



NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN RETIREE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Forest Service Retirees:

For what it is worth I thought I would share the reason for my association with NRMRA. Like many of you, I enjoyed working for an agency that has a meaningful purpose and history. What made the experience even better was working with others that shared a value for our nation's forests and grasslands (I served on the Little Missouri National Grasslands from 1979 to 1984). All my years, I

worked with, and for, remarkable people that were mentors and role models for me. The NRMRA gives us the opportunity to stay engaged with and connected to friends and memories. I hope you can attend our monthly meetings on occasion and read the great newsletter that Vicky Maclean prepares for us. Enjoy!

Tim Love



The grassy area at the Fort Missoula Historical Museum has provided a great location for informal lunch gatherings. Our September potluck welcomed a few new faces to our group. We are going to have one more outside lunch gathering in October before moving indoors.

RED IVES RANGER DISTRICT REUNION

by Tom Troxel and Bill Boettcher

In mid-August, about forty-five alumni, families and friends who worked and lived on the Red Ives Ranger District from the 1960s through 1984 got together at the old Ranger's cabin. The Red Ives RD was one of the Districts on the St. Joe NF, later the Idaho Panhandle NF, until it was

consolidated with the Avery RD in 1984. During those years, there were 10-12 permanent staff and up to eighty seasonals, with trailers, bunkhouses, and a cook house sufficient for room and board for all.



Mid-1960s to 1984 Red Ives Alumni

Front Row L to R: Bill Burkert, Don Scharfe, Jan Abbott, Jim Abbott, John Krebs, Diana Krebs, Bill Wynkoop.

2nd Row: Ken Stretch, Roger Ottmar, Bill Boettcher, Allan Youens (Tex), Carl Maass, Lisa Harrison, Leroy Zent, Pat Harrison.

3rd Row: Greg Boyd, Bill Brandt, Lee Peterson, Russ Kolberg, Eric Trimble, Kevin Williams, Tom Troxel, Gene Kostolecky, Dale Schrempp.

It was a very special treat that Jim and Jan Abbott (Jim was District Ranger from 1964 to 1969) and John and Diana Krebs (John worked on the St. Joe for many years, starting in 1958) could attend

and share their memories of Red Ives and the upper St. Joe from the 1960s.

There were lots of stories, some of them with, perhaps, a little embellishment - about firefighting

heroics (Ball Creek, Cross Creek, and Caribou fires), tree planting, winter trips, timber crew, brush crew, rain, fire crew, road crew, great food, snow in July, and harrowing trips to, and from, St. Regis and Avery.

Some of the group's observations about the Red Ives RD of today were – the 'last 9 miles' are paved, the old clearcuts 'disappeared', there was prolific natural regeneration in addition to planted trees, there weren't any logging trucks, and fishing the St. Joe River was still as amazing as it used to be when Lester Smith was the camp fishing expert.

There were also great memories of fine people who have passed on, including Carl Schultz, Bob Lehman, Dave Whitmer, Les and Esther Smith, Paul Rambikur, Chuck Brooks, and others we were not aware of but played an important role in the work at Red Ives.

In 1969 and 1970, there was a tent camp at Berge Creek for the Brush Crew. The camp was patterned after the BRC camps of years-past and housed approximately thirty-five people with numerous sleeping tents, a cook tent, shower tent, two crew bosses, a cook and a cook's helper. Conditions were a bit austere, but everyone got along very well. The work was handpiling logging slash every day, which got a little repetitious, but for a camp full of 18-year-olds from across the country, it was high adventure. After all, there was always a trip to St. Regis or Avery to drink beer at least one evening each week – at that time, Parker's bar in Avery or the Talking Bird bar in St. Regis were the main attractions. Wednesday night at Parker's was 'peanut night' and the

Talking Bird had "George," the Myna bird. To this day, there is still a "George" in the Talking Bird bar, and now it's "George #9" to sit in the cage behind the bar.

The 1970 Brush Crew comprised mostly of students from forestry schools across the country, who were recruited with Student Requisitions, developed great comradery in that summer of living and working and fighting fires together, and eleven of that crew were able to attend. Tom Troxel had one of the original "Berge Creek Camp" signs that was along the Gold Creek Road and donated that back to the museum in the old Ranger Station.

Overall, the reunion went on for 3 days, with people coming and going the whole time. Attendees unanimously judged the reunion a huge success and a great time to see Red Ives again and renew old friendships. Thanks to all those who worked to make this gathering a big success.



Red Ives, 1936.



1970 Berge Creek Brush Crew Alumni

Front Row L to R: Bill Burkert, Roger Ottmar, Bill Wynkoop.

Back Row L to R: Ken Stretch, Alan Youens (Tex), Russ Kolberg, Tom Troxel, Leroy Zent, Gene Kostolecky, Bill Boettcher (Crew Boss).

Attendees not in the photos: Jerry Collins, Jim Furlong, John and Debbie Harrington, and Don Golnick.

Bill was a seasonal at Red Ives from 1966 to 1971 then got hired on the Clearwater in a permanent position. He spent his career all over the northwest and was a District

Tom started work as a seasonal then as a forester from 1970 to 1989 at Red Ives, Libby district on the Kootenai, and Eagle Lake on the Lassen. In 1989 he took a

Ranger on the Kootenai in the mid 1980's. He finished his career as a regional director in R1 and R4. He lives in Phoenix.

position with the Intermountain Forest Association in Rapid City SD; He retired there in 2017.



The National Museum of Forest Service History will once again be having their Old-Fashioned Christmas event on Saturday November 26 from 11 am to 3pm. This is a great family event. Volunteers needed. Contact Lisa.tait@forestservicemuseum.org



Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex and Adjacent Lands Priority Area Trail Maintenance Project

Funded by the Great American Outdoors Act Legacy Restoration Fund

The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Trails Project is a multi-year, \$5.4 million project focused on reducing deferred maintenance on 3,247 miles of trails within the Wilderness Complex and the Adjacent Lands Priority Area. This is one of only 15 Priority Areas nationwide (established under the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Act of 2016) that were identified as a priority for increased trail maintenance. The project is a combined effort between the Helena-Lewis and Clark, the Lolo, and the Flathead National Forest.

The Forests have partnered with the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC), the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation (BMWF), Flathead Area Mountain Bikers (FAMB), and Backcountry Horsemen of the Flathead (BCHF) to implement maintenance on hundreds of miles of trail as part of the project.

Over the 2021 season, the three forests were able to complete over 1,000 feet of tumpike repairs, 500 feet of puncheon replacements, 6 miles of retreat, 220 feet of retaining wall restoration, 6,400 feet of ditch/drainage structure repairs, 5,000 feet of braided trail repairs, 31 miles of brushing, 535 feet of puncheon running board repairs, 40 feet of puncheon approaches/stair repairs, 98 miles of re-establishing cleared corridor, 6,000 feet of trail rerouting projects, and 50 feet of multi-tier crib wall repairs. GAOA funding was also used to invest in project area stock programs and primitive trail maintenance activities across the complex.



Above: Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex & Adjacent Lands Priority Area



Above: Bringing in supplies with stock

All of this work occurred in addition to the Forests' regularly scheduled maintenance projects. The additional funding provided by GAOA has allowed the Forests to address vital deferred maintenance tasks which otherwise would not have been completed.

The upcoming 2022 field season is also quickly taking shape. The Lolo intends to have 4 MCC hitches in the Scapegoat Wilderness. The Flathead expects to continue to improve clearing width across the trail system and focused work on the Bull Creek, Morrison Creek, and Big River Trails. The Helena Lewis and Clark is planning puncheon reconstruction on a couple of trails, as well as reroutes, tumpike work, and trail brushing.

Over the next four years, additional trails work is planned which will significantly improve the experience of forest visitors and provide enjoyment for many years to come.

Right: Forks Patrol Trail No 452 before and after MCC brushing and tread work



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RETIREE GROWS HOPS FOR BEER

by Vicky MacLean

Retiree Mike Oliver's Forest Service career began when he was sixteen, as a seasonal at Moose Creek on the Nez Perce where he worked in trails, fire and even as a cook's helper. His professional career kept him mostly in Montana working at first in fire on the West Fork District on the Bitterroot. He then worked in timber and minerals on the Darby District before becoming the Staff Officer for Public Affairs. In 1991, Mike transferred to the Helena as the Public Affairs Officer. He also worked as the Natural Resource Team Leader and Government Affairs Coordinator while on the Helena. In 1999, he began a fellowship detail in the U.S. Congress associated with the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. He served one and ½ years on the U.S. House of Representatives side and 2 years on the U.S. Senate side. He returned to Montana in 2003 as the Montana Capital City Coordinator. He worked in that position until transferring to the Regional Office in 2004. Mike retired from the Regional Office in 2012 where he was the Assistant Director of Public and Governmental Relations.

Living above Huson, Montana, in the old, remodeled Huson schoolhouse, and not far from the Nine Mile Ranger Station, it appears that at one point in time Mike was a gardener. Remnants of a once large vegetable garden are surrounded by an 8' tall fence to keep out bears, elk, and deer. Along three corners of the fence are hops that Mike planted as ornamentals. Mike does not do home brewing, but FS retiree and beer connoisseur, Dave Spilde, approached him about providing hops to the Great Burn Brewing company in Missoula. The

brewing company decided to do a special batch using local community hops. This is the Great Burn "Backyard Brew IPA." Great Burn collects hops donations from several local growers to provide this "once-a-year" fresh hops brew. Dave Spilde approached Mike and another FS retiree, Earl Sutton about donating their hops crop. Breweries generally use pelletized hops because the fresh hops methodology is more complex and requires a more rigorous cleanup process.



Fresh-picked hops.

hops are used to flavor beer. According to Wikipedia, they are used as a "bittering flavoring and stability agent.... which impart floral, fruity, or citrus flavors and aroma." They are picked in late summer or early fall. Mike usually gets 10 to

15 gallons of hops, which were almost ready to be harvested when I stopped by in August. Due to the continued hot weather this summer, hops crops in general have been less abundant.

Mike is always happy to see anything from the garden utilized. The “Backyard Brew” should be available at Great Burn Brewing in late September. The IPA has been described by customers as exceptional, thus does not last long.



Mike Oliver and his hops.

FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FOREST SERVICE HISTORY

“What did we get ourselves into?” – Stories From the Forest Service Family

There is an old adage which claims that “it takes a village to raise a child.” This is also true for the United States Forest Service (USFS), a sprawling outfit that employs 30,000 people spread over nine regions and across six hundred ranger districts ranging anywhere from 50,000 to more than 1 million acres. This expansive organization has historically benefitted from the supplementary assistance of an army of unpaid yet highly devoted wives, sons, and daughters. The *Oral History Program of the National Museum of Forest Service History* is producing a podcast that centers around the stories of those intrepid women who gave their lives to “the outfit” without any expectation of notoriety or reward.

“What Did We Get Ourselves Into?”, premiering in Fall 2022, will be essential listening that acknowledges those ordinary families who made extraordinary efforts to achieve “The Greatest Good.” If you know anyone who fits that description, please contact the Museum’s Oral Historian, Dr. **James Wall** by email at james.wall@forestservicemuseum.org or by phone at 406-541-6374. We plan to interview “narrators” through the end of May 2022. Also, do you know of other ways the Museum can build its oral history collection? Please visit the Museum’s oral history web page (<https://forestservicemuseum.org/oral-history-program/>) and consider completing one or both of the electronic forms.

NEW NEZ PERCE-CLEARWATER SUPERVISORS OFFICE

Jennifer Becar, Public Affairs Specialist

The new Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests Supervisor's Office in Kamiah, Idaho has been completed using innovative design, modern technologies, local building resources, and community contractors and designers. This new facility is located on the same property as the old Kamiah Ranger Station which was built in 1963.

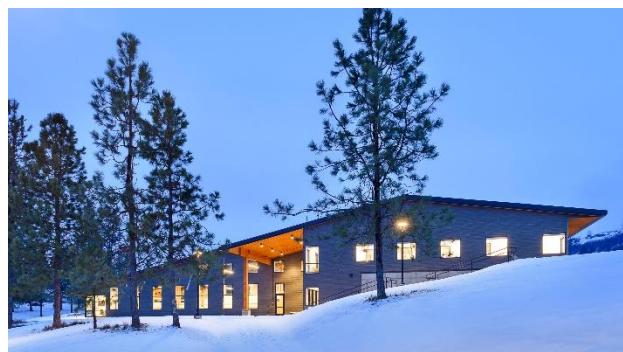


Entrance of new Supervisor's Office.

Mosaic Architects of Helena, Montana designed the building to blend into the surrounding landscape, featuring a sloped roof, large windows, and a subsurface floor level. Quality Contractors, LLC of Deary, Idaho was awarded the contract for the building, and they worked with local subcontractors and the Nez Perce Tribe's Tribal Employment Office to employ area Tribal members. Timber products are prominently featured in the 15,000 square foot building's structural, interior, and exterior design, with cross-laminated timber roofing and raw timber support beams artfully placed throughout the office and meeting space. An open floorplan reduces the footprint of the building while enhancing

efficiency by promoting collaboration between employees and resource areas.

Economic and environmental sustainability is literally built into the new building, which utilized 159,400 board feet of wood in its construction. The new Supervisor's Office stores approximately 331 metric tons of carbon dioxide in its building materials and avoided 376 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions in construction, for a total potential carbon benefit of 707 metric tons of carbon dioxide. This is equivalent to 149 cars off the road for one year, or the energy required to operate 75 homes for one year.



Back of new Supervisor's Office.

Though the building's construction is complete, further work at the facility will continue to highlight all that makes the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests and the surrounding areas unique. The Forest Service is working alongside the Nez Perce Tribe on interior and exterior design "elements that honor the Tribe's special relationship with these lands. Landscaping features at the office will highlight the different

environments found across the National Forest, from the rolling hills of the Palouse to the rugged Salmon River canyon.



Reception area.

We are excited to be moving in to this beautiful and economical building, made with wood products from around the region and expertly constructed by local contractors,” said Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests Supervisor Cheryl Probert. “We are proud to offer this facility as a showcase for tourists and visitors in Kamiah to share an example of what is possible within the modern forest management and wood products industries.”



Conference room.



Bitterroot Forest Reserve Headquarters Office in Kooskia, 1907.



NO SMOKES

By Nils "Swede" Troedsson

In the summer of 1953, I accepted a job as a fire lookout on the Superior Ranger District, on the Lolo National Forest, MT. I was packed into the Marble Mountain Lookout, situated south of the Clark Fork River, between Superior and St. Regis, Montana.

I was on the lookout for six weeks, and although 1953 was a busy fire season, I never spotted a fire.

One day, Hank Vische, the District Fire Dispatcher, called me on the phone and after giving the direction to a fire, asked me if I could see the smoke. I was not provided binoculars and told him I could not see the smoke. He sounded agitated as to the fact I could not see the smoke. He kept asking me if I was sure I could not see the smoke. I kept replying, "NO, I CAN'T SEE THE SMOKE!"

A couple of years later, I was finishing my tour in the Marines. At Camp Pendleton, CA, a buddy of mine and I were watching a hawk hovering above us (looking for a mouse or vole, I suppose).

My buddy's glasses fell off. I picked them up, and out of curiosity, put them on and looked up at the hawk. WOW!! I realized then and there I must be near sighted. The corpsman at sick bay confirmed my suspicions. He said: Private, you are DEFINITELY near sighted! A Navy optometrist prescribed corrective lenses. Now I know why at the rifle range the 500-yard target appeared fuzzy. In spite of that I did qualify as a Sharpshooter, sending rounds downrange in the

general direction. I think with corrective lenses I may have qualified as Expert.

This also may explain why I never spotted a fire while on lookout. A nearsighted lookout with no binoculars! SHEESH!

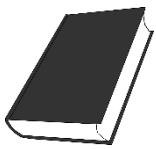
However, I had a great time on lookout! I sunned myself on the shutters, baked pies, tried other recipes listed in the great Lookout Cookbook, watched a bull elk and a black bear who routinely wandered around my lookout, and gossiped on the phone in the evening with other lookouts.

Swede is a retiree from Dillon MT who spent most of his career on the Beaverhead.



A TRIBUTE TO DR. STEVE ARNO

By Tim Love



Most of you knew Steve Arno or were familiar with his work. He was an acclaimed Forest Researcher who made significant contributions to our understanding of forests and fire. More than that, Steve was simply an outstanding individual. I first learned about Steve as a student at the University of Montana where I knew him as Dr. Arno. His work with his colleague, Dr. Bob Pfister, on Forest Habitat Types, and his research related to fire ecology was foundational and advanced our professional understanding. He was also a gifted writer. Long after retirement he continued to write books about trees and forests. His book, *Golden Trees of the Mountain West, A Natural History of the Northwestern Larch*, was the latest in a series of books he authored or co-authored with his

friend Dr. Carl Fiedler (another excellent research forester). Like most of you, I love to read and admittedly I like to read about trees and forests. Steve's books make enjoyable reading of a subject that can be difficult for some. But Steve covered his subjects in such a manner that stirs imagination, piques interest, and captures attention.

Those who knew and loved Steve will miss him. The profession of forestry will miss this gifted and kind gentleman. A partial list of his books he authored or co-authored include *Ponderosa: People, Fire, and the West's Most Iconic Tree*, *Timberlines: Mountain and Arctic Forest Frontiers*; *Douglas Fir: the Story of the West's Most Remarkable Tree*; *Flames in our Forest*; *Mimicking Natures Fire*; and *Discovering Sierra Trees*.

A RURAL EDUCATION

By Vicky MacLean

One theme I have regularly come across doing my ranger station research is the situation regarding school age children at remote ranger stations. Various pieces of correspondence in early Forest Service files have mentioned that a ranger needed to be moved closer to town because he had school age children. In some instances, children boarded in town with friends or relatives. Sometimes the ranger's wife and children would all move to town for the school year. On the Helena Forest, early day ranger E. A. Woods was moved from McClellan Creek to Nelson because he had school age children and there was a schoolhouse (which still is there) along Beaver Creek several miles below the ranger station. A 1925 inspection report from the Beaverhead said *The Melrose Station is in fair condition. Location is about three miles out of Melrose up some lonesome gulch. It is not a cheerful sort of place in which to live. Three miles is too far from school. The best one can say of this location is "it might be worse."* At the Powell Ranger Station the solution was to bring the school to the ranger station.

The community of Powell is located about ten miles west of Lolo Pass on the Idaho side of the state line. To call it a community is probably a stretch, but there has been a Forest Service presence there since the early 1900s. Also included in the greater Powell community are the Lochsa Lodge and the Idaho department of transportation facility along Highway 12 across from the Ranger Station. The nearest towns are Lolo 48 miles to the east and Kooskia ninety some miles to the west.

At first within the boundary of the original Bitterroot Forest Reserve, the Powell ranger station, according to retiree Ken Hotchkiss, has



Powell School, 1988.

been treated like the family stepsister and shuffled around from Forest to Forest, a remote unit with poor access and poor roads and buildings brought in from other places. Highway 12 was built in bits and pieces and completed in 1962. Phone service came to Powell in 1973.

In the early days Powell was just a seasonal station, but with the highway going through there it was turned into a year-round ranger station in the 1950s. It is once again a seasonal station with headquarters for the district now at Kooskia Idaho. Next door to the ranger station, on Forest Service land and operating under a special use permit, is the Lochsa Lodge. The lodge was built in 1928 to provide hunting and fishing outfitting. It consists of a lodge and numerous cabins. The original lodge burned in 2001 and has been replaced with a large log building. Across the highway is the Idaho Transportation facility with residential facilities for the highway crew, state highway patrol, and game warden. Residing at these three facilities in the 1970s there were a number of school age children.

Retiree Bob Hoverson said at that time there were probably about a dozen families there.

In 1972, the Powell community association approached the Idaho school board district #241 at Grangeville about providing a school. The school district supplied materials for school and the Forest Service provided a trailer near the lodge for a classroom. There were ten children that year. According to Idaho Education department, over the next 27 years there were from 5 to 27 students up to eighth grade. A few years later a new building was built in Missoula and moved to the ranger station. One teacher was from California and did not last the year due to the cold snowy climate and isolation. Records indicate that some years there may have been 2 teachers there. The school closed in 1999. The closest school now is Woodman school on the Montana side of Lolo Pass, down Highway 12 on the way to Lolo. Forest Service district headquarters moved to Kooskia Idaho in 2012, however there are some employees who still live

at Powell year-round. Powell District Ranger retiree Larry Cron (at Powell from 1972-1976) said that the presence of a school there was a real victory for recruiting employees with families. He recalls that at first there were three students from the Lodge, and several Forest Service children: two Hoversons, one Williamson, and one Cron daughter. Larry remembers that the teacher required all kids to have a pair of slippers at school to change into to keep the new carpet clean.

Angela Bolon-Reichert, now an archaeologist on the Lolo Forest, moved to Powell when she was 4 or 5 years old. Her dad was Idaho patrol there from 1983-1989. She remembers that the K-8 teacher was Mrs. Butler, then Mrs. Konyck. Angela said there was usually one teacher and an assistant. Following are accounts of teaching at Powell and how another Forest Service retiree got to school from remote locations on the St Joe (now part of the Idaho Panhandle) National Forest.

TEACHING AT A RANGER STATION SCHOOL

By Terry Clark

When I started my journey in education as a 19-year-old I never would have expected to spend over 20 years as a teacher in a one-room school. This journey would take me to three different one-room schools.

The Powell School, a one-room school started in 1974 is located along the Lochsa River just on the west side of Lolo Pass in Idaho.

What made Powell School unique was its location on a Clearwater National Forest District compound. It was three hours away from the

Joint School District 241 office in Grangeville, Idaho. It was a K-8 school. It provided schooling to children of Forest Service employees, Lochsa Lodge employees, Idaho Department of Road Maintenance employees and Idaho Highway Patrol employees. I taught at Powell School from 1990 to 1999, a daily commute of fifty miles each way from Lolo, Montana. I taught an average of six to eight students but had as many as fourteen students. Each day was spent doing, Math, Reading, English, Writing, Spelling, Social Studies, and Science to nine different grades.

The location of a school within a national forest provided the students the opportunity of spending every day observing what their surroundings had to teach them. Many hours were spent exploring and doing field trips in the outdoors. Some of these outings included tree identification, wildflowers identification, bird watching and identification, and observing salmon on their trek up the creek to spawn. We did bike rides to our local pond in the spring as soon as the snow was off the road (some years earlier than others). One thing Powell had was lots of snow, which lent itself to cross country ski trips to the pond as well. Students spent recesses playing badminton and tetherball and sliding down large piles of snow.

The school's location across the street from the Ranger Station gave students and parents opportunities to be in close proximity to one another and for easy access to maintenance and EMTS.

Throughout my tenure at Powell, we had parents who were awesome musicians who taught piano lessons and volunteered their talents and assistance to the production of our annual Christmas programs.



Powell students, 1983.

Art was a big part of the curriculum. One day I opened up my art closet door and noticed that some construction paper and yarn had been chewed on in the closet. So, as I slowly started cleaning it out, I came across a nest of paper and yarn in the bottom with two beady eyes looking up at me. So, I asked one of the boys to bring a waste basket which I threw over the top of the mouse. We slipped a piece of cardboard under the waste basket and carefully carried it outside. All we could see was a small animal running through the grass with tail in the air towards the Ranger Station. On the ride home I told my story to my husband (Lee Clark, a Forest Service Fire Management Officer) which he replied, “the mouse will be back tomorrow.” I thought no way, it was so scared. When I arrived the next morning, I opened the closet door and there it was looking at me. It was deemed not safe to cohabitate with the mouse. Traps were set. There were a few tears shed over the loss of the little mouse.

Another story that comes to mind occurred during the week I prepped for the upcoming school year. It was a very dry summer with much of the surrounding vegetation tinder dry. On my arrival at the school, I sat down at my desk and looked out my window. There looking up at me was a brown bear lying beneath a bush. I went about my preparation, and she continued to lie there throughout the day. This went on for a few days. With the school's start just a few days away, we decided it wasn't safe to have a bear around the school. The Forest Service brought in a bear trap and the bear was relocated in an area far from the school. Unlike the mouse, the bear never returned to the bush near the school.

As one-room schools become a way of learning from the past. I need to write about the positives.

Students learn to be self-starters working independently. Older students are mentors and help with younger students. Children learn to adapt to different situations and adjust to larger schools very well. Many of my former students have become Forest Service employees, wildlife biologists, fire fighters, research scientists, realtors, office managers and have made me proud of them as if they were my own children. Prior to becoming the teacher at Powell School both of my children attended this school.

Schedules could be very flexible allowing for more time to learn and delve into particular subjects. The school was a community where parents, students and teacher all took part in field

trips and outside activities. Powell School had many social functions from potluck, pet parades, Christmas programs, last day of school celebrations and promotional parties that the Powell community took part in. There was a closeness that formed between all the parents, students, employees of the Powell Ranger Station. It was a sad day when my husband and I transferred to Great Falls and the Powell School closed permanently.

Terry taught at the Powell school from 1990 to 1999. Her husband worked for the Forest Service. She went on to teach at one room schoolhouses at several other locations as her husband was transferred to new jobs.



Powell School kids.

After a summer of outdoor monthly lunch meetings, we will be moving inside starting in November. We meet the first Tuesday of the month. We usually have a speaker from the Regional Office to help keep us up to date on what is going on nationally and in the region. Notices will go out about a week ahead of time to let you know the location.



LIFE ON THE MILWAUKEE ROAD WITHIN THE NATIONAL FORESTS

By Jack Walton

I was born in Townsend, Montana in 1945. My father worked for the Milwaukee Railroad and was a section foreman stationed at Sixteen Mile, near Ringling, Montana. My brother Garland and sister Pauline were also born in Townsend. In 1949 the railroad abolished the station at Sixteen Mile and my family moved to Bryson, a station about four miles west of Saltese. While at Bryson, in the winter my father would go down to Saltese on the motor car to get groceries. In the summer there was a trail from the section house down to the highway for access. In the spring of 1950, the station at Bryson was abolished and we moved to Clearwater Junction for a short time and spent a few months at Sappington near Three Forks, Montana. In the fall of 1950, we moved to Roland, Idaho. My sister Carol was born in Missoula while we were stationed at Clearwater Junction.

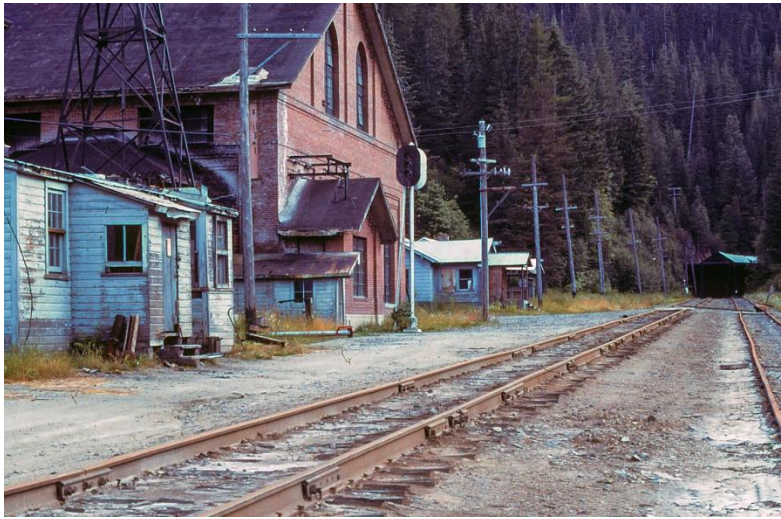
My father was section foreman at Roland from 1950 to the spring of 1953 when the station was abolished. The foundation of the section house we lived in still exists at Roland at the west end of tunnel twenty. The section house was a two-story structure. Across the railroad tracks from the house was a bridge and a set of stairs that went to a bench where there was a garage. There was a small pond located on the bench as well as a lineman shack. East of the section house on a bench was another small shack. One time my dad took me through the tunnel on the open top motor

car and at one spot told me not to look up. Being a kid, we do not always follow instructions and I looked up and got a face full of water.

In the fall of 1952, I started first grade at Avery, Idaho. I boarded out with a railroad family in Avery. On Friday about noon time, I would go to the railroad station and catch the east bound passenger train and get dropped off at Roland. On Sunday afternoon or evening I would ride the west bound freight train to Avery. While we lived at Roland, in the wintertime we got our groceries from a Safeway store in St Maries, Idaho. The east bound passenger train would drop off our groceries. In the summer we would go over the mountain to Taft and go to Wallace for our shopping.

Washington Water Power came in and installed a weather station on a small bench above the section house to the west. My mother would record the readings (high and low temperature, rainfall, snowfall and moisture content) and send them to Washington Water Power. The weather station was on a platform about fifteen feet above the ground due to the snow that we got in the wintertime.

In the spring of 1953, the station at Roland was abolished and we moved to Garrison. I started second grade at Garrison. Then in January 1954, my father got bumped and we moved to Lennep, near Martinsdale, Montana. We would go hunting



East Portal. Undated.

The Walton family lived in the old depot building to the left of the substation.

and fishing in the Castle and Crazy Mountains. When I was in the seventh grade, I saw some engineers working on the road between Lennep and Loweth. It was then that I wanted to be an engineer. My sister Kathleen was born in Harlowton. In November of 1961, the station at Lennep was abolished and we moved to East Portal (east end of Tunnel 20 and now the Route of the Hiawatha trailhead).

It was the beginning of Thanksgiving week that we moved. On Monday, I started high school at St Regis. On Wednesday we unloaded our household goods from the box car and moved into the depot at East Portal. Overnight we had three feet of snow but were able to get our vehicles out to the highway where there was a garage for storing them. The school district had a Tucker Snow cat that could carry about seven people that was stored in the substation. One of the substation operators operated the Tucker Snow Cat and would take their three children, and my brother, two sisters and me from East Portal the three miles to the highway where we caught the school bus from St Regis. The school bus would drop the grade school

students at the Saltese Grade School. When the road was open, we traveled by car to catch the bus.

A couple of times during the summer my brother Gary and I would walk through the tunnel to Roland and back. In late summer we picked a lot of huckleberries and blackcaps. My mother canned the huckleberries and made syrup from the blackcaps.

For entertainment in the winter, we would watch tv and the two stations were out of Spokane, WA. Also, we learned how to cook and bake as well as playing cribbage and pinochle. A couple of times, I would try out my dad's snowshoes down on the flats especially when there was 8 to 10 feet of snow. Sometimes I would flounder around until I could get upright. You had to watch out for any springs and when crossing Rainy Creek.

Also, we enjoyed in the winter, watching the bank widener clear the snow from the main line, passenger, and house tracks. This happen when there was between 4 to 8 feet of snow. Over eight feet the Milwaukee would run their rotary.

The next year the Saltese School District hired a bus driver that lived in Saltese and purchased a suburban to come up to East Portal and transport us to Saltese. The railroad had a rubber tire dozer at East Portal to remove the snow from the passenger and house tracks. The dozer kept the road open during the winter.

In the spring of 1963, my parents bought a house in Saltese. We had to add onto the structure for a family of seven. My dad bought the section houses at Bryson and Saltese and on the weekends and evenings my dad, brother, and I would work taking down the building and constructing an addition to our house up Silver Creek.

The summer of 1964, I worked with my dad on the railroad. The East Portal section was from the west switch at Saltese to the Adair. In September I went to Denver, Colorado, and attended a trade school for drafting and mapping. I got a diploma in the spring of 1965 and went back and worked with my dad at East Portal for about 1 ½ years before going to New York and working for a surveying firm. During the summertime when the blackcap berries were ripe, my dad and I would pick them during lunch time and take them home and my mother would make blackcap syrup.

While working for my dad on the railroad, in the winter when the temperature dropped to around zero and there was an east wind, we would close the tunnel doors. When the doors were closed, we would go into the tunnel and pick ice from between the rails, otherwise it could build up and derail the train. We had to watch the signal at the Roland end of the tunnel. When it turned yellow,

we would open the tunnel doors, and get into a little shack in the snowshed. After the train went through, we would close the doors until the next train came through.



In January 1968, I started college at Montana State College and began working on my Civil Engineer degree. During the summers of 1970 and 1971, I worked on the St Joe National Forest. The first year I was a GS-5 Civil Engineer Tech party chief in charge of a survey crew. The second year I was a GS-5 Construction Inspector on the Prospect Creek project up the St Joe River and was stationed at Avery, Idaho. I drove back and forth between Avery and Saltese on the weekends going up Cliff Creek and over the mountain to Taft.

The Milwaukee Road closed down through this area in 1980. In 1998 the Route of the Hiawatha bike trail opened from East Portal down to Pearson where bikers can catch a shuttle back to the trail head at East Portal. The scenic bike trail passes through ten tunnels and over seven trestles and has numerous pullouts with interpretive signs. Another thirty plus miles of trail is being planned which would extend eastward to St Regis.

Jack went on to a 36-year career in Civil Engineering. His first permanent job was as a GS 7 on the Gifford Pinchot Forest. With various career moves he spent time on the Challis, Kootenai, and White River Forest where he had duties for winter sports engineering on five ski areas. Jack's last job was as Forest Engineer on the Lassen National Forest from where he retired in 2012.

In 2025 this region will be hosting the USFS National Reunion in Missoula. Committees are forming and we will be needing volunteers. If you are interested in being involved, contact Lisa Tait at the Museum. Lisa.tait@forestservice-museum.org

An Old Fashioned Forest Service Christmas

National Museum of Forest Service History
6305 Highway 10 West, Missoula

(one mile west of Missoula Airport)

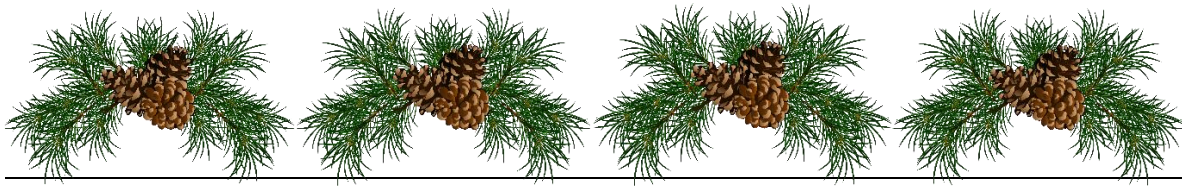
Saturday ~ November 26, 2022
11am - 3pm

- Visit Santa Claus
- Horse drawn wagon rides
- Do the Snow Pants Dance
- Snap a picture with Smokey & Woodsy Owl
- Play the Scavenger Hunt and win a prize
- Gather Around the Campfire & sing songs
- Shop in the Ranger Station for special gifts
- Sip Hot Chocolate and Munch Candy Canes

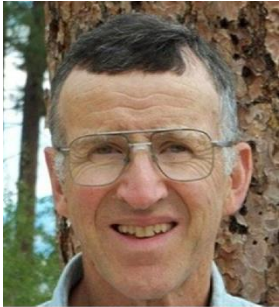
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Donations welcome! For further information, please contact our office at 406-541-6374



WE REMEMBER



Stephen Arno – Passed away June 4th, 2022, at his home in Missoula. Steve was born on October 1, 1943, to Siegfried and Grace Turner Arno. He spent his childhood on Bainbridge Island and Bremerton Washington. He attended Olympic Junior College and then transferred to the Forestry department at Washington State University. He was a naturalist from an early age and felt blessed to have spent nearly all of his life near the forest.

In 1965 he and his newly wed wife, Bonnie, moved to Missoula Montana where he earned a PhD in Forest Ecology. He started in timber management at the Forest Service where he had a 25-year career conducting research in forest and fire ecology. Steve published many books and articles about forestry, fire ecology and natural history and received many awards relating to his contributions to the forestry community.

Steve and his wife purchased their family forest near Florence in 1971 and spent the next 48 years managing their forest, hosting tree farm tours, and sharing their experiences. Steve is survived by his two sons, 4 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Donations may be made to the Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation or the Montana Tree Farm Program.



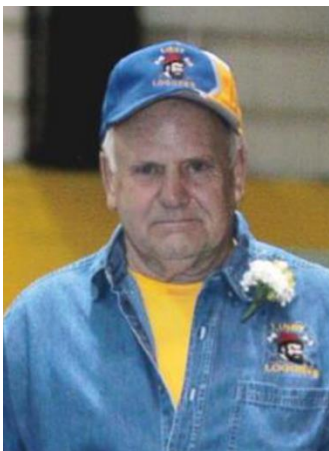
Marthan Marius Bourassa – Marty was born in Polson Montana September 21, 1943, to Marius and Ruby Hanson Bourassa, He passed away on May 30, 2022, at his home up the Rattlesnake in Missoula. Marty attended school in Missoula and finished his education with an accounting degree from University of Montana. His first accounting job was with the Forest Service in Orofino Idaho from where he commuted often to Missoula to see his family and Leora Lila Kane who he married in 1969. Marty's career took them to Missoula, Great Falls, back to Missoula, to Colville Washington until 1982. He finished his career at the Regional Office in Missoula as Chief Financial Officer retiring in 1999.

Marty's passion was classic cars, having purchased his first Ford at the age of fourteen. He always had a car project in the works and was involved with helping organize local car shows. Marty and Leora enjoyed traveling around the country until she passed away in 2006. He later connected with an old Forest Service colleague Virginia Nichols, and they were married in 2011. Survivors include his wife Virginia, her three children and grandchildren, his three sisters, and many nieces and nephews



Carl Fager – age 84 passed away June 16, 2022, in Moscow Idaho. Carl was born to William and Myrtle Fager in Kewaunee Wisconsin August 15, 1937. He attended the University of Wisconsin where he met and married Sandra Stewart. In 1961 he moves to Montana to complete his forestry degree at the University of Montana. He subsequently worked for the Forest Service in Plains, Harlowton and Billings Montana and St Maries Idaho.

Carl was an active member of his church where he served in many capacities. He was also involved with the volunteer fire department and as an EMT in St Maries, Friendship Force and Gideons International. He is survived by his wife Sandra, sons Bruce and Craig, two grandchildren and six great grandchildren.



Ray Hammons – Ray passed away at Kalispell Medical Center July 25, 2022. He was born in Eureka Montana on July 10, 1936, to Hedge and Anna Hammons and raised in Warland and Ural which are not under the waters of Lake Kooconoosa. Ray graduated from high School in Libby Montana in 1954 and married Darlene Fairchild in 1957. After high school Ray worked for his brothers mill, then the railroad, followed by 36 years with the Forest Service. His Forest Service career was varied and included road and bridge building, fire, and fleet manager on the Kootenai – the job he retired from in 1989.

Ray had many hobbies and interests. He built a boat in his living room and enjoyed fishing and water sports. He loved ice skating, camping, hunting, cutting firewood and family vacations. He was an avid skier, served on the ski patrol and was president of Kootenai Winter Sports for many years. His other winter passion was sledding, and he prepared a two-mile route by plowing and misting the road and readied sleds for competition by sanding and waxing runners. Ray also spent countless hours at his grandchildren’s wrestling matches.

Ray is survived by his wife Darlene, his daughters, 6 grandchildren, 3 greatgrandchildren and 2 nieces.



John Walter Mumma – died September 1, 2022, of multiple myeloma. John was born in Farmington New Mexico to Richard Marion and Luita Dufur Mumma on September 30, 1939. He graduated from Farmington high school. He attended Fort Lewis College, graduated from the University of New Mexico, and attended Oregon State and Colorado State Universities.

John’s Forest Service career started as a seasonal for the San Juan Forest. His career continued mostly in wildlife and fisheries resources on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison, Apache, Lincoln, and Shoshone Forests. He served in the Southwest Regional office as well as Regional Offices in the Intermountain Region and the Rocky Mountain Region. John spent a year at the Washington Office on the Programs and Legislative staff and from there went to the Northern Region Office, first as Deputy Regional forester then as Regional

Forester. After his time in the Northern Region, he spent four years as a natural resources consultant before being named Director of the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Over his career John received numerous awards and was also involved in acquiring many acres of wetland habitat and elk habitat in Colorado.

John enjoyed spending time outdoors with his family and passed on his knowledge of plants and wildlife to his children and grandchildren. John is survived by his wife Myra, daughter Rainee and son Johnny as well as two stepchildren, eight grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.



Harry Lee Siebert – Harry passed away at his home in Missoula October 24, 2021, after a long illness. He was born in Alamota, Kansas on September 19, 1932. He graduated in a class of sixteen from high school in Sand Fork, West Virginia. He started his Forest Service career in 1952 working seasonally on the Monongahela Forest. In 1955 he earned a BA in Civil Engineering from West Virginia University. He married Sue Haynes in September of that year. Harry then spent two years with the Army Corps of Engineers in Korea.

Harry's work then took him back to the Monongahela Forest, the Regional Office in Philadelphia, the Payette, and the Manti-La-Sal Forest where he worked with the Park Service to establish Canyonlands National Park and eventually to the Regional Office in Missoula.

Harry was active in local organizations including the Missoula Transportation District and various volunteer efforts. After retirement he enjoyed traveling all over the United States as well as overseas. He was preceded in death by his wife Sue, a daughter and three sisters. He is survived by a son-in-law and granddaughter as well as several step grandchildren and great grandchildren.



Diane Kay Thompson – Diane was born in Dillon Montana on February 23, 1949, to Oliver and Betty Lou Thompson. She passed away May 4, 2022, in Missoula from Multiple Myeloma. As a child she was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Diane graduated from Powell County High School in Deerlodge where she was a member of the Rainbow Girls and the National Honor Society.

Diane attended the University of Montana and received a degree in elementary education with a minor in reading in 1983. She began her Forest Service career in 1984 when she accepted a job as an information receptionist on the Helena Forest. She later transferred to the Missoula Ranger District as a Support Services Supervisor and in 2000 to the Lolo Forest as a procurement Technician until her retirement in 2008.

Diane enjoyed playing cards, crafts, cha-chinging, and Montana Griz football games. Survivors include her sister Linda Lee, a niece and several great nieces and nephews and numerous cousins.



John Franklin Wells – passed away April 21, 2022, in Lebanon Oregon. He was born September 21, 1941, in Springfield Missouri to Dewy Perl and Margaret Emma Wells. He attended the University of Missouri-Columbia and graduated with a degree in Forest Management. He married Nancy Elizabeth Sharpe in 1971 and adopted her two daughters. He later married Ellen Vogel in 1992. He began his Forest Service career on the Bitterroot, building trails and as a lookout, then in inventory and engineering on the Kootenai. He later worked on the Sequoia, the Stanislaus Forests, and the Regional Office in San Francisco. After that he was back in the Northern Region on the Kootenai and the Panhandle Forests. He ended his career at the Washington Office in 2004 where he was the Branch Chief of Information Resources Management for Forest Management staff.

After retirement he moved to Tennessee, Washington, and Oregon. John was an avid outdoorsman and enjoyed fishing, hunting, backpacking, and bird watching. In 2004 he became active in the National Active and Retired Federal Employees organization and was their newsletter editor and webmaster. John is survived by his sister, three daughters and seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.



Jennifer Wilke – was born July 9, 1971, to Judy and Marvin Hagen. Jennifer passed away May 24, 2022. Jennifer grew up in Lincoln Montana and graduated from Lincoln High School as class Valedictorian. She earned a full scholarship to MSU from the US Airforce and graduated with a B.S in mathematics. She married John Wilke in 1996.

Jennifer started her career as a fire fighter on the Lincoln Ranger District and became an engine crew foreman. She spent 18 years with the Forest Service locally and nationally before leaving to start her own business in fire science, protection, and prevention. She eventually sold her business and went to work for Gibson and later for Blackhawk.

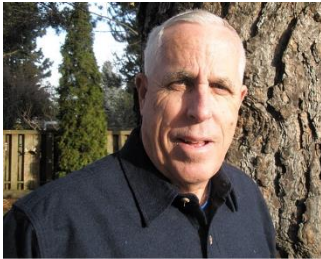
Jennifer succumbed to her long battle with cancer this spring. She is survived by her husband, parents, her brother, five nieces and a nephew.



Harris Anthony Wiltzen – Harris was born in 1922 in Minot North Dakota to Anthony and Annie Wiltzen. He passed away February 13, 2022, at the age of 99. He started Forestry School at the Dakota School of Forestry where his education was interrupted by WWII. After serving in New Guinea and the Philippines he moved to Missoula where he finished his Forestry degree. Harris and his new bride Estelle manned the Scalplock lookout in Glacier National Park. The next year Harris joined the smokejumpers in Missoula and at the time of his death was the oldest living smokejumper. After graduation he went to work for the Soil Conservation Service in eastern Montana until his retirement in 1980

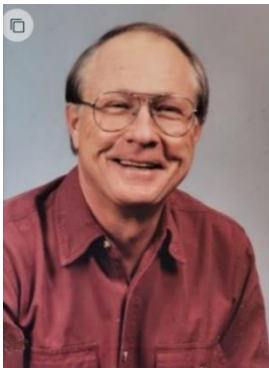
at Plains Montana. In his retirement he was busy with his tree farm and was awarded the Montana Tree Farmer of the Year from 1992 to 2002.

Harris is survived by two sons and daughter, 14 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.



David Wright – David passed way at his home in Coeur d’Alene March 15, 2022. He was born in Seattle Washington April 3, 1944, to John and Elizabeth Wright. He was a Navy Brat and grew up mostly in San Diego. Dave attended Forestry School at Oregon State where he met his wife, Nancy Christensen. They both graduated in 1966. Dave went on to have a career with the Forest Service on the Klamath, Modoc, and Shasta Trinity where he was District Ranger on the Big Bar district. Dave then spent several years at the Regional Office in Missoula followed by Forest Supervisor positions on the Allegheny Forest and the Idaho Panhandle Forest from where he retired in 2001.

Dave enjoyed traveling, fishing, hunting, golf and building a log cabin in Montana. He was also a HAM radio operator. He is survived by his wife, a son, and a daughter and 4 grandchildren as well as his younger brother and many cousins.



William Hicks Wyatt - Bill passed away at home on February 24, 2022. He was born on February 24, 1945, in Durham North Carolina where he was raised and attended school. After school Bill joined the Air Force and eventually was a Military Police Dog Handler. After his service he returned to North Carolina where he earned his degree in Industrial Technology.

Bill moved to Montana and was employed by the Forest Service until he retired in 1997. After retirement he returned to school at the University of Montana and along with his daughter and earned his degree in 2001. Bill was an avid hunter and fisherman and a competitor in the Summer Biathlon. He is survived by his wife and daughter and former wife.

Complete obituaries may be found by googling the person’s name.



Northern Rocky Mountain Retiree Association

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The new Red Ives administration building, 1937.