Bruce, as did many OldSmokeys, first worked in the U.S. Forest Service as a summer employee. He served on the Okanogan National Forest in 1958 and the Ochoco National Forest in 1959. After graduating from South Dakota State College in 1963 with a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering, he received a permanent appointment in the Forest Service and served assignments on the Ochoco and Umatilla national forests.

Also, in 1963, Bruce married Marry Jane Snapp of Madras, Oregon, and transferred to Engineering in the Regional Office in Portland. For the next several years, he worked on construction of fire lookouts and as a ski lift engineer, and later led the architecture section. This was during the early years of Job Corps center development, and there was a lot of work to do.

In 1967, Bruce transferred to the Washington Office where he served as Engineering's specialist in buildings and related structures for both National Forest System and Research projects.

Bruce returned to Region 6 and the Regional Office in Portland in 1971 where, for the next 14 years, he was the leader of a building design group. The group's work included projects on Timberline Lodge, the new J. Herbert Stone Nursery, and the newer Silver Lake Visitor Center for the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument.

Bruce has been a member of the Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association since his retirement from the Forest Service at the end of 1985.

Clip or copy the ballot below or just use a plain piece of paper to mail your approval of your Board's nomination of Bruce Hendrickson as President-elect. You also may also cast your ballot by email addressed to Secretary Bev Pratt at <bev_pratt@yahoo.com>.

Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association
Fall 2007 Ballot for Election of New President-elect

The PNWFSA Board of Directors has nominated **Bruce Hendrickson** to serve as its new President-elect. Bruce will become President early next year if the membership casts enough ballots in favor. So, let's send in lots of votes (one per member, of course) to show Bruce how much we appreciate his willingness to lead the OldSmokeys in 2008 as President-elect and in 2009 as President! The alternative is to write in the name of another member you would like to serve in these positions.

I cast my ballot for **Bruce Hendrickson** to serve as PNWFSA President-elect _____ (check here), or

I cast my ballot for _____ (write-in here) to serve as PNWFSA President-elect.

Mail your ballot to PNWFSA, P.O. Box 5583, Portland, Oregon 97228-5583 by November 15, 2007.

Or you may cast your ballot by email addressed to Secretary Bev Pratt at <bev_pratt@yahoo.com>.

Changes *Compiled by Bev Pratt, Secretary, and Vern Clapp, Treasurer and Data Base Manager*

Anderson, Christine & Wayne – New members: Olympia, WA
Anderson, Linda Ruth – Deceased, June 27, 2007; Carl survives
Brown, Mary Ellen – Change address: Vancouver, WA
Carson, Ben F. & Helen – Change email:
Ciesla, William M. & Patricia — Change email:
Clarke, Edward H. & Tee — Change address: Tigard, OR
Cyrus, Gene — Deceased, August 16; Judith survives
Davis, Gilbert A. & Caroline — Change emails.
Doty, Ormond H. — Deceased, May 6, 2007; Edith survives
Hess, Deane A. & Donna — Add email:
Heyn, Phyllis — Change address: Boise, ID
Hughes, John – Change email:
Knowlen, Esther — Change Address: Eugene, OR
Leep, Jim & Retta – Change email:
Loff, Donald D & Jean – Change email:
Long, Roger L. & Tigerlily-Feline – New members: Amboy, WA
Lowery, Bill & Shirley – Change email:
McFarland, Janine — New member: Crooked River Ranch, OR
Mealey, Steve & Marty — New members: Springfield, OR
Pong, Gene & Karen — Change email:
Pratt, Beverley B. — Change email:
Reinhart, Ken & Denise — New members: Prineville, OR
Robertshaw, Woody & Pat — Change email:
Rondthaler, Howard M. — Deceased, August 6, 2007; Carolyn survives
Scott, David W. & Audrey —Change emails.
Skrip, Ron & Helen — Change e-mail:
Thorn, Stanley A. — Deceased, May 23, 2007; Edna Marie survives
Wilson, Bruce & Glenda — New Members: Cody, WY
Wilson, Michael T. & Nancy D. – New members: Marysville, WA

The actual changes do not show on this web version of the newsletter but any PNWFSA member can request an updated electronic directory from Vern Clapp.

Forest Service News continued from page 7

U.S. Forest Service Chief Gail Kimbell Focuses on Climate, Water, and Kids in Speech

The themes of climate change, water issues, and childrens' understanding of the role forests play in American life dominated Chief Gail Kimbell's September 7 speech to the Society of Environmental Journalists at Stanford, California.

The challenge of climate change and its influence on America's forests, the influence of both on America's water supply, and the need for America's children to understand the interrelationships between natural resources and life are "three themes in particular" that "stand out" for Chief Kimbell as critical concerns for the Forest Service. "Our most important resource in this country is not forests, vital as they are," she told the journalists. "It is not water, although life itself would cease to exist without it. It is people. The challenges of climate change and looming water shortages will not be resolved in a few years. It will take generations. Today's children—and theirs—will need to be able to take the baton and finish the race. For that, they will need a full understanding of why forests are so valuable." The Forest Service's new "More Kids in the Woods" program is intended to help provide this insight.

Prepared from Chief Kimbell's September 7, 2007, speech.

Forest Service News continues on page 17

New Members

Welcome to these new OldSmokeys who have joined since the Summer 2007 issue of the *OldSmokeys Newsletter* went to press.

Christine C. & Wayne Anderson of Olympia, Washington. After 34+ years in the Forest Service and 31 of those in Region 6, Chris is a forester working in Olympia for the R.O. Natural Resource section handling timber sale contract claims and litigation. Joined in June. According to Christine, “Ol’ Bob Devlin is one heck of a recruiter!”

Roger L. & Tigerlily-Feline Long of Amboy, Washington. Roger retired in June 1983 from the R.O. in Portland after 30 years in the Forest Service, all in Region 6, and 36 total years of federal service. Joined in July.

Janine McFarland of Crooked River Ranch, Oregon, has served 22 years in the Forest Service, and has been district archaeologist, Bend/Fort Rock Ranger District, Deschutes National Forest, since January 2004. She served as an archaeologist on the Los Padres National Forest from 1988 to 2004, and before that on the Lassen, Deschutes, Malheur, and Wallowa-Whitman national forests. Joined in October.

Steve & Marty Mealey of Springfield, Oregon. Steve served four years in the U.S. Air Force as an intelligence officer and was a big game hunting and river outfitter and guide in Idaho and a grizzly bear researcher in Wyoming and Montana before 20 years in the Forest Service as a wildlife biologist, forest supervisor on the Shoshone and Boise national forests, co-leader of the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, and Assistant Director of Wildlife and Fish and Assistant Chief for Strategic Planning in the W.O. After retiring from the Forest Service in 1997, he was Director, Idaho Department of Fish and Game 1997-1999; Executive Director, Boone and Crockett Club, 1999-2001; and Manager of Wildlife, Watersheds, and Aquatic Ecology, Boise-Cascade Corporation, 2001-2005.

Ken & Denise Reinhart of Prineville, Oregon. Ken retired in October 2002 after 35 years in the Forest Service, seven on the Fremont National Forest and 28 on the Ochoco National Forest. He worked in presale, postsale, and sale administration and retired as forest safety officer. Denise, who has been grants and agreements specialist for the Deschutes and Ochoco national forests since 2002, has served most of her 33 years in the Forest Service as a resource specialist, primarily in timber. Joined in September.

Bruce & Glenda Wilson of Cody, Wyoming. Bruce retired in May 2006 at the Region 2 R.O. after 32 years in the Forest Service, 20 of those in Region 6. Joined as a lifetime member in August.

Michael T. & Nancy D. Wilson of Marysville, Washington. Mick retired in May 2007 as timber sale contracting officer on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest after 29 years in the Forest Service, all but three years in Region 6, and 36 total years of federal service. Mick and Nancy plan to move to Arizona later this year. Joined in July.

Membership Chair Bob Devlin Focuses On, Encourages OldSmokey Recruitment

“I continue to have good luck with recruiting new members by contacting both recent retirees and those employees who are eligible to join according to our membership bylaws,” says Membership Chair **Bob Devlin**, who encourages Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association area representatives as well as other members to do likewise.

“With most of the Forest Service’s personnel (Human Resources) staffing concentrated at the new Albuquerque Service Center, it may well require our Area Representatives (*see page 20 for the list of Area Representatives to the Regional Office and Region 6 national forests*) to do more work to keep track of retirement news and retirees. That is another reason I have been putting extra effort into recruiting those who are still working for the outfit, but are eligible.”

“I know the Area representatives are all working at contacting potential new members. That’s good, but not enough! All of us can help! I bet most of you know someone who is still working for the Forest Service who meets the membership requirements. If you do, ask that person to join.”

“Our OldSmokeys association is blessed with a large number of active members. We can continue that legacy by successful recruitment of new members. So let’s all help our Area Representatives!”

Pacific Northwest Forest Service Association Membership Requirements –

To become a PNWFSA OldSmokey, a person must be either...

- a U.S. Forest Service retiree or soon-to-be retiree who has worked in or now resides in the Pacific Northwest, or
- a current employee of the U.S. Forest Service with at least 20 years of government service (including military service) who works in or has worked in the Pacific Northwest.

Complete membership information and applications are available on the PNWFSA web site at www.oldsmokeys.org!

Memories *Compiled by Dave and Jane Kolb*

Linda Ruth Anderson died June 27, 2007, at age 68. She was the wife of PNWFSA member Carl Anderson. Linda Todd was born August 22, 1938, in Caribou, Maine. She married Carl on September 25, 1958. Linda was a county health nurse, an EMT, and a medical practitioner in the Bend and Redmond areas of Oregon. Survivors include her husband, son Sven, daughters Paula Owen and Sonya Juthberg, one brother, one sister, and nine grandchildren.

George Chaffin died July 2, 2007, at age 95. He was a long-time member of the Fremont National Forest road crew. George was born April 12, 1912, in Golconda, Illinois. He joined the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933. He married Opal Henderson on May 28, 1936, in Roseburg, Oregon. She died two months before George on May 1, 2007. Survivors include daughters Sharon Carter and Kay Hunnemuller, seven grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

Gene Cyrus died August 16, 2007, at age 59. He was a PNWFSA member. Gene worked in Personnel for the Forest Service on several national forests in Washington and Oregon, for the U.S. Army in Germany, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Panama. He retired from the Forest Service as administrative officer for the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Olympic national forests about 1997. Survivors include his wife Judith; daughters Kalle Cyrus, Juli Rising, Jaime Seiber, and Jill Cyrus; and three grandchildren.

Ada C. Dalby died in early August 2007. She worked in Lands and Minerals in the Regional Office, primarily in the rights-of-way section with Bob Beeman. She retired in 1983. Ada died suddenly about a week after returning from a cruise near Catalina Island. She loved to travel and is survived by her husband, Jack. No other information is available.

Ormond H. Doty died May 6, 2007, at the age 76. He was a PNWFSA member. Ormond was born April 28, 1931, in Baker City, Oregon. He earned a degree in forestry from Oregon State College in 1954. He married Edith Alice Holm on July 17, 1954, while serving in the U.S. Air Force in Rapid City, South Dakota. Ormond started work with the Forest Service in July 1956 on the Siuslaw National Forest. Later he held positions on the Willamette National Forest where he was district ranger, Oakridge Ranger District, from 1967 to 1974, and in the Pacific Northwest and Southwestern regional offices. Survivors include his wife, son Ormond Robert, daughter Alice Candelaria, and six grandchildren.

Enid Lee Klenski died April 28, 2007, at age 68. She was born August 16, 1938, to Floyd and Janie Miller in Billings, Montana. Enid served as a retirement specialist in the Deschutes National Forest supervisor's office. She married Ralph Klenski in Salem on September 22, 1956. Survivors include her husband, son Lyle, one sister, and one grandchild.

Wendy S. Knight died September 5, 2007, at age 44. She was the daughter of Bob Snoich, a Region 6 retiree. Wendy was born January 23, 1963, in Medford, Oregon. She was a teacher for the Hillsboro and Beaverton school districts. Survivors include her husband Matt, daughter Alissa, son Brenden, parents Bob and Shirley Snoich, and two brothers.

Joe Price died July 18, 2007, at age 76. Although not a PNWFSA member, he had many PNWFSA friends. Joe earned a degree in forestry at Duke University in the mid 1960s and served on the Wind River Ranger District, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, and Hebo Ranger District, Siuslaw National Forest, in both timber management and other resource (lands, recreation) positions before transferring to the Sandia Ranger District on the Cibola National Forest, New Mexico, where he worked in timber management and retired in 2004. Survivors include his wife, Donna, and sons Douglass and Andrew.

Howard Mayro "Rondy" Rondthaler died August 6, 2007, at age 79. He was a PNWFSA member. Born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in 1928, he attended Clemmons Public School and served in the U.S. Navy. He moved to Oregon in 1948 and began working for the Forest Service on the Mt. Hood National Forest, rising to head the trails construction and maintenance programs and to administer every contract for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail from the Columbia River to Mt. Jefferson before retiring in 1984. Rondy attended Reed College, graduating in 1955 with a degree in history. While at Reed, he met and married Jane Doar. They were divorced in 1974. On April 1, 2000, he married Carolyn Reynolds. Survivors include Carolyn; sister Katherine Woodwell; daughters Elizabeth Jolly, Catherine Rondthaler, and Mary Rondthaler; stepdaughters Louisa Reynolds and Jennifer Reynolds; and nine grandchildren.

Donald Lloyd Southwick died September 1, 2007, at age 66. He was the husband of Joanne who works in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest supervisor's office. Donald was born in Sunnyside, Washington, and was living in Woodland, Washington. He was retired from Pacific Power and Light Company. Survivors include his wife; sons Dan, Dave, and Dean; daughter Deborah Anderson; three grandchildren; two sisters; and one brother.

Benjamin B. Stout died July 29, 2007, at age 83. While he didn't work for the Forest Service in Region 6, Ben was well known by many PNWFSA members. He was born and raised in West Virginia and earned a degree in forestry from West Virginia University. Ben earned advanced degrees in silviculture and forest ecology from Harvard and Rutgers universities. He taught at Rutgers and was Dean of the School of Forestry at the University of Montana. He retired in 1991 and moved to Albany, Oregon. Survivors include his wife Elaine and her six children, sons David and Bruce, daughter Susan, and two grandchildren.

Stanley A. Thorn died May 23, 2007, at age 84. He was a PNWFSA member. Stan was born in Portland, Oregon, where he spent most of his life except for the World War II years in which he served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps in India and China. After the war, he graduated from Oregon State College. He worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, then transferred to the Forest Service in the late 1950s. Stan worked in bridge and facilities design and inspection and was COR for the Angell Job Corps Center. Stan retired in 1978. He married Edna Marie Hale in 1949. Survivors include his wife, son Thomas, and daughter Nancy Thorn.

Lloyd Alvin Waid died July 30, 2007, at age 93. He was born February 27, 1914, in Stanfield, Oregon. Lloyd graduated from Ukiah High School, married his high school sweetheart, and started working for the Forest Service as a lookout. He later graduated from Oregon State College with a forestry degree. During World War II, he served in the U.S. Navy aviation in the South Pacific. He married his wife Norma in 1950, and both worked for the Forest Service. After retiring in 1972, he led the effort to incorporate

Ukiah and served as the city's mayor for 15 years. Lloyd and Norma moved to the Grande Ronde Retirement Center in La Grande, Oregon. Norma died in 2001. Survivors include his daughter Karla Lewis, granddaughter Melissa Wendell, brothers Ken and Fred, and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

News Flash!

Ray Steiger Relieves Dave Kolb

as OldSmokeys' Archivist. Ray Steiger has agreed to take over the PNWFSA Archivist job from Dave Kolb, according to President John Poppino. Dave, with the able assistance of his wife Jane, has excelled at this exacting function for several years.

"That's good news!" said Dave. "I'll be glad to work with Ray on the transition. I'll probably continue to scan *The Oregonian* obituaries—mainly out of habit and to make sure I'm not on the list—and will pass on to Ray anything that I recognize as Forest Service related."

Many OldSmokeys Remember Orm Doty

Orm Doty's death at age 76 on May 6, 2007, stimulated memories throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

Orm Doty was a special case. If ever anyone looked like the stereotypical "ranger" is was Orm. Square-jawed, handsome, trim, wore the uniform like he had been the model. But there was more. He was tough. No nonsense. By the book. And if the book didn't fit, he rewrote the book.

I left Oakridge just before he came as ranger, following **Mike Kerrick**, I think. On return visits, I was regaled with stories of the "tough new ranger"...not always loved, but always the boss.

Orm hired me off the Willamette National Forest in the late 1970s to be the first logging specialist in Region 3, where he was the R.O. timber sales group leader. I was scared to death of him but, as they say, I needed the job. He told me to start a cable logging program in the region but, since he didn't know much about logging, it was totally up to me.

He also gave me two books to help me understand the Southwest culture: *The Great Milagro Beanfield War* and a Tony Hillerman novel starring Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn [of the Navajo Tribal Police].

--Denny Caird

I had the good fortune to work with Orm Doty on the Siuslaw National Forest. Once [when he was a district ranger on the Willamette National Forest], Orm called me to be the fire information officer for a big fire on his Oakridge Ranger District. He was a no-nonsense kind of guy, and ran a tight ship.

In later years we had the chance to chat occasionally when he was in D.C. for a meeting. I always looked forward to seeing him. And yes, he did mellow out a bit in later years.

--Tom Harlan

Ormond Doty and I teamed up on a lot of projects while we were both in the R.O. We developed a lot of C clauses involving the timber sale road business. We also traveled a lot on value engineering reviews in the region. We were also forestry schoolmates at Oregon State College. We both got a lot done together. He was great to work with and I count him as one of my close friends.

--Paul Enberg

While forest supervisor of the Willamette National Forest in the early 1970s, I had the good fortune to have Oakridge Ranger Orm Doty as a colleague. Orm was a consummate professional and a focused and "on top of it all" district ranger. He oversaw an immense timber program during the time when the Forest actually scaled around a billion board feet a couple years, which included "older dead."

I cannot recall even one time when there was a problem on the Oakridge Ranger District that came to me. He took care of things! His spouse, Edith, was a true Forest Service wife in the tradition I grew up in during my father's and grandfather's Forest Service careers. Both fine people and rarely duplicated. Sad to see him gone.

--Zane G. Smith, Jr.

Mealeyisms Packed a Double Punch

By Stan Bennett

Bob Mealey came to the Siuslaw National Forest in the early 1960s as timber staff officer. My office was next to Bob's until he retired in 1974. While the Pinchot shibboleth "forestry is tree farming" was in his background, Bob was sufficiently exposed to the new ideas and the new needs of those changing times to "break new ground." Bob had in his office two tools of days gone by—a Stonebridge folding lantern and a Hebo pruning club. Both rested on a 16-inch diameter slice of second-growth Douglas-fir 39 years old.

Bob was known throughout Region 6 for his colorful speech. On the Willamette and Siuslaw national forests his witty sayings became known as "Mealeyisms." When the Siuslaw fell deep in debt in its brush disposal account and Rex Wilson, fire staff, found out the sad news, Bob remarked that Rex "howled like a hound dog who had stuck his ass on a thistle."

There are those who have something to say but do not know how to say it without putting our foot in our mouth. There are others who think they have something to say but soon realize from the drooping eyelids and nodding heads that they didn't. When Bob had the floor, a certain magnetism commanded attention. Next to Bob's office, I overheard many colorful conversations. My ears would tune in as Bob was painting his philosophy with picturesque patter. Why? While one of Mealey's witticisms is jamb-packed with humor, if you take it apart you'll find a lot of wisdom. Like the time at a ranger-staff meeting when the discussion turned to strengthening our timber sale administration. "While I don't want to make a habit of not being popular," Bob said, "it behoves us to know the sins of our timber sale purchasers before he commits them." He went on to say: "In training timber sale administrators, district rangers should sometimes favor them with their own attention."

After Bob gave **Tom Harlan**, our I&E officer, a rundown on the timber management activities for 1968, Tom said, "Bob, your statements leave me speechless." As the late Howard Cosell would say, "he told it like it is." Bob's stories were told in a twinkling sense of humor, using his normal language, not something special for shock treatment.

During the 1970 fire bust on the Okanogan National Forest, Tom Harlan was sent to the R.O. as public information officer. "That's not an assignment, that's a sentence," Bob replied Tom when he told him his assignment.

Rex Wilson was often designated acting forest supervisor during Tenny Moore's absences from the Willamette National Forest. At a staff meeting after one of Tenny's trips, Bob said to Rex, "What did you do when you had the 'mantle-of-God' on, Mr. Wilson?"

The Blue River Ranger District on the Willamette was one of Bob's assignments, and he spent considerable time on the Three Sisters Wilderness study. The South Fork of the McKenzie River was dear to his heart. During the controversy over French Pete Creek, Bob was heard to say "some darn knuckleheaded dimwit senator changes his leopard spots to look like a swan so that everyone follows him and the whole damn plan goes down the tube."

Responding to the then-new Forest Service budget process, Bob had this comment: "The real world is the world the Chief lives in whether we like it or not."

When observing a woman in Tillicum Beach Campground scurrying for firewood, Bob remarked to Ranger **Kent Mays**: "Kent, you better get that woman some wood before she has a heart attack."

During a discussion of the form for the presale development plan one day, Bob said: "I'm not sold on forms, only certain kinds."

Some other Mealeyisms which I recall are:

"Timber management financing is the act of agony."

"Thank God for bureaucracy. We got lots of numbers."

"Timber management versus multiple use coordination is known as the case of the widget factory."

"We can't play this game by the seat of our pants."

"And that's what gets people into trouble, is a 'shall we dance' sort of thing."

Bob told fire assistant **Johnny Devereaux** in 1974, "They got me so loaded up with junk I won't be able to relax until I retire."

Like many of us, Bob and Anna started their Forest Service career in a tent. Bob was a wonderful man to work with, and I always was grateful for his advice.

Tom Harlan Recalls Bob Mealey on Penstemons

I was on a field trip for rangers and staff to the Willamette National Forest a long time ago. I was doing a lot of environmental education at the time, and could hold my own identifying coastal flowers but was somewhat at a loss with Cascade Range species. I was walking down a trail with Bob Mealey and asked him to identify a flower. He said it was a penstemon. A little farther along I asked him about another flower, and he said it was a penstemon. The third time he identified another flower as a penstemon, I asked him what it was with him and penstemons. He said there are dozens of different penstemons, so he just called everything a penstemon and was right most of the time. What a great sense of humor! Bob was a consummate gentleman.

Letters

Gordon Schmidt on *Joe Price*

I am saddened at the news of Joe Price's passing. I knew Joe very well and worked for him on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in the late '60s and early '70s. He was Bob Burns' assistant to the RA (Bob was the RA). I worked for Joe in reforestation and TSI. We carpoled to work at Wind River as he and I lived in Stevenson at the time. Joe transferred to the Siuslaw National Forest from Wind River.

Joe was a great guy to work for and he taught me a great deal about forestry. I was a technician at the time and Joe was a big influence on me to get my degree. Between Tom Atzet and Joe, I didn't have a chance. I had to go back to school!

Alan Kelso on *Joe Price*

Joe Price worked on the Cibola National Forest in timber management from 1983 to 2004, with his final tour on the Sandia Ranger District. He continued to work in the state and private forestry arena in the East (Sandia) Mountains after retirement, always focused on helping people avoid losses from catastrophic fire.

Joe's legacy is evident on the ground at Sandia. With help from many others, there was an active timber sale and fuel break program which provides a foundation for many years of work ahead. He recognized the potential of catastrophic damage to Albuquerque's mountain playground and worked to protect it through active management. He also recognized the value of the aspen resource, which was declining rapidly. Now there are vigorous stands of aspen over 10 feet tall, a rare sight in the Southwest. When you look at the middle and east side of the Sandias and see the bright green in the spring or the golden leaves in the fall, think of our departed friend who left his mark.

Editor's Note: Alan Kelso is Forest Silviculturist, Cibola National Forest and Kiowa, Rita Blanca, Black Kettle, and McClellan Creek national grasslands. This letter came through Victor Wyant of the Cibola National Forest, and contained additional information found in "Memories" on page 15. Readers who wish to contact either Alan or Victor may do so through Wendall Jones.

John Poppino on *Rondy Rondthaler*

Rondy always had a smile and usually a story! He enjoyed telling the story of how my "promotion" to Fish Creek Lookout created an opening for him on the Rho Ridge trail crew. That was in 1948. He spent the rest of his career on Mt. Hood trails after a degree in history from Reed College.

Bruce McMillan on *historic Allison Ranger Station*

I enjoyed the article in the summer newsletter about Allison Guard Station. It brought back fond memories.

There is one little gap in the story about the move of the ranger station to Hines. The ranger station was first moved to Burns where it was located on the second floor of the old post office building. The Burns Ranger District of the Malheur National Forest was also in the post office building at that time.

The motor pool was at Hines where the new ranger station was eventually built and the Snow Mountain Ranger District folks moved into their new office in 1962.

I don't know when the move to Burns occurred, but it was long before I moved to the district in 1960.

Editor's Note: Bruce's letter is greatly appreciated. The information about the interim district office at the Burns post office building is something my research on the Allison Ranger Station didn't turn up.

Jim Barrett on "*The Way We Were*" photograph

The photo on page 23 of the summer newsletter brought back some great memories. I knew twelve of the guys in the photo. Frank Dunning and I were scoutmasters together and marked a lot of timber in the winter of 1958. Ralph Dymont was a close friend. Henry Tonseth and Don Peters showed me how to fight fires, before I went into research and some after. Great bunch of men.

LeRoy Layton on *forest management and forest health*

I am a 1985 U.S. Forest Service retiree. After serving in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Korean War and doing a few jobs here and there, I joined the Forest Service in 1956. I was in timber management working as a timber sale administrator.

I was always proud of the work we did. As I travel the forest now I soon discover that the forest is in bad shape. It appears to me that no one is looking out for the common good of the solid infrastructure established years ago by many of us old timers. I feel strongly that our precious forest has been violated by our environmental laws now in effect.

The rules for good forest management nowadays [are] inflexible and tie up the hands of Forest Service managers. It seems to me that the scale is tipped too far in one way. I feel that forest management has to be balanced so that it favors the most good for everyone.

It is imperative that changes be made so that good and proper forest management can get back on track. Let the Forest Service take charge.

Letters is a section of your *OldSmokeys Newsletter* in which you may share thoughts and feelings with other OldSmokeys. You may send your letters to Secretary Bev Pratt at P.O. Box 5583, Portland, Oregon 97228, or directly to Editor Les Joslin at 2356 NW Great Place, Bend, Oregon 97701.

A Big OldSmokey Thanks to Pat Joslin, Amy McLaughlin, and Wendy Joslin for their technical assistance with this issue of the OldSmokeys Newsletter!



Books

Pacific Northwest Research Station Publishes Les Joslin's *Ponderosa Promise: A History of U.S. Forest Service Research in Central Oregon*

Ponderosa Promise: A History of U.S. Forest Service Research in Central Oregon, by OldSmokey **Les Joslin**, was published in September 2007 by the Pacific Northwest Research Station as General Technical Report No. 711.

Ponderosa Promise is the story of the origins, evolution, and contributions of Forest Service research in Central Oregon at the Pringle Falls Experimental Forest from 1931, when the experimental forest was established, until 1996, when the Bend Silviculture Laboratory was closed. It is the story of the people and places key to the long-term search for knowledge about our resources—in this case, of the magnificent and valuable ponderosa pine forests and other forests east of the Cascade Range in Oregon and Washington—that is the very nature of forest science.

Les wrote this history from more than a dozen oral history interviews with Forest Service scientists and research foresters—including several OldSmokeys—and myriad other sources including hundreds of research papers and reports. Among the OldSmokeys whose contributions are summarized are **Jim Barrett, Carl Berntsen, Walt Dahms, Bill Hopkins, Russ Mitchell, and Boyd Wickman**. Other featured researchers include PNW Research Station founder Thornton Taft Munger; research pioneers Ernest Kolbe, Paul Keen, Ed Mowat, and Jim Sowder; the more recent Pat Cochran, Bob Martin, Joan Landsberg, and Ken Seidel; and Professor Lew Roth of Oregon State University.

For information, see the PNW Research Station web site at <www.fs.fed.us/pnw>. To request a copy, contact Publications Distribution, Pacific Northwest Research Station, by telephone at 503-808-2138, e-mail at <pnw_pnwpubs@fs.fed.us>, or by U.S. Mail at P.O. Box 3890, Portland, Oregon 97208-3890.

Oregon State University Press Publishes *People, Fire, and Forests*

Years of drought and decades of aggressive fire exclusion have left North American forests at high risk for catastrophic fires.

Forest settings are a magnet for recreation and for rapidly growing residential development—putting an increasing number of citizens and their property into the path of wildfires. To be effective, wildfire risk management must be informed by science—but that requires more than just knowledge about the physical and biological dynamics of fire and forest ecosystems. Social values, socioeconomic factors, demographic trends, institutional arrangements, and human behavior must also be taken into consideration by the agencies and individuals responsible for wildland fire decision making.

This first book of its kind to integrate the social science literature on the human dimensions of wildfire, *People, Fire, and Forests: A Synthesis of Wildfire Social Science* reviews current studies from this broad, interdisciplinary field and synthesizes them into a rich body of knowledge with practical management implications. Sections in the book cover such topics as public perception of wildfire risk, acceptability of fire management policies, and community impacts of wildfire.

Designed to make relevant social science information more available and useful to wildfire risk managers and policy makers, as well as to scholars and students, *People, Fire, and Forests* explores the theoretical and methodological issues surrounding human interactions with wildfire and describes the practical implications of this research. Published by Oregon State University Press, this new book is edited by Terry C. Daniel, Professor of Psychology and Natural Resources at the University of Arizona; Matthew S. Carroll, Professor of Natural Resource Sciences at Washington State University; Cassandra Moseley, Director of the Ecosystem Workforce Program at the University of Oregon; and Carol Raish, Research Social Scientist at the U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Orders for *People, Fire, and Forests* (ISBN 978-0-87071-184-8) are fulfilled by The University of Arizona Press, 355 South Euclid Avenue, Suite 103, Tucson, Arizona 85719, telephone 1-800-426-3797. The book may be ordered for \$24.95 plus actual postage charges by using a secure online ordering form at <<https://www.uapress.arizona.edu/scripts/secure/orderosu.pl>>.

Forest Service News continued from page 11

Willamette National Forest Retiree Judy Mitchell Receives Chief's Award

Judy Mitchell, for 18 years a Willamette National Forest wilderness manager, received the Chief's Award for being the top volunteer in the National Forest System from U.S. Forest Service Chief Abigail Kimbell in Washington, D.C., in July.

A Roman Catholic nun for 10 years and a church educational director for another 15 years before her Forest Service years, Mitchell was recognized for organizing, training, and supervising a corps of about 300 volunteers—existing groups of horsemen, mountain bikers, backpackers, llama users, and cross-country skiers as well as individuals—to help maintain trails in the Mount Jefferson, Mount Washington, and Three Sisters wildernesses during the two years since her retirement. Her volunteer project is based at the Willamette National Forest S.O. in Eugene where the Forest Service provides her a desk, computer, and telephone. According to Willamette National Forest figures, her volunteers performed about 5,500 hours of work valued at about \$86,000 in 2006.

Prepared from an article by Diane Dietz of the Eugene Register-Guard published in the August 1, 2007, issue of *The Bulletin*, Bend, Oregon.

Uncle Sam's Cabins

Historic Elk Lake Guard Station Deschutes National Forest, Oregon

By Les Joslin

After almost 70 years of service, historic Elk Lake Guard Station on the Deschutes National Forest got a new lease on life. Beautifully restored between 1998 and 2001 by Forest Service personnel and Passport in Time (PIT) program volunteers, Historic Elk Lake Guard Station was dedicated on August 25, 2001, to serve as a visitor information center and interpreted historic site on the Cascade Lakes National Scenic Byway.



At that dedication, just a few days after the flagpole had been erected, then-forest Supervisor Leslie Weldon and then-District Ranger and OldSmokey **Walt Schloer** spoke to over a hundred friends of the effort before they sawed a log with a “miserer whip” to open the station. OldSmokey **Les Joslin**, instigator of the project, observed that “as important as the restoration and preservation work is, there’s more to realizing the potential of this historic station than putting the place back together. Serving the public—providing visitor information and telling the station’s story—is the real reason for all this restoration and preservation work.”

A dozen volunteers under Les’s leadership, 10 PIT volunteers and OldSmokeys **Jim Bull** and **Dave Kolb**, began to realize this potential during the summer of 2002. During 56 operating days, these uniformed volunteers welcomed 1,233 Deschutes National Forest visitors to whom they provided information and assistance and for whom they interpreted the station and the job of the old-time Forest Service guard. The station has operated seven days a week for 12 weeks each summer since, and is now the only Forest Service visitor contact facility along the popular Cascade Lakes National Scenic Byway. In 78 days of operations during the summer of 2006, during which a forest fire across the road on Elk Mountain closed the scenic byway and the station for six days, the station served 3,423 visitors. This summer, the station’s sixth consecutive summer of information and interpretation operations, 15 volunteers operated the station for all 84 scheduled days during which they served 3,XXX visitors.

An interpretive sign helps the volunteers tell visitors the story of Historic Elk Lake Guard Station and the Forest Service guards who served there. That sign reads:

In the early days of the National Forest System, the forest guards who were sometimes posted at guard stations were the forest rangers’ right-hand men in the field. Guard stations were satellites of ranger stations.

When, in 1920, a wagon road connected Bend and Elk Lake, recreation boomed in the area. National forest campgrounds were built, summer home sites were leased, and Elk Lake Lodge was opened. By 1924 there was an Elk Lake post office. The forest ranger in Bend soon needed a forest guard in the area to serve visitors, maintain facilities, and protect resources.

This forest guard needed a base, and in 1929 the Elk Lake Guard Station log cabin was built. At first, because funds were scarce during the Great Depression, this station was not staffed. From the later 1930s through the 1990s, however, forest guards and other Forest Service employees and volunteers served the public from this small station. Their job grew as the population grew, access improved, leisure time increased, and more forest visitors came.

In 1997, the Forest Service decided to retain this old guard station—along the popular Cascade Lakes National Scenic Byway—as a visitor information center and historic site. During the next few years, Forest Service employees and volunteers restored the cabin and rehabilitated its grounds

Now, as you visit historic Elk Lake Guard Station, you get a feel for how the forest guard lived and worked during the Middle decades of the 20th century—in a very different time not too long ago.

Historic Elk Lake Guard Station is just one of many examples of “adaptive reuse” through which the Forest Service has simultaneously preserved a heritage resource and developed a recreation resource. While some old stations, fire lookouts, and so forth serve visitors as information stations and interpreted sites usually staffed by volunteers, many more support themselves as recreation rentals.

Editor’s Note: To get to Historic Elk Lake Guard Station, drive about 35 miles from Bend on the paved Cascade Lakes Highway—usually open from Memorial Day until closed by snow in November. About four miles south of Devils Lake, turn left onto Elk Lake Loop Road (Forest Road 4625), then turn right at Historic Elk Lake Guard Station sign and follow the red paved road to the cul-de-sac where the station is located. The station is open and staffed daily from mid-June until mid-September.

*Do you have a favorite Region 6 historic ranger station or guard station with a good story? If so, please send in the pictures and the story for this **Uncle Sam’s Cabins** section.*

The Way We Were & Out of the Past

Adventures in Slash Burning

By Richard H. Woodcock

I ran into a fairly recently retiree from the Forest Service a little while back. His retirement was recent, at least, compared with my own 35 years ago. We enjoyed comparing notes, especially on fire control. Dave Anderson reminded me of a paper on slash burning techniques I had published in *Fire Control Notes* years ago. After being in charge of burning thousands of acres of logging slash over a period of 17.5 years as a district ranger on the old Suiattle and Lake Wenatchee districts without letting even one unit escape, I had felt that I had acquired a little experience in this phase of fire control. However, I couldn't help but remember—even with my restricted memory capacity—a couple experiences leading up to my later Forest Service accomplishments.



*Dick's 1937 slash burning crew and the latrine-turned-
"comfortable barracks" east of Kelso, Washington.*

Back in the summer of 1937, between my sophomore and junior years at the School of Forestry at the University of Washington, I was a member of a crew hired by a Major Cowan who was head of the Washington Forest Fire Association. We were located on an old Clemens Logging Company clear cut on the Coweeman River east of Kelso. Our job was to prepare this large clearcut for burning in the fall by converting old railroad grades into roads, building fire lines, and generally fireproofing the area outside the clearcut.

We also converted the only available building left in the old logging camp, a twelve-hole latrine, into a comfortable barracks for our crew. We did this by splitting shakes to cover the exterior of the building, by building bunks and adding a kitchen and dining room, and by covering up the twelve holes.

When Labor Day rolled around and we'd heard a few drops of rain on the roof of our domicile the night before, our foreman told us we were ready to burn. I recall donning my tin coat to protect my back from the back pack spray can filled with a fuel mix rather than water. We would squirt a section of slash and then throw a lighted match. Either the Association could not afford drip torches or this was before their time.

In any event, the method worked but the timing was all wrong. When we left to go back to school a week later, we had certainly burned all the slash. But in addition the fire had consumed a whole adjacent logging side of felled and bucked timber including the spar tree and yarder-loader. My first experience with slash burning.

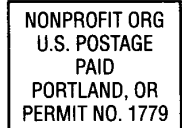
And then, a few years later as a timber management assistant on the Solduck Ranger District of the Olympic National Forest, around 1951, I again found myself taking orders to start setting the slash afire on what I recall as a clearcut in the Deep Creek area. The method was more up to date since we were using drip torches, but again maybe the timing was not the best. As I recall, we set too much fire too quickly and a little too far into the unit from the fire line. The residual damage was not as extensive as my first experience. This time we only succeeded in destroying a nice, 10-year-old Douglas-fir plantation.

Also, fighting that escaped blaze, I can't help but thank the Lord for a close escape. While cutting burning snags with District Ranger Sandford Floe, I experienced the following. Using a large, two-man Titan chainsaw with Sandy on the operating end and yours truly on the stinger end, the long bar sagged enough to loosen the chain which proceeded to come off the sprocket and zip back toward me. To this day I can recall feeling that chain zip past my neck. Another inch or less closer and certainly I wouldn't have been celebrating my 90th as I did a few days ago.

*Editor's Note: I was casting about for **The Way We Were** and **Out of the Past** pieces for this issue when, at the August 10 OldSmokeys picnic, Dick Woodcock thrust an envelope containing both into my hand. As much as I oppose lumping, I decided Dick's piece—which was dated July 30, 2007, and which I entitled "Adventures in Slash Burning"—filled the bill for both. Knowing other OldSmokeys—that means you—will come up with pieces as Dick did, I plan to again split the two sections that appear as one on this page in the Winter 2008 issue.*

When he graduated from the School of Forestry, University of Washington, with the Class of '39, Dick told me, he was one of about 6,000 applicants competing for a handful of U.S. Forest Service junior forester positions. And so, before his 1946-1972 Forest Service career, he worked for the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and served in the U.S. Army engineers. After eight years of timber management work on the Olympic National Forest, Dick was district ranger of the Suiattle Ranger District, Mt. Baker National Forest, from 1954 to 1957, and district ranger of the Lake Wenatchee Ranger District, Wenatchee National Forest, from 1957 until he retired from the Forest Service in 1972. It was great to meet him at the picnic!

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Fall 2007

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