



NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN RETIREE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2020

NEW NRMRA PRESIDENT

Dear Forest Service Retirees:

Tim Love has replaced Barry Hicks as the president of our organization. A big thank you to Barry for his years heading up the group. Barry will stand in for Tim when Tim is tied up with fire assignments.

Tim served as District Ranger for the Seeley Lake Ranger District on the Lolo National Forest for nearly twenty years. He started with the USDA Forest Service in 1975 and served in a variety of capacities on the Custer, Lewis and Clark, and Lolo National Forests. He served in the US Air Force following high school, and then returned to his home in Missoula where he received a bachelor's degree from the University of Montana. He is a Certified Forester with the Society of American Foresters.

Tim is currently serving as Coordinator for the Montana Forest Collaboration Network and serves as an Adjunct, teaching Forest Planning at the College of Forestry & Conservation at the University of Montana.

Tim serves as a Public Information Officer with a Type 1 Incident Management Team.

Tim remains active in forestry and has served on numerous community and non-profit Boards. His wife Donna is author of children's nature books. The couple has three grown children and three grandchildren.



Sketch by Phil Schlamp

This year has been a crazy one and it has impacted all of us. Those of us in western Montana have missed our monthly lunch gatherings and are now getting creative so we can meet in a safe environment such as the outdoor museum area at Fort Missoula and the FS museum/visitor center. We will need to get creative for the winter months so that we can still stay in touch.

LUNCHES: Our Missoula area lunches have been infrequent and outside during the pandemic. It is unlikely we will be back at Jaker's any time soon. If you have ideas for an outdoor alternative please let Tim Love know. tglove@charter.com

2020 FIRE ASSIGNMENTS

by Tim Love

I serve as a Public Information Officer with Northern Rockies Team 1 (Type 1) IMT, (IC, Mike Goicoechea's team). Our team served on two fire assignments this season. The first assignment was the Bighorn Fire located just north of Tucson, AZ in the Santa Catalina Mountains within the Coronado National Forest. We started our assignment June 21 and continued through July 6. The second assignment was the SQF Complex on the Sequoia and Inyo National Forests and Sequoia National Park in California. We started our second assignment September 2 and demobed September 22. These were atypical fires in many respects, especially due to the COVID pandemic. At the time the states of Arizona and California were experiencing alarming COVID infection rates. Crews and overhead worked as modules and separated as much as possible, practicing strict protocols for hygiene and sanitation. We had an ER Doctor working with the Team during both assignments (a first in my experience) that provided recommendations to help prevent infection. Team Communications (briefings) were largely conducted using remote communications.

A limited number of the Command and General Staff, with essential personnel worked from facilities that

safely served as the Incident Command Post(s) (ICP). Approximately a third of the Public Information Section that I serve with, worked virtually, from our homes. This seemed difficult, but it worked far better than any of us imagined. For example, we provided administration and information support such as documentation, public calls and emails responses, Incidence postings (InciWeb), etc., from our respective homes. We also provided support for some remote meetings.

Here's an example of using remote technology. People would call giving me their address, and using Google maps and Google Earth Pro I could see their home(s). and could talk with them about the fire's location given that I had access to current infrared and other operational maps. I had such accurate information people assumed I was at the fires.

These were challenging fires, but I'm happy to report that through it all I heard of only one engine crew that needed to quarantine during our assignment on the SQF Complex. Much is learned from each fire and every fire season. This year we had to adjust and perform under extraordinary circumstances.



A TRIBUTE

by Jerry Stern

This is a story of one Ranger's wife. The writer is biased and of limited experience. As of this writing they have been married for almost 69 years. Her name is Frances J. Stern and a Wisconsin native. We moved to Montana in 1951 to finish school and start a family.

The importance of a ranger's wife in the community cannot be underestimated. Acceptance has to be earned and is not an overnight event. Earning \$3300 a year with a family was a tough way to start. She would read the labels on grocery cans to determine the best buys. Wild

meat was a staple and getting a deer or elk a necessity. One time we cleaned wild ducks until early morning.

We moved 23 times in my career and she “cleaned” out the door when we lived in government housing. On one move, the previous ranger and his wife were alcoholics and they also smoked heavily and didn’t clean. We moved in, but not before Fran threw out the blinds and did a lot of cleaning. On one move we couldn’t find affordable rental property and I looked at remodeling a chicken house. Frequent visitors often arrived at compound houses. I was outside cleaning the yard on a Saturday when Regional Forester Neil Rahm and Forester George Engler stopped by. Fran had just house cleaned, waxed the floor and baked sweet rolls. We enjoyed coffee and rolls plus the visit. What a way for a ranger’s wife to leave an impression. Visitors to the district could almost always be invited to lunch for grilled cheese sandwiches, pickles, potato chips and coffee. Fran could fix this up on short notice.

While on housing, when we moved to the Orient, Washington community we moved into a trailer with three kids (shut the door please so I can go to the toilet) After new linoleum was installed on the kitchen floor, we moved in. Our boys were playing next to the house when someone hollered “snake”. Fran left the house to check on the boys. She also left the water running which covered the new floor. Luckily the flooring didn’t come up! They killed two rattle snakes that day. We moved to Orient Washington in 1960 and I still have second generation friends there. Again, Fran fit into the community and was instrumental in our acceptance in the area.

One thing I insisted on was separation of my wife from Forest Service activities. On my first district as ranger she came to the office and I said “what the hell are you doing here?” She left without a word. I suffered at home, but she was never at the office again unless there was an emergency. The previous ranger’s wife was always in the office and into Forest business.

Fran handled situations at a compound really well. You would really be amazed at the amount of petty bickering

that occurs between wives. “Your kid rode my kid’s bike without permission”, “your kid is a bully”. And the beat goes on. Another one is “my husband is number one after the ranger. I told them that someday their kid would be, so live with it regarding the bully situation.

Rangers wives participated in many community activities such as music, basketball, baseball, school and so on. Think of the liability of having a car load of players heading to a game. One such time she drove into a snowbank on the continental divide. Our boys were embarrassed, but all got out and pushed her out. Another time we had a 20” snow dump and I was away from home. She proudly told me she put chains on alone and drove the boys to a scout meeting. After getting home I discovered the chains were on inside out and had gouged the tires. What could I say except “good job, Fran.”

Our wedding anniversary is in August and with fire season going we did not have many celebrations at home. In fact, Fran had responsibility for family activities, etc. One job was “10 days on 4 days off”. Month away at a leadership school in Missoula, 2-week fire schools in Arizona. During one such absence she cut and braided a 9x12’ woolen rug with new material from the Pendleton woolen mill. Another time she did an 8x12 braided rug from old wool.



Jackie Stern feeding the district mule at the Lincoln Ranger District – a fun aspect of living on a district compound

Fran was also talented in sewing, knitting, and crewel embroidery, making her an excellent fit with the women in the various communities. Her many assets and accomplishments were recognized at various places and we have a large card, given at a dinner in her honor, by most of the women in that area.

We lived in many beautiful places and had a chance to participate in many activities. I wonder how many

women have held a stadia rod for her husband so he could plane table a campground. This happened in the Butte District on a cold weekend. Thanks, Fran, for being a great partner.

Jerry spent his career at numerous ranger stations in Idaho and Montana. He lives in Sage Idaho.

COLD SPRINGS CABIN RESTORATION

by Tom Keller

During my time on the North Fork District there were many volunteer projects that were done on weekends that included both civilians and Forest Service employees who did the work. Those were fun experiences that normally resulted in considerable work being accomplished at minimal cost and the public usually benefited from the work. One such project involved restoring an old smoke chaser cabin located near Cold Springs Peak, which is at about 6,500' of elevation and about six miles north of the Kelly Forks Work Center on the Clearwater Forest. A tower had been constructed on Cold Springs Peak, but no cab had been built on top of the tower. Instead, the smoke chaser stayed in a cabin located near the lookout. It was built in the 1930's from logs cut from Alpine Fir trees on site. Alpine Fir logs are not the best quality material for building a cabin. Typically, high elevation Alpine Fir have many branches and many knots. There is a lot of taper to the logs and they do not resist rot very well. Therefore, the cabin was not well constructed to begin with, but did serve the intended purpose. It was small, probably measuring no more than 12'x12'. The location of the cabin was on a very small flat spot at the end of a rocky spine. There was just enough room to build the cabin, and barely enough room to enter the cabin from the downhill side, safely. On the uphill side, or south side of the cabin there was just enough room to walk along the cabin wall if a person was careful. The view from that side of the cabin was a vertical drop of perhaps 1,000' straight down into a glacial cirque basin.

There was a small mountain lake located in the cirque basin called Ice Lake. It was an awesome sight, but also frightening. Of course, the view from the cabin was magnificent. Just beyond the cabin there are some rocks that can be climbed to afford an even better view, but making that climb is not safe because if a person fell, it would be the last thing he or she would ever do.

Several Forest Service employees and one civilian volunteered their time, and skill to construct a door, door latch, windows, and cedar shakes for the roof. All of this work was done by hand and it was quality work.

In September of 1989 a weekend was selected to do the bulk of the restoration work. There were probably about 6-8 people involved with the project. I think more than one weekend was required to complete all of the work, but the majority was done in one weekend. Before the work could begin, all the materials, tools including two step ladders, a stove and stove pipe had to be packed in from the trail head to Cold Springs Peak. The packing job was my contribution to the project because I was the District livestock manager and did all the packing jobs required on the District. I only had three animals so it took me several days to pack everything in. Fortunately, it was only two miles from the trail head to Cold Springs Peak, so I could make multiple trips per day. Packing the door and step ladders was a challenge. They weren't heavy, but they were cumbersome, however the animals were up to the challenge and everything needed to complete the

project was on site prior to weekend that restoration work was done. I might add that the horse I used to pack the door and step ladders was an animal that when he first came to the District, wouldn't even allow anyone to touch with without him jumping sideways. By the time he packed the door and step ladders he was a completely reformed pack animal. I didn't even have to tie him to the other pack horse he just followed along behind me. That was a good thing because the other pack horse didn't want anything to do with those odd shaped packs.



Cold Springs cabin.

On the first day of the project, people were swarming all over the cabin. Sill, logs underneath the cabin were replaced, the old floor was removed and replaced, there was nothing left of the old roof, so a new roof was installed, new triple wall stove pipe and a new steel heating stove were installed. Also, the new door was installed. And new chinking was placed between the logs on the inside of the cabin. A coat of linseed oil was applied to the outside walls.

For those people who worked on the roof, it had to have been a harrowing experience. I would not have worked on that roof because of the long fall that would have occurred had anyone slipped and fallen off the roof on the south side. No one slipped and the new roof was completed.

By Sunday afternoon the cabin was almost complete. The windows were not available yet for installation, but

they were shortly afterwards. I packed those in later and one of the District employees who had worked on the project came back and installed the windows in early October 1989.

Overall, a lot of work was completed in a short time. The cabin was sound and weather proof enough to permit placing it on the Forest Service cabin rental list. It has become a popular destination for numerous people, some from long distances from Idaho as can be verified by reading the log book purposely left in the cabin for people to record thoughts about their stay at Cold Springs Peak Cabin.

The only downside to the cabin is; rats and mice still inhabit the place, so people who stay overnight there have to share space with the wild critters. I guess that is a small price to pay for enjoying a brief stay at an original Forest Service historical cabin.

Tom was born in Billings Montana. He was raised on a cattle ranch located in the Bull Hills about sixty miles north and east of Billings. From 1954 to 1964 he was privileged to spend time at a cabin each summer, located in the Beartooth Mountains, Custer National Forest. It was there he gained his appreciation for the wild places, had his first contact with Forest Service people, and at about age 15, made his decision to pursue a career with the Forest Service. His first Forest Service job was on the Beartooth Ranger District, Red Lodge, Montana. After completing his college education in 1970, he began work on the Clearwater National Forest, Bungalow Ranger District, and later the Kelly Creek/North Fork Ranger District. He spent almost his entire career (31 years) on the Clearwater National Forest. It was a great life! Tom is the author of "Thirty-One Years on The Upper North Fork of The Clearwater River."





NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FOREST SERVICE HISTORY

There is a lot happening at the museum. We continue to work aggressively on our capital campaign even though the pandemic has certainly complicated fund raising. Since last fall we have received donations totaling nearly \$3 million so we are moving very close to being in a position to begin work on our Conservation Legacy Center in Missoula. In total we have raised over \$7 million and still need to raise another \$2.5 to \$3 million, We now have momentum that hopefully will carry us through. We are planning to conduct an on-line auction as a fundraiser this coming spring and will be sharing more about that later. We also have put a lot of emphasis on increasing our membership and outreach and now have about 850 members and hope to reach a thousand by year's end. We continue to offer a special membership rate of \$20.20 for new members through the end of the year. Many of you are members now but if you are not, please consider supporting the museum with your membership. Your support really makes a difference.

Our collection continues to grow and about three quarters of our 50 thousand items are cataloged on line.

We are expanding our cadre of Regional Directors (individuals who work to support and provide outreach for the Museum in each region) and are currently searching for a Director for the Northern Region.

Work on the site in Missoula this summer includes renovation and relocation of the fire lookout and work is being done to have our donated air tanker on site by next summer. The site has been open this summer but visitation has been low due to the pandemic.

Again, if you want more information about the Museum and the great work we are doing to “share the rich history and story of America’s conservation legacy” check out our website at www.foretservicemuseum.org and remember you can become a member for just \$20.20 right now.

FOREST INVENTORY RESCUE

by Ken Hotchkiss

In July, 1972, I was working on a seasonal crew conducting a forest-wide inventory on the St. Joe National Forest based out of St Maries, Idaho. I had gone to summer school at the University of Montana during May and June to finish up five credits needed for graduation from Forestry School. I had about six weeks available in July and early August to join the inventory crew before I was drafted into the U.S. Army in late August.

During this six-week period, I was working for Dewey Hader, though I rarely saw him. Most of our work was directed by Pete Marsh, a middle-aged, recent forestry

graduate from Virginia Tech. Pete was a fun, enthusiastic crew leader, full of entertaining stories, who was trying to break into the Forestry profession following a farming accident. The work consisted of several teams of two people that installed timber inventory plots on a grid pattern in randomly selected timber compartments across the Forest. Since we

moved around the Forest to various locations, we worked out of temporary tent camps. What a great way to spend the summer!

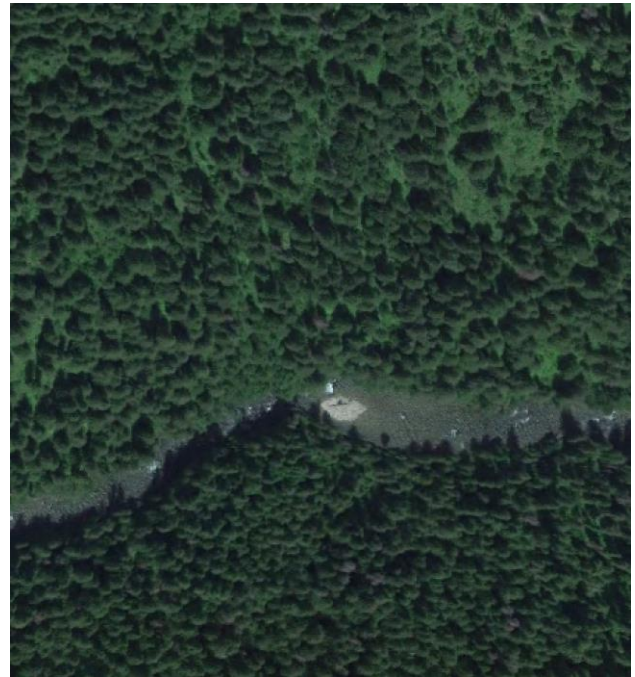
One particular compartment was located on the north side of the Little North Fork of the Clearwater River, a few miles southwest of Snow Peak. It was a rather large, unroaded area with a single point of access high on the ridge above the river. To facilitate the work, it was decided to establish a spike camp on the river below and use half the crew to work from the top down and the other half the crew would work from the bottom up.

A gravel bar in the river was selected for the spike camp as it was the only flat, level spot in the canyon. Eight crew members were selected to be ferried in by helicopter from the top of the ridge. Two people per flight. We were very limited in gear that we could take. Five days of dehydrated food, cots, sleeping bags, a couple of small cookstoves, and limited clothing. We were given a roll of plastic sheeting and some twine to build a shelter. We were flown in during the morning and began installing inventory plots in the afternoon. The first task was to drop a tree from the stream bank over to the gravel bar to provide access between the camp and the worksite.

That evening, we noticed a thunder storm brewing with dark clouds and lightning. We gathered our cots together and constructed a shelter from the impending rain with the plastic, twine, and driftwood. We went to sleep hoping to stay dry and listening to thunder in the distance. Around midnight, we were awakened by a bright flash of lightning overhead and a loud clap of thunder. The wind picked up and it began pouring rain. Luckily our shelter held up and we stayed dry, but I don't think any of us got much sleep. At daylight, I peeked out of our shelter. It had stopped raining, but THE LOG WAS GONE! I quickly got up and checked things out.

The river was ripping down the canyon. It had doubled in size. It was no longer safe to cross. Our gravel bar was about half its previous size. The clouds were

hanging low in the canyon. We took stock of our situation. We were stranded. We reluctantly called the fire lookout on Snow Peak and apprised them of our situation. Dewey ordered up the helicopter and as soon as the weather broke, later in the day, it flew in and ferried us out. We were taken by vehicles to the Ranger Station at Clarkia, Idaho where we had a hot meal and a good night's sleep. The next day we rejoined the rest of the crew and finished the inventory in that compartment by hiking down from the top.



Gravel bar on the Little North Fork of the Clearwater River, St. Joe National Forest.

This event happened nearly fifty years ago, and I don't remember most of the crew members names. Thirty years later, I was working with Don Krogstad on a forest planning project. We started comparing notes and swapping stories and discovered that we had shared this experience. I would love to hear from others that participated in this adventure. To this date, I remain in awe at the skill of the helicopter pilot that installed and retrieved us from that small gravel bar in that canyon without incident. I also gained a life-long appreciation and respect for the power of storms and other natural events on our lives.

Ken worked seasonally for the Coeur d'Alene and St Joe National Forests 1969 – 1972. Following two years of military service, he started his permanent career in timber management with the Forest Service on the Mt Hood National Forest. In 1974 followed by an assignment on the Willamette National Forest. In 1980, he transferred to the White River National Forest as the Forest Silviculturist. In 1988 Ken was assigned as the

Timber Management Assistant on the Powell Ranger District, Clearwater National Forest. He became the North Zone NEPA Team Leader on the Bitterroot National forest in 2001, followed by his last assignment on the Forest Plan Revision Team (Bitterroot, Lolo, Flathead). Ken retired from the Bitterroot National Forest in January 2008.

Our mailing lists are still in a state of “being worked on.” Some lists contain lots of non-members and the membership lists may have some “members” on them who we have not heard from in a while. For members who get a hard copy of the newsletter, please include an email address, if you have one, when you renew. That way you will get the occasional notice of lunches or an event of interest.

BOOKS BY FOREST SERVICE RETIREES



These three memoirs are examples of what all of us should be doing, putting together our Forest Service memories for our family and the FS records so that they are not forgotten. All these books are available at the National Museum of Forest Service History in Missoula.

“Saving Trappers Lake and other Adventures of a Forest Ranger” by Jim Hagemeyer is a recently published memoir by a retired Northern Region employee who spent 35 years with the Forest Service. It starts with his childhood and on through smoke jumping and a career as a landscape architect. A treasure for his family and the FS record.

“This is our Forest” by Harold Coffman is a memoir about Harold’s summer Forest Service jobs, mostly as a

smoke chaser and lookout on the Cabinet and Clearwater Forests. These summers included a lot of time on the old Kelly Creek District at the headwaters of the North Fork of the Clearwater in the 1940s. A fun read for people who liked their days in the field better than days behind a desk.

“Preserve the Best and Conserve the Rest” by Hadley B. Roberts is a memoir about his Forest Service career and his life after the Forest Service. Roberts worked as a wildlife biologist whose career spanned 30 years on forests in New Mexico, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Alaska. His passion for wildlife issues continued after retirement with volunteer projects, birding, hunting and fishing.

Thanks to so many of you who wrote up some of your stories while stuck at home during the Corona virus situation. If your story doesn’t appear in this issue, rest assured that it is in the files for a future newsletter. Photos and artwork are great too if you have any to share of people and places in the Northern Region.



MISADVENTURES OF FOREST SERVICE BRATS

by Larry Cron

My brother, Bob, and I had a number of skirmishes with proper conduct of FS children. The first that I recollect was at Pinehurst on the Sequoia where Dad was the Ranger in 1943-44. We had pretty much free run of the station as long as we stayed out of the way of workers. In the central warehouse area, there was a small building which was either associated with the gas pump or may have housed a generator, or both. Anyway, one side of it had at least two windows each made up of 12 small glass panes. We decided to try our aim with rocks and broke all the panes. This was followed by pain in our derrieres and Dad replacing the panes on his own time and expense; which was followed the next day by Bob and I removing much of the still soft putty with our fingers.

Some vehicles were kept in warehouse stalls. Bob, I, and another kid frequently went into the warehouse after work hours to play. On one occasion we heard a buzzing sound coming from the bed of a pickup. By climbing up on the running board behind the cab we discovered a rattlesnake slithering around in the bed of the pickup. Then commenced a three-kid scour to get rocks outside, bring them into the warehouse and heave them up into the pickup bed. Finally, Bob climbed up on the running board behind the cab with a big flat rock and manage to drop it on the snake. We never did hear ow the snake got to hitch its ill-fated ride in that pickup.

In 1945 Dad was the Ranger at Springville on the Sierra and Bob was in kindergarten. I discovered how neat it was to strike stick matches. We had actually fried an

egg on the sidewalk by the office and the cheat grass in the flower beds was well cured. I decided that burning that grass might be a good pastime. It was, until the big Indian fire crew foreman caught me and I got a serious lecture from my parents, and the matches in the kitchen got hidden out of my reach. The fire control officer on the district at that time was Glenn Cecil. He and Rose had a son Billy who was about our age. We and Billy didn't get along very well and had more than one rock fight. Fast forward to 1967-72, Glenn Cecil and I shared an office at Hayfork on the Shasta-Trinity where he was the district fire control officer and I was the MUF (multiple use forester), or district resource assistant. Our first daughter was born in 1969 and was occasionally baby sat by Glenn and Rose's high school age daughter. Around 1970-71 we were invited to the Cecil's for dinner. After dinner Rose, recalling the rock fights, proclaimed, "Well, Larry, you turned out alright, so I guess there is hope for anyone."

Larry grew up in the Forest Service. He spent his career in Region 5 and Region 1 and retired from the Kootenai in 1998. He lives in Missoula MT.



BIG SNOWY TRAIL PROJECT

by Dietrich (Dick) Schwecke

Trail maintenance work needed to be done on Uhlhorn Trail along the crest of the Big Snowy Mountains south of Lewistown, MT. My trail foreman, Jeff Finn, and I made two separate trips into the area between July 23 and August 1, 1997.

On July 23, we loaded four horses and our camping gear, and drove to Swimming Woman Canyon on the south side of the Big Snowy Mountains. We set up camp for one night. The next morning at 0600 we were in the saddle, and rode up a steep climb to Half Moon Pass, and then up a very gentle grade along Knifeblade Ridge to the crest of the mountain range. It took about an hour and a half to reach this point. Once on the crest, I found a good spot to get off the horse and look into the basin at the head of East Fork Cottonwood Creek. Cottonwood Creek is a main drainage flowing north from the crest of the mountain range. I used my binoculars to look into the high meadows in the basin. Lo and Behold. Three big hat-rack bull elk. I spent about 15 minutes looking at the elk, and then we continued with our work for the day. That evening we rode back to Swimming Woman Canyon, packed up our camp and drove home.



Knifeblade Ridge

The next week, on Monday, July 28, we again loaded four horses and our camping gear. We set up camp in Swimming Woman canyon. On Tuesday morning we

made the steep ride up to Half Moon Pass, and then down into the basin that is the headwaters of Half Moon Creek. Jeff and I noticed something dark, like a moose or bear, about a mile away. I had forgotten to bring my binoculars from camp. The dark animal appeared to be tall, maybe 6-feet or so. It was narrow, maybe only 2-feet wide. It walked straight up the mountain, and never broke stride, and never stopped to rest. We watched it walk up a steep mountainside for at least three-quarter mile, and it went across the skyline ridge without stopping or turning around to look. It was extremely unusual behavior for an animal to walk straight away from us, never stop, never turn sideways, and not stop on the ridge to look back. I have no idea what the animal was.

Wednesday morning, July 30, we again rode at 6:00 a.m. from our camp in Swimming Woman up to Half Moon Pass, and then west along Knifeblade Ridge. I got out of the saddle at the same point where I had seen the three bull elk the previous week. I had binoculars. My oh My. Eight hat-rack bulls. Jeff and I spent about 30 to 40 minutes watching the elk and enjoying the beautiful morning. Clear sky. Warm. Gorgeous day. We continued with our two pack horses and tools to work on the trail. We rode back to camp in Swimming Woman by 9:00 p.m. that evening.

Thursday morning, July 31, was a repeat of the previous day. We rode up to Half Moon Pass and then along Knifeblade Ridge to the vantage point where I could look for elk. I had my binoculars ready when we dismounted to look into the high basin. OMG. OMG. Fifteen. Count Them. Fifteen hat-rack bulls. They were everywhere. We spent an hour watching them. We had a great day. It was dark before we completed work and rode back to camp. The next morning, Friday, we packed up camp and drove home.

Just think. I was paid to take these sorts of horrible treks. I was provided with good horses, good equipment, food, and everything needed to live and work in these conditions. We always stopped at the Judith Gap Mercantile on our drive home to buy a giant ice cream cone. There was no such thing as a “bad” day in the Big Snowies. There were some “western” days, and there were “memorable experience” days, but there was never a bad day.



East Fork Cottonwood Creek, 1997

One final addition. When we got back to the office at the end of the week, Friday afternoon, I told people about seeing the tall black animal in Half Moon basin, and I told them it was probably a sasquatch. Oh My. I learned to never joke about seeing a sasquatch. I had a number of people who believe in sasquatch come to visit. I must have had twenty phone calls. They wanted to confirm my sighting of a sasquatch. Apparently, a Forest Ranger who sees a sasquatch has credibility. Again, I have no idea what the animal was. Probably a moose. Although it sure looked and acted like a sasquatch.

Dick grew up in Great Falls MT and went to forestry school at The University of Montana followed by a masters in silviculture at Washington State. Early in his career he worked in recreation planning for the BLM in Arizona then in silviculture for the BIA on the Flathead Reservation, the Helena, the Nez Perce and Lewis and Clark National Forests. His final assignment was as a Travel Management Planner at the Lewis and Clark S.O. Dick retired in 2008 and lives in Great Falls. He is still active in fire as a Plans Chief on a Northern Rockies Type 2 Team.



MEMOIRS OF A RANGER’S WIFE, IDA WOODS, WIFE OF RANGER E.A WOODS

Dupuyer Ranger Station, Lewis and Clark National Forest

by Vicky MacLean

E.A. (Eustace Adrian) Woods was born in Spain in about 1876, the son of an English mining engineer who traveled extensively. E.A. went to school in England and moved to Canada in about 1893. His daughter Peggy described him as a dreamer. *He worked at various*

jobs before he shot an elk in what he thought was Canada and was brought to Montana to pay a poaching fee. While paying his fine, he inquired about a line of men at the adjacent counter and was told that they were joining a group to work for a new outfit

called the Forest Service. He decided to get in the Forest Service line. Thus, began his career with the Forest Service.

E.A. worked on the Lewis and Clark, Helena and Kootenai Forests. While stationed at the Dupuyer Ranger Station on the Lewis and Clark, he met a young lady, Ida Loeffler, who was to become his wife. Ida was homesteading near her sister's and brother in law's farm along the Rocky Mountain front.



Ida Loeffler at her homestead, Dupuyer MT, 1910

Ida's memoir gives us a look at the adventure and hardships of an early day Forest Service family over a century ago. The following account is extracted from Ida's memories of her years on the beautiful and rugged Front Range of the northern Rocky Mountains in northern Montana.

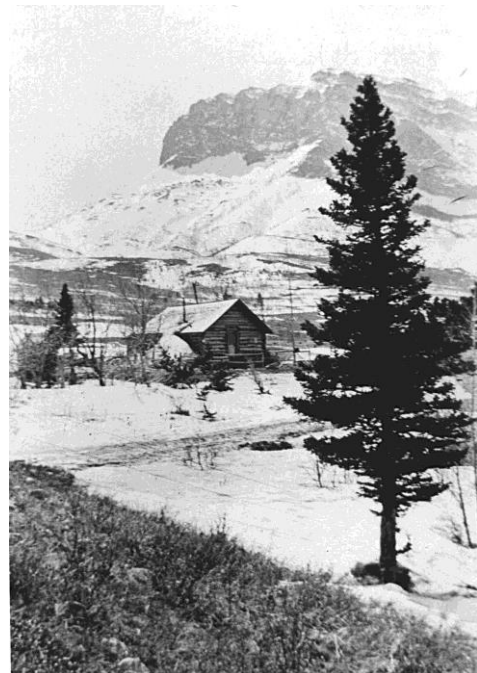
In the summer of 1910, I found myself established on a homestead in Teton County, Montana. The deal was that I had to stay at least 14 months before I could get title to the place and then only when I had paid \$1.25 an acre for the land.

Fourteen months is a long time to be sitting in the middle of nowhere in a nine by twelve slab shack, believe me, especially for one who had been among a large group of young people at school the year before.

Ida met E.A. at the neighboring Aman's ranch. The Amans were German immigrants.

Shortly before noon, a tall, slim, rather good-looking man rode into the yard on a gray saddle horse. I was very curious to know who this might be. Mrs. Aman was a jolly, teasing sort of person and when she looked out the window she said "Now we have fun. That is Woods, the new Forest Ranger. Now, Ida, you watch out. He is a great lady's man."

Before long, he began to drop by the homestead on one pretext or another It wasn't long before he tried to convince me that my life work should be done at a ranger station instead of on a dry land homestead. From all appearances it did seem that a ranger's life was very exciting and adventurous, with so many trips to the mountains and some place to go nearly every day I finally fell for it in a big way, I guess. He was a good salesman and put a very persuasive argument and finally won it.



The Dupuyer Ranger Station – early 1900s.

E.A. and Ida were married December 5, 1911. They made their home in a three-room long house, with later on a lean-to, which we used for a summer kitchen and in winter it served as a shelter for a stack of dry wood The Dupuyer Station was located at the mouth of the North Fork of Dupuyer Creek, right up in the canyon between two high mountains. And the wind blew there from October to April, in varying degrees, but most constantly. It came with the dawn and blew all day. The wind was a blessing to the stockmen along the foothills. It kept the pastures and hills free of snow so the stock could forage.

Someone up there said that the country was "fit only for bachelors and steers."

We were miles from anyone. Five miles to the Aman ranch, nine miles to my sister's, sixteen miles to Dupuyer and about the same to the Blackleaf post office where we got our mail. Sometimes it was ten days or two weeks before we got our mail.

Our visiting officer from headquarters in Washington D.C. was completely lost without the daily paper. The trip to Choteau and Supervisor's office necessitated a drive of about 35 miles. So, we didn't make many trips, especially in winter. It was quite something to get enough warm clothes on to make such a long drive in an open buckboard.

We wore long, woolen underwear. And I do mean long, the wrist to ankle kind We went to Montgomery Ward's for ... we had to pay five dollars a suit for the best quality (editor's note: E.A.'s salary then was \$90 a month) We thought it quite an amount to have to put out for underwear, but it had to be done. When we were seated in the buckboard, we pulled a warm, closely woven lap robe over us then a tarpaulin over the lap robe to keep the wind out. We were often chilled at that before we got where we were going. What a country.

Several of the Woods' children were born in this harsh environment. Ida's memoirs recount the birth of their first child, Peggy; *As it came near time for our first baby to arrive, we engaged a nurse to come out and stay with me, just in case the men would not be home when it came time to send for a doctor. Our old friend of many years, Mr. Dorrington, brought her out to the station one day when he was making his rounds of duties as a game warden.*

The further they drove the more upset Miss Kennedy became. She vowed she would not stay out there under any circumstance. She thought it was too far away from town and that she absolutely refused to accept the responsibility in case the doctor should not get there in time. She thought us a little short of stark crazy to think of letting a baby be born in the wilds.

Ida ended up going to her mother's place in the north west part of the state for the birth, *a long trip by buckboard to the railroad and then the long ride on the train.* A telegram was sent in care of Lewis and Clark Forest Supervisor Leavitt to announce the birth advised E.A. of the "new

boss". His comment was, *What? No little ranger? It was several daughters later before he got his little ranger.*

Then there was the birth of their second daughter. *In the dead of winter, February 1, 1914 to be exact. I woke with a terrible foreboding. It was Sunday morning. I was so sick I soon began to realize that the stork was about to call on us for the second time. There had been a high wind the day before and the telephone line was down. It was thirty-two degrees below zero; thirty-five miles to the Choteau doctor; and five miles to the Aman ranch.*

Something had to be done and done quickly. I promised I would go back to bed and stay as quiet as I could. E.A. would go for help. He was hardly dressed warm enough, but he jumped on the saddle horse, Chief, and rode like mad to the Aman ranch.

It was not very long before he was back with the word that Mrs. Aman was on her way in the buggy. He said Chief seemed to sense that there was need for haste and surely, he did his best. E.A. also sent a messenger to ride as far as necessary to phone for a doctor. Mrs. Aman arrived about ten minutes before the stork and the doctor and nurse got there when the baby was ten hours old.

It was very cold and he had to stay all night. His fee was \$25. Babies came cheap those days. The nurse stayed two weeks and her fee was \$20.

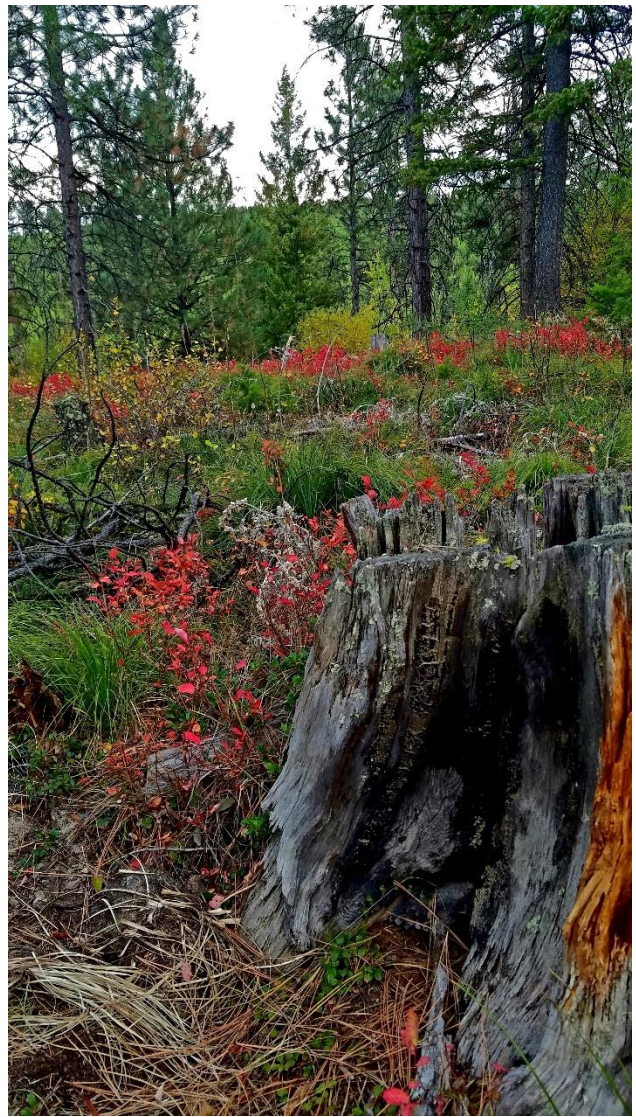


E.A. Wood and family at Swamp Creek, 1924.

About three months later we were transferred to the Sun River District (Hannon Gulch on the Lewis and Clark Forest). We trekked overland in true prairie schooner style. The second day, or maybe it was the third, I won't be sure, a thunderstorm came up as we were going around the edge of a lake. Oscar Olney, with the load of furniture, drove too close to the edge miring the wagon and upsetting the load. That was something! Lightning striking all around us. Horses frightened. Babies crying and our cherished possessions scattered by the lake. But soon the storm was over and things were picked up and we were on our way again to stay the night at the Jim Caldwell ranch.

The Woods family moved many times after this: to two stations on the Helena Forest and three on the Kootenai. With more of the moves there were more children, seven total. Their oldest daughter Peggy Woods Rachac, remembers their life growing up in remote areas as tough, but carefree.

E.A. Retired from the Kootenai in 1936 after 34 years of service. An article in "The Western News, Libby, Montana" described his retirement party and dance. *Dancing started at 9 o'clock and continued until 4 a.m. with time out for supper. Various entertainment was intermingled with the regular dance numbers.... Between 12 midnight and 1 a.m. supper was served on tables decorated according to the resources and forest activities on the eight ranger districts and at the supervisor's headquarters. Small trees of each districts' major species were on the tables, and green boughs of all species were on the supervisor's headquarters table. Animals were represented on many districts, domestic stock on others and logging on others.* E.A. passed away in Helena in 1958. Thank you to his oldest daughter Peggy, who was a friend of mine, for sharing her mother's memoir.



Lake Como trail, Bitterroot National Forest.

RENEWALS: Because the fall newsletter comes out way before you need to renew your membership this year, I will also send out a renewal form separately after the first of the year. A lot of **LIFE MEMBERS** have neglected to "renew" by filling out the form – no dues required, but this is the only way I can track changes of address, email, and most importantly, know that you are still with us. Some of you may think you are a member, but we have not heard from you in years. Due to mailing list issues, this newsletter is going out to a number of people who did not renew for 2020. Please renew for 2021.

WE REMEMBER



William "Bill" D. Badgett of Elliston Montana passed away March 19, 2020 at the age of 72. Bill was born to Karlton and Ruth Badgett in May 23, 1947 in Billings. He spent his childhood in Nye and Broadview Montana. He spent 1966 to 1968 in the US Army and served in Vietnam followed by time in the Army Reserves until 1972.

Bill worked for the Soil Conservation Service in Harlowton, MT from 1972 to 1977. He then went to work for the Forest Service on the Kootenai as an Engineering Technician from 1977 to 1979 when he transferred to the Helena where he worked until his retirement in 2003. Bill is survived by his wife Mary, daughters Tawnya Parke, Hope Grayson and Lisa Lopez, sons Charlie and Tony Popp and 14 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

Joseph Lamar Beasley of Reston Virginia passed away March 27, 2020 at the age of 83. Lamar was born in North



Carolina October 12, 1936. He served in the Air Force and afterwards attended the University of Georgia and graduated in 1962 with a degree in Forestry. He spent his 33-year career with the Forest Service serving in many positions across the country. His last position was as Deputy Chief in the Washington Office. After his Forest Service career, he became the director of the National Forest Foundation and then established American Wetlands and Natural Resources Exchange Corporation which he ran for 15 years. Lamar was an avid sportsman throughout his life.

He was loved and cherished by Janette, his wife of 64 years, children David and Karen, 2 grand daughters and his brother Jerry.



Harriett Rosemary Werner Allison Lang Calcaterra was born on November 2, 1942 in Missoula Montana and passed away on May 2, 2020 after a diagnosis of cancer. She attended Missoula County Highschool and graduated from Westmar College in Iowa with a degree in education. Harriet taught in Illinois and then for the Department of Defense in Okinawa where she married Air Force Captain Kent Allison. Soon after their return the United States she was widowed. Harriet then married John Lang Jr and had two daughters Kadi and Chrissy. After a move to Missoula she worked for 22 years for the Forest Service at the Regional Office and on the Lolo Forest. An accomplished pianist,

Harriet played for 40 years at the Lolo Community Church. She volunteered in the community and enjoyed fishing, hiking and camping. In 1992 she married Jim Calcaterra who survives her. Harriet is also survived by her daughters, and a sister as well as several nieces and nephews and step sons.

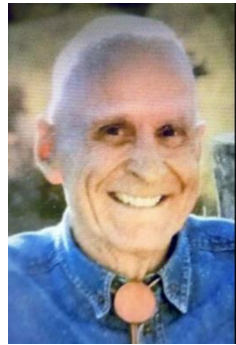


Rosalee P. Cash age 92 of Missoula passed away on June 11, 2020. She was born September 12, 1927 in Hamilton Montana to Ival and Doratheia Kent. In 1947 she married Frank Cash. Rosalee enjoyed crafts and golfing, bowling and traveling. After her retirement from the Forest Service she enjoyed traveling to many places around the world. Her daughters Cheryl Cash, Vickie Jellar and Jo Sanders survive her along with four grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Carolyn H. Chase of Clinton Montana passed away on July 28, 2020 at the age of 73. She was born in Fort Benton Montana January 28, 1947 to Kathleen and Einer Holm. Carolyn excelled in math and science and was her class valedictorian. She also played the piano, clarinet and bassoon. Carolyn pursued a degree in math at the University of Montana followed by a graduate degree two years later. During college she met and married Alfred Chase. They built a home in Clinton where they raised their family and where they celebrated their 52th anniversary in June. Carolyn began her professional career in Fire and Aviation and was then hired as a mathematician at the Intermountain Fire Sciences Laboratory in Missoula where he worked on fire behavior research until her retirement in 2008. She enjoyed knitting, quilting and gardening and Sudoku.

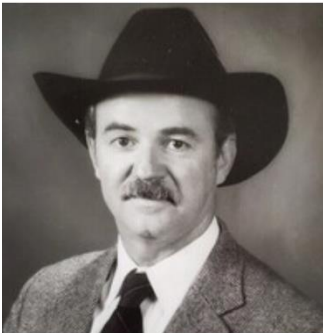


Carolyn is survived by her husband, Alfred, and daughters Fern, Lynn, Laura and Rebecca, a sister and a brother as well as several grandchildren, great grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.



Paul Willard Conrad passed away July 20, 2020 in Orem Utah at age 88. He was born December 10, 1932 to Charles Conrad and Alice Margaret Peterson. Paul served in the U.S. Army and graduated from BYU with a degree in Range Management. He worked on the Flathead National Forest from 1976 until his retirement in the 1990s. He was married to Maxine Muhlestein and after her passing married Pat Williams Smith.

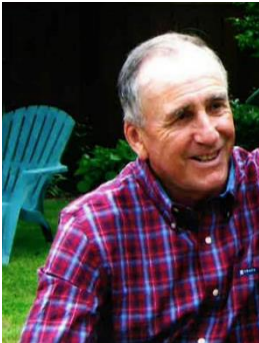
Paul was active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. He is survived by his wife, Pat and sister Lois Nelson. His daughters Pauline Low, Michele Conrad, Mark Conrad, Melanie Marrott and Shawn Conrad 30 grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren also survive him.



Dennis R. Dailey – passed away May 5, 2020. Dennis was born December 26, 1943 and grew up in South Dakota where he was inspired by the movie cowboys. He never was a cowboy, but rode many miles of high-country trails for the Forest Service and Back Country Horsemen. Dennis said that his work involved two very important elements of his dreams: working with horses and working in the wilderness – the Bob Marshall, the Bridger and the Selway-Bitterroot, preserving and protecting God’s resources. Dennis was the District Ranger at Moose Creek on the Nez Perce and on the Jim Bridger district on the Bridger Teton Forest. He retired to Pinedale Wyoming.

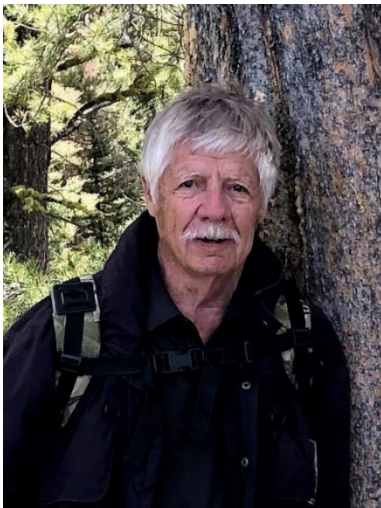
Dennis is survived by his wife Liz, children Lesley Wenz, David Dailey and Michael Dailey.

Robert “Bob” Earl Daniels died April 19, 2020 in Billings. Bob was born July 11, 1943 in Missoula to Betty and Roy Daniels and was raised in the Bitterroot where he enjoyed hunting and fishing with his father. Bob graduated from high school in Stevensville. He attended the University of Montana and graduated with degrees in forestry and wildlife biology. He then married his soul mate and best friend Phyllis with whom he had two children, Brenda and Craig.



Bob worked on the Bitterroot, Medicine Bow and Tongass National Forests and received numerous awards for his exceptional and outstanding work. Bob was a big Griz fan, coached Peewee and Little League baseball and Junior High football. Upon retirement he took up cooking and enjoyed delivering his chili to friends. Bob also enjoyed golf, watching sports,

travel, genealogy, reading and was a Civil War buff. He enjoyed spending time with family and grandchildren. Bob was preceded in death by his parents and wife Phyllis. He is survived by his sister Linda, children Brenda and Craig as well as numerous grandchildren, nieces and nephews.



James “Jim” Arthur Flansburg age 82 of Missoula passed away October 1, 2020. Jim was born in Havre on June 7, 1938 to John and Emma Flansburg. He attended school in Box Elder and Stevensville. At age 17 he enlisted in the Navy where he worked as an electrician. After serving in the Navy Jim returned to Montana and married Joyce Roczek. They lived in Missoula and raised three children there while working at Intermountain Lumber. He then returned to school, learning to operate mapping equipment. He was then hired by the Forest Service where he worked as a surveyor and cartographer for the Lolo National Forest. He was especially proud that he was able to fly aboard helicopters and provide data to fire crews during wildfires. His career with the Forest Service spanned 34 years before he retired in 1999.

Jim was involved with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Backcountry Horsemen and the Missoula Alliance Church. He was an accomplished artist and worked in water color painting, pen and ink, woodcarving and bronzes. Jim enjoyed spending time outdoors: hunting, fishing, camping and boating at the lake with his family. Jim is survived by his wife Joyce of Missoula, son Rick and daughters Bonnie and Kim as well as six grandchildren and five great grandchildren. He once said that he believed there must be horses in heaven and his family believes he is now united with his beloved horse, Zipper.



H. William “Bill” Gabriel passed away April 7, 2020 after a long life spent in wild places. Bill began studying birds as a boy scout and went on to study forest and wildlife conservation at Virginia Tech. He spent his summers fighting fires in California and joined the Army Reserve in 1956. Bill served in Colorado with the U.S. Army Mountain and Cold Weather Training Command where he taught a variety of mountain assault skills. He finished his Army commitment as an Army Forester. After the army he joined the Forest Service working in the Great Basin and Rocky Mountains and spent a year in Ecuador with the United Nations inventorying and mapping a rain forest wilderness.

Upon his return to the United States he earned a PhD in wildlife biology at the University of Montana. He spent time in Alaska working on land and resource conservation issues. He was involved in founding the Anchorage Audubon Society. When Bill retired, he traveled to 6 continents, including Antarctica and also became a widely published writer and photographer. He said “In my 32 years with the Forest Service I worked from the windblown treeless tundra of Alaska to the steaming equatorial forests of Ecuador and loved every minute of it”.

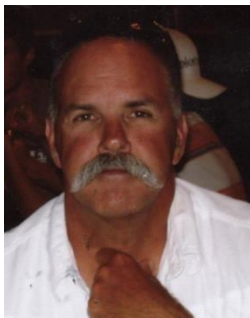
Margret Goerke of Fort Davis Texas passed away December 16, 2019 at the age of 80. She was born in Iowa in 1939 and attended the University of Iowa studying sociology. She spent many summers as a back-country Forest Guard in Idaho on the Payette Forest. Including 30 plus years at the Chamberlain Basin air strip. She leaves her son John, sister Carolyn MacDonald, brother Emil and two grandchildren.

Patrick Francis Hartless – age 77 died in Arlee Montana November 5th, 2018. He grew up in Pennsylvania and California. His first Forest Service job right out of high school was as a firefighter. He spent his whole career in fire, moving up to Forestry Research Technician at the Pacific Southwest Station where he conducted planned experimental fires instrumental in prescribed and wildfire behavior studies. While in California he also was a member of a Class 1 Fire Behavior team. In 1966 he transferred to the Missoula Fire lab where he was involved in prescribed burns and data collection.



After retirement Pat was an avid collector of Native American memorabilia and owner of the Three Rivers Trading Post in Missoula. He was an avid outdoorsman and hunter. Pat is survived by his three children Patrick Alexander Hartless of Corvallis, MT, Anna Price Carter of Hamilton MT and Daniel Paul Hartless of Kansas. He is also survived by seven grandchildren, one great grandchild and eight brothers and sisters.

Harold Curtis “Curt” McChesney died in December of 2018. He was born in Missoula in 1952 and spent most of his life in the Missoula area. He loved the great outdoors and started with the Forest Service as a fire fighter as soon as he turned 18. He later became a smoke jumper and worked his way up through the ranks until he retired from the West Fork Ranger District (Bitterroot National Forest) in 2005 after 35 years with the Forest Service.



Outside of his Forest Service career he was an avid skier and flyfishing guide. He met his wife Peggy on the slopes of the Montana Snowbowl. Together they had two children, Kate and Chas.

Glen Albert Roloff was born August 2, 1934 in Jackson Missouri and died March 28, 2020 in Missoula Montana. He graduated from the University of Missouri School of Forestry in 1956 where he met and married fellow student Susan Webster. After a stint in the Army, Glen started in timber management on the Stanislaus National Forest, the start of a 43-year career. He spent most of his career in State and Private Forestry, working in Illinois, Montana, North Dakota. He retired from the Region 1 office in Missoula in 2004.

Being outdoors and fishing with his great grandchildren were his favorite activities. Glen is survived by his wife Susan, daughter Kate, son Chuck, five grandchildren, great grandchildren, brother Paul and sister Madge.

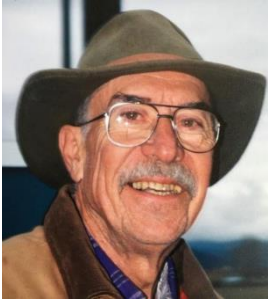
Martha Peggy Archibald Ranta was born in Missoula March 1, 1925 and passed away on June 20, 2020 in Yakama Washington. She graduated from the Missoula County High School in 1942 and moved to Fort Vancouver Washington to work for the army during WW11. After the war she returned to Montana and worked for the Army at Fort Missoula. She then went to work for the Forest Service in Missoula then in Packwood Washington until her retirement in 1981.



Martha married Arne “Sandy” Ranta and raised their family in Milltown before moving to Missoula in 1964. She was a boy scout den mother and PTA president at the Bonner grade school. After retirement she enjoyed full time traveling in their motor home.

Martha was preceded in death by her husband Sandy. She is survived by her sons, Lyle, Arne Roy and Walt as well as grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces and a nephew.

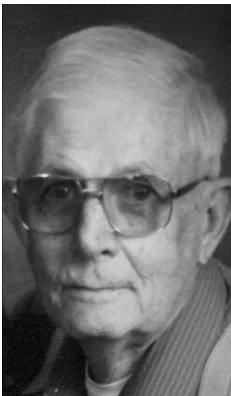
Stephan “Steve” Ramon Sherick of Missoula died April 9, 2020 at the age of 85. He was born in Butte on January 22, 1935. Music was an important part of Steve’s life and he played the accordion from the time he was a child. In high school he took up the French horn. After high school Steve attended MSU where he received his degree in Industrial Engineering and a masters in secondary education. While teaching in Butte he met and married fellow teacher Doris Wonder Fitz-Henry to whom he was married for 51 years. Steve started working early; setting pins in a bowling alley at age 6. He went on to work summers for the Forest Service. When the U.S. Job Corps was established, he became the Education Officer at the Trapper Creek Center in the Bitterroot. He traveled the country reorganizing Job Corps centers nationwide and was the Director of the Anaconda Job Corps Center from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. Steve retired in 1994 after several years as a Public Affairs Specialist in the Regional Office.



In retirement Steve raised Maine-Anjou cattle and Targhee sheep and was president of the Western Montana Wool Growers Association. Steve enjoyed traveling and was active in his community. Steve is survived by his wife, Doris and children Flynn and Gina.



Lloyd Whitaker passed away March 7, 2020 at the University of Kentucky Medical Center. He was born August 16, 1942 in Carmel California to Gus and Gertrude Whitaker. Lloyd was a smokejumper for the Forest Service and was active in the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church. He leaves his wife Carolyn House Whitaker, brother Floyd and several nieces and nephews.



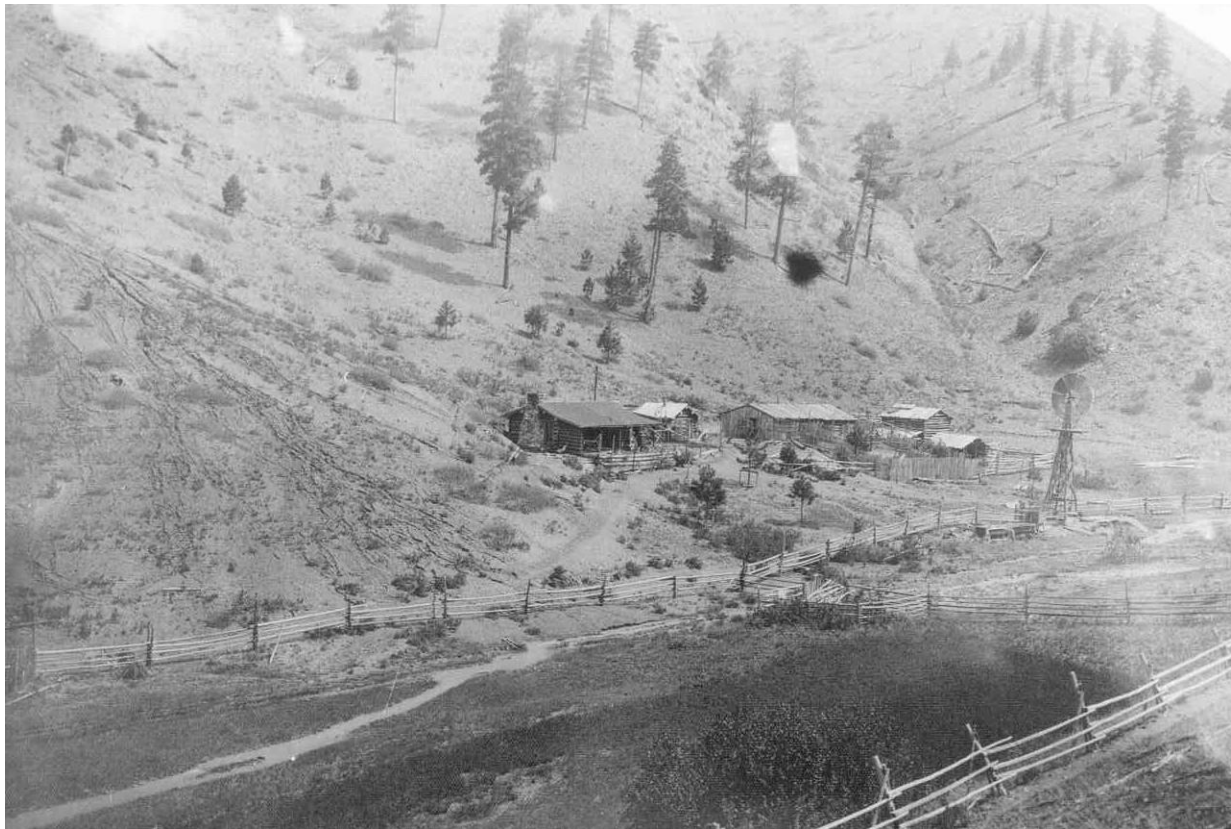
James (Jim) E. Labbe of Turah, passed away October 15, 2020 at the age of 82. Born to Edmond and Louise Labbe on July 23, 1938, Jim grew up east of Missoula running on logs floating down the Blackfoot and hopping trains with his brothers. He graduated from Missoula County High School then spent 5 years in the military. These years of service were followed by his career with the Forest Service. Jim started out on trail crews, then went on to Dispatch on the Bitterroot and Lolo. He eventually went into Law Enforcement and spent many years as special agent #229.

During his years at Seeley Lake he met Josephine Ployhar while doing a Smokey Bear presentation for her students. They were married and spent 58 years together raising a family of 10 children. Jim enjoyed the out of doors; hunting, getting firewood and helping friends with ranch work. After retiring from the Forest Service in 1989 he worked as a federal court bailiff for Judge Larson until 2014.

Jim leaves his wife Josephine, and children Neil, Stan, Mary Lou, Vince, Nick, Anne, Paul, Carole, Julie, and Donna as well as 20 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren.

Northern Rocky Mountain Retiree Association

P.O. Box 3215
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Forest Homestead on Soup Creek, Helena National Forest, early 1900s.