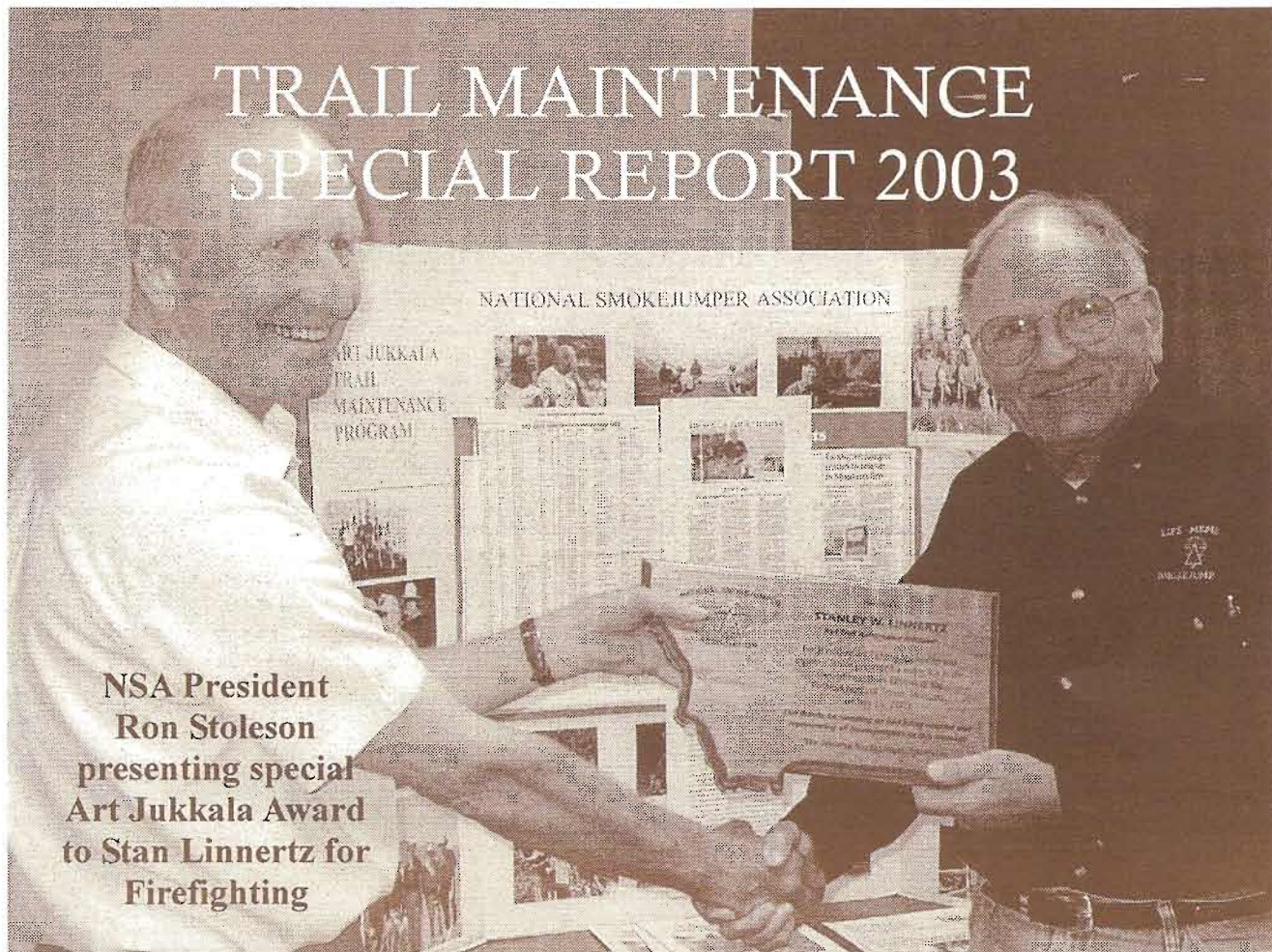


TRAIL MAINTENANCE SPECIAL REPORT 2003



NSA President
Ron Stoleson
presenting special
Art Jukkala Award
to Stan Linnertz for
Firefighting

SIGNUP SHEET INSIDE SIGN UP AND MAIL TODAY!

Next summer's projects: June 21-28 & July 1-8, 2004

Immediately following the Reunion in Missoula

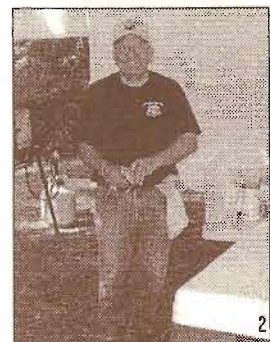
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NSA Trail Maintenance Smokejumper of the Year 2003



(see page 19 for details)

NSA TRAIL MAINTENANCE REPORT 2003

**To
NSA BOARD of DIRECTORS
Annual Meeting
October 25, 2003
McMinnville, Oregon**

Overview

This was the program's fifth year. Created by the late Art Jukkala (Missoula '56), it continues to expand in popularity and demand. During 2003, we sponsored 11 projects with 84 member volunteers.

Production

We completed projects in Idaho, Montana and Oregon on the Flathead, Helena, Lolo, Lewis and Clark, Custer, Wallowa-Whitman and Siskiyou National Forests plus the Sawtooth and Hells Canyon National Recreation Areas. Our volunteers cleared more than 100 miles of trail, reroofed a wilderness guard station, repaired and upgraded two other guard stations and rebuilt over 6000 feet of airport fencing. They also repaired numerous water bars and check dams, cleared brush, cut hundreds of trees, rebuilt sections of many trails, hacked out miles of tread, and, after three years of effort, completed the Silvertip Creek Project in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Rod McIver (Missoula '64) graduated from the Forest Service's Wilderness Structures Restoration Course and is now certified for roof restoration. That provides NSA Trail Maintenance with an additional service to offer.

Funding

Funding this year came from the Bob Marshall Foundation, Sawtooth Society, Custer and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests, Hells Canyon National Recreation Area and the ExxonMobil Corporation. We express our sincere thanks to them. Without their support our program could not continue.

Tools

The Bob Marshall Foundation continues as caretaker for many tools and much of the equipment we need. NSA Director Mark Corbet (LaGrande '74), a Redmond Smokejumper squadleader, has been of tremendous assistance. He identifies tools that no longer meet Forest Service standards and works through legal procedures to make those tools available to the NSA. For a second year, Roy Williams (Missoula '60) has contributed time and money to transport those tools. Missoula jumper boss Ed Ward continues to loan us such critical tools as razor sharp crosscut saws. The Bob Marshall Foundation's tool cache has reached its storage limit, and we've established a cache on property owned by Chuck Fricke (Missoula '61). This year we were asked to bring chain saws to two projects outside Wilderness boundaries. NSA Member L.A. "Chuck" Pickard (Missoula '48) was instrumental in getting three new saws donated and shipped from the Poulan Company. A special thanks is due to those members and to Poulan.

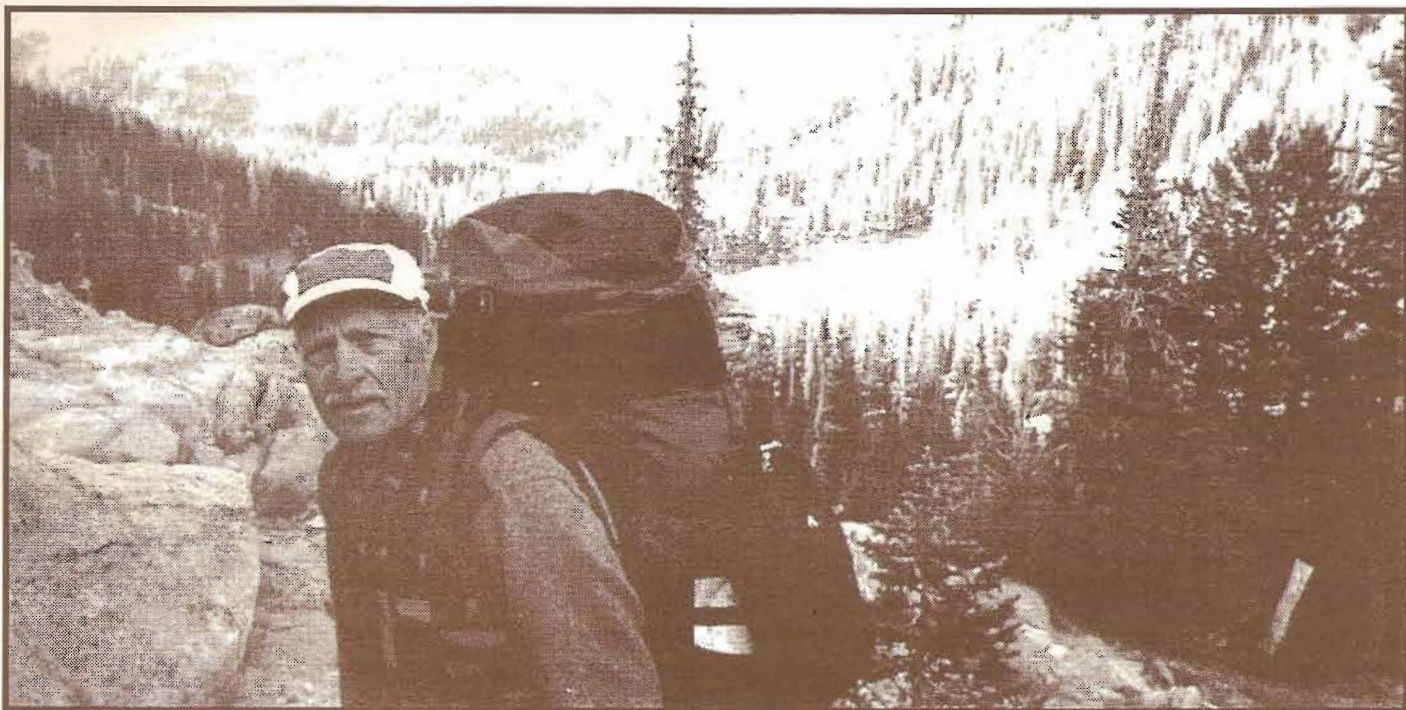
Expansion

Chuck Mansfield (Cave Junction '59) is the NSA Trails Coordinator for California and Oregon, while Jon McBride coordinates the program in other states. Bill Ruskin (Cave Junction '58) is developing a NSA trails program in Colorado for next summer. He joined us in Montana this year to learn what we've been doing.

Advisory Council

The NSA Trail Maintenance Advisory Council was formed in May 2002 and meets at least once each year. Its members are advisers to the Trail Maintenance Coordinators. They review operations and financial accounts, recommend policies and serve as an oversight committee.

Jon H. McBride (Missoula '54)
NSA Trail Maintenance Coordinator



THE ART JUKKALA TRAIL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

The NSA's trail maintenance program was created and launched by former Missoula jumper Art Jukkala in 1999. Art had been retired from the U.S. Forest Service after many years as a leader of the Forest Service's Technology and Development Center in Missoula.

A very experienced woodsman, Art recognized that the Forest Service was not maintaining trails as it had in the past. He discovered that only 800 miles in Montana's Bob Marshall Wilderness, for one, were being maintained, compared with the nearly 4,000 miles of trails in the 1930s.

Trails are essential to nearly all aspects of national forest management. So the obvious question was, "How can the Forest Service manage the forest and its resources if it cannot enter it to observe what needs to be managed?"

Art decided to do something about it.

He recruited 18 veteran jumpers as volunteers. Working with the Bob Marshall Foundation whose personnel shared his vision, he obtained funding for food and transportation for two projects. While working as squad leader on one of those projects in "The Bob," Art died of a heart attack on July 12, 1999.

The program has grown each year since this small and sad beginning. In 2000, more than 27 veteran smokejumpers completed five projects. In 2001, 43 completed eight more, and in 2002, 79 volunteers completed ten projects in three states.

The 2003 effort resulted in the clearance of over 100 miles of trails by volunteers who cut hundreds of logs and trees that had been blocking them. They also restored many guard stations and over 6000 feet of wooden airport fencing.

The program's future is exciting as more veteran smokejumpers volunteer and additional forests request our services.

The Trails Program is a legacy to Art Jukkala, a smokejumper who saw a forest problem and did something to solve it.

Tools



Rob Marshall Foundation
P.O. Box 983
Whitefish, MT 59937

National Smokejumper Association
2527 Mountain Wood Drive
Missoula, MT 59808

September 23, 2003

Dear Jon,

The Rob Marshall Foundation would like to thank you for the tools that we have received in the past year thanks to your efforts and those of Mark Corbet.

When I first started working for the Rob Marshall Foundation in 1997, we had no tools or equipment. We would borrow tools from the Forest Service, which were mostly those left after trail crews had taken their tools for the summer. These leftover tools were generally of poor quality and not well maintained.

After a couple years, we did receive some grants to purchase new tools. We were able to slowly build up our tool cache and we soon outgrew the small closet that we stored our tools in. Through the years we have acquired more tools, but at the same time the number of volunteers has also increased. During the busiest parts of the summer we would often run low on tools or be forced to take out tools we had not been able to maintain or sharpen since the last time they were out in the field.

Thanks to the generous donation of tools from Mark and your efforts in acquiring these tools, we now have enough tools to get us through an entire summer, especially pulaskis and shovels. We have a few dedicated volunteers who help to maintain these tools in the winter so that they are ready to go in the summer.

We also really appreciate the camping gear and supplies that we can now issue to volunteer groups as well. This has been especially useful for youth groups whose participants can't afford to purchase all of the outdoor gear and equipment needed for a backcountry project.

Thanks again for your help in acquiring and transporting these tools to Montana. We really appreciate your efforts!

Sincerely,

Carla Cline
Executive Director, BMF

Tools, Tools, Tools, Thanks to FS Region 6 and NSA Director Corbet By Carl Gidlund (Missoula '58)

The Trails Project has a real "go to guy" for tools and camping gear.

So far, NSA Director Mark Corbet (LaGrande '74), a still-active Redmond jumper, has collected so much for use by smokejumper trail crews and other Bob Marshall Foundation volunteers that the foundation has run out of space to store them. So, Chuck Fricke (Missoula '61) has donated space on his ranch near Missoula for the overflow.

Corbet explains he visits the Forest Service's Region 6 fire cache in spare moments from his job as a smokejumper squadleader. With the cache manager's permission, he digs through bins of discarded tools and equipment and selects those that are in good enough shape to be used for trail work. He loads them into his truck, transports them to a shed at his home, then notifies NSA Trails Coordinator Jon McBride (Missoula '54).

Thus far, McBride and fellow Missoulian Roy Williams (Missoula '60) have made two 1,100-mile round trips to collect the bounty.

Here's what the Trails Project has accumulated thus far through Corbet's diligence: 283 shovels, 300 pulaskis, 67 combi tools, 37 McClouds, 26 axes, nine adz hoes, six Council tools, a sledge hammer, six large tarps, four two-person tents, two four-person tents, 55 sleeping bags, 15 sleeping pads, and 2,000 feet of parachute cord.

Corbet explains that the sleeping bags are non-standard and, "I couldn't stand seeing hundreds of tools get pitched just because they had a nick in the handle or paint on them or a newer model was being used.

"Collecting this stuff has amounted to quite a few hours of off-time work, but it's going to a great cause."

Hells Canyon or The story of the Snake River Outlaws

By Jon McBride (Missoula '54)

Hells Canyon NRA

Our crew came from all points of the compass -- central California, the Seattle area, north central Washington, western Montana, north Idaho and the greater Salt Lake area.

We volunteers for this year's NSA Trail Maintenance startup project were eager to hit the trail and get into some springtime conditions after a long cold winter.

As we'd done in past years, we met at Mack's bar and grill in White Bird, Idaho. It was the late afternoon of Sunday May 4, and after dinner we headed to Pittsburg Landing on the Snake River for the night.

Early the next morning we packed and loaded a large Forest Service jet boat with our gear for the long trip upstream to Sheep Creek.

After building our camp around a giant cook tent on a promontory overlook along the river it was time for dinner and what jumpers do best, telling true jump stories.

The week went by fast. Early breakfasts prepared by Chef Tom Blunn were ready and waiting each day, as well as evening meals.

We left camp each day by 8 a.m. and hiked from 3 to 5 miles to reach the work site in Clarks Fork Canyon. We usually returned to camp by 4.

The job required 16 creek crossings, and we also built a dozen temporary log bridges so that we could get to work with dry boots. By week's end we calculated that 568 individual creek crossings had been required.

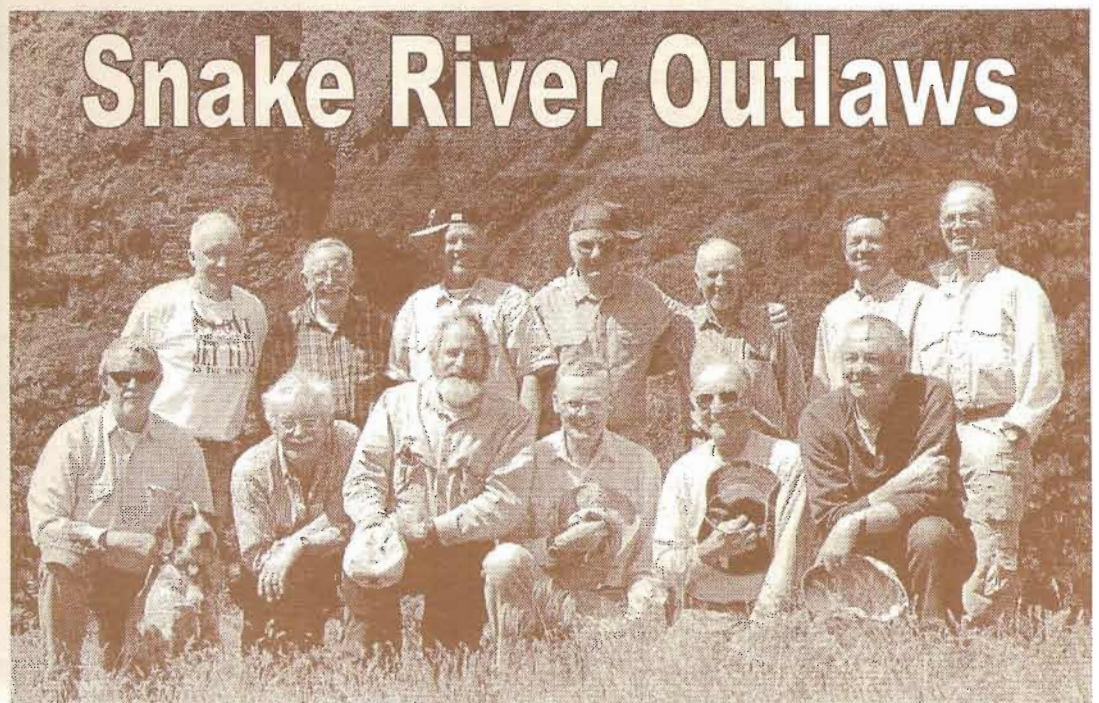
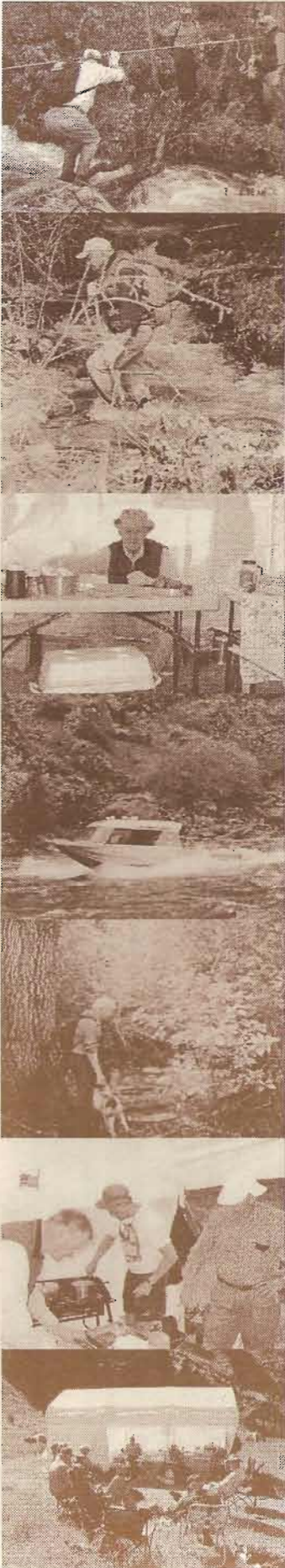
We cleared a total of 15 miles of trail. Five of those were on the Clark Fork, three on Sheep Creek and seven miles were on the Idaho side of the Snake River Trail.

As thanks to our crew for the work we'd accomplished, the Forest Service gave us a special boat trip. We were picked up at 1 p.m. Friday and hauled 15 miles upstream to Garnet Rapids, the limit of boat travel on the Snake in Hells Canyon. During the trip, we stopped to inspect some little known hieroglyphics on cliffs near the river.

The Forest Service boat returned to camp early Saturday for the trip downstream and the end of the project.

We had a great week and accomplished lots of work despite the stream crossings. And, as usual, we heard some terrific jump stories. The weather was spring-like and the food was outstanding.

Hells Canyon must be one of the most spectacular scenic locations in our country and with the work we accomplished there, it's now accessible to more Americans.



The Beartooth Project

By Bill Thomas (Missoula '75) *Custer N.F.*

After attending the social in Missoula, I made the long drive to Red Lodge, Montana on July 12 and met with the rest of the crew for beers and supper. We camped for the evening at a spot close to the trailhead.

The next morning we met volunteer packer Bob Madden and Wilderness Ranger Chris Roy at the Timberline trailhead. With our gear securely attached to Bob's handsome buckskin mules, we followed the pack string to our base camp in the Custer National Forest's Silver Run Lakes Basin.

The hike was about five miles, from an elevation of 7,600 feet to 9,600 feet. We spent the rest of the day setting up camp, pumping water, digging a latrine and getting Chris's orientation on work objectives and low impact camping.

Although temperatures were cooler at the higher elevations, it was still hotter than normal. And water ponds and remnants of snow banks were breeding grounds for hordes of vicious mosquitoes that made cooking, eating and even fireside chats fairly miserable.

Fortunately, we had a large tent supplied by the trails project that had plenty of screened windows. We retired to it in the evenings where we were schooled in the arts of Hearts and Whist by North Dakotans **Dennis Friestad** (Missoula '65) and **Joe Kroeber** (Missoula '62).

We worked about 3.5 miles of trail, and the work was great. We built rock cairns on the treeless plateau and dismantled cairns that cluttered the landscape. We removed loose rock and cleared brush, pruned and limbed. We also got in a good session of crosscut work on a big downed spruce plus cleaned a few water bars.

The crew meshed well and all kept in good spirits despite the mosquitoes. Everyone pitched in to help with the cooking and camp tasks.

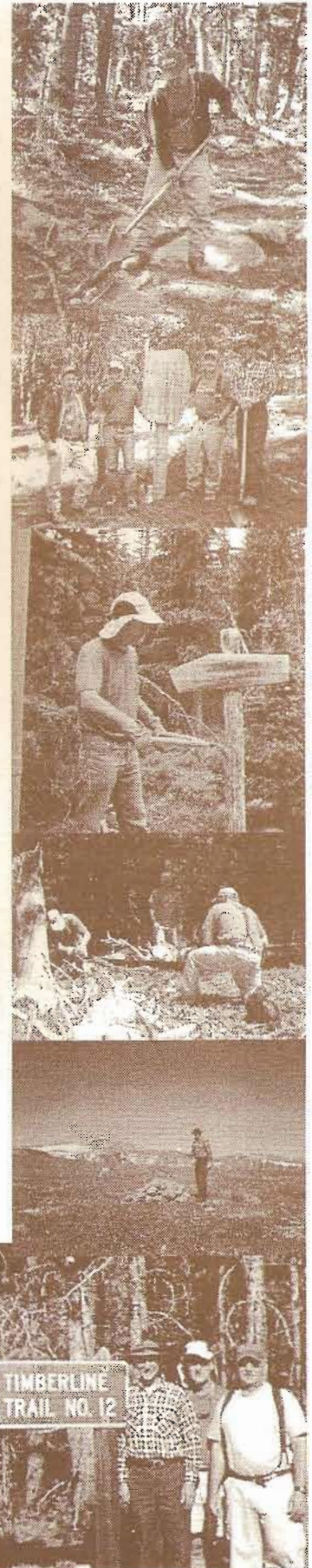
Kroeber, a former teacher, coach, trainer and current state legislator, was the master chef. He came up with great meals, and still put in a full day's work on the trail.

Friestad, a teacher and wrestling coach, was Kroeber's right-hand-man in the cook tent and on the cleanup. He also kept a good, steady mosquito deterring fire going.

Terry Danforth (Missoula '59), a 30-year-plus veteran of the Park Service, reminded us of the proper width and height for brushing out the trail. He was a champion water pumper also.

John Payne (Missoula '66) kept us entertained with stories from an interesting background that includes being a forester and an FBI agent. He's now a unicycle fanatic. He was a real horse on the Oregon saw, and kept the camp fires going.

The scenery was spectacular, our support from the Red Lodge District was excellent, and we were treated to the sight of several hundred elk on a high windy slope, staying out of the heat and free from bugs.



NSA Trail Scouts Continue Search for Wag Dodge Memorial Cross

By Jon McBride (Missoula '54)

Early on October 8 2003, 10 NSA Trail Scouts left the Colt Killed Creek (named by Lewis and Clark) Trail-head and entered the Clearwater National Forest's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. It was our second attempt in six years to locate a memorial on Dan Ridge to the late Wagner Dodge (Missoula '41).

Wag was the foreman on the Mann Gulch fire of 1949 in the Helena National Forest. That fire killed 12 smokejumpers and a smokechaser who'd jumped the previous year.

After Wag died in 1959, Fred Brauer, who'd trained with Dodge and was then the Aerial Fire Depot project manager, arranged to have a cross made by Missoula jumpers. It was fabricated of Ford Tri Motor aircraft parts supplied by Bob Johnson, owner of Johnson Flying Service which had the contract to fly jumpers in the early decades of the aerial project.

Working with Bud Moore, the Powell District ranger at the time, Brauer arranged for the flight and Bob Johnson flew the Tri Motor to the site of the Dan Ridge Lookout (no longer standing).

The site was chosen because it was Wag's favorite location in the mountains of Western Montana/Idaho. Anyone who sees it today would feel the same about this beautiful spot.

Moore and members of the Dodge family were on board the aircraft when the cross was dropped on a cargo chute, followed by Wag's ashes.

The area was not a designated wilderness at the time.

The next week, Dodge family members and Moore

retrieved the cross, packed it via mules to a suitable site on Dan Ridge overlooking Dodge Lake (named after Wag) and cemented it into place.

The cross was damaged by snow over a couple of winters and was packed out to Powell for repairs. District packers carried it back into the woods, and this time set it up near some trees that would protect it. It was very near the spot where Moore had placed it in 1959.

The NSA Scouts failed to find the cross after searching the ridge in 1998 and again this year. The hike was eight miles in and the search of the ridge another two miles, equaling a 20-mile day. In addition, the ridge is 4,000 feet higher than the trailhead.

Search time was limited to a single day and, as in 1998, the scouts returned to the trailhead just at dark.

The crew split up on the hike out. Three returned via the old Fern Ridge Trail, a more moderate route, the one used by Moore in 1959. The Forest Service has abandoned that trail and it couldn't be followed without the aid of a GPS device.

Our crew scouted it as a possible future project for a NSA trail maintenance crew.



SAWTOOTH PROJECT 2003

By Gary Weyermann (Missoula '63) *Sawtooth NRA*

This was the "Can Do Crew." As soon as a task was identified crew members were on it. Our first job was to repair the flagpole at our duty station, the Bowery Guard Station in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Thereafter, we had flag raising and lowering ceremonies every morning and evening.

Our crew, the third NSA bunch in the Sawtooth NRA, consisted of **Don Baker** (Missoula '65); **Charlie Brown** (Idaho City '56); **Cliff Dalzell**, **Doug "Digger" Daniels** and **Stan Linnertz** (all Missoula '61); **Jim Cherry** (Missoula '57), **Karl Maerzluff** (Fairbanks '67); **Ron Stolsen** (Missoula '56); and me, plus Sawtooth National Forest Trail Maintenance Forman **Debra Peters**.

After the flagpole job, other tasks were to erect a rail fence around the station, install 1,500 feet of electric fence, relocate a trail stream crossing, and work a three-mile trail segment up to a pass.

We split the crew to work multiple jobs. Deb, Charlie, and I worked the trail segment and the climb up to the pass was worth it for the spectacular view of the White Cloud Mountains.

The crew spent three days completing the electric fence and fix a stream crossing by moving the trail to an area away from a fish spawning bed.

The rail fence post tops didn't look finished with a square cut, so Karl unsheathed his 40-year-old jump knife and chamfered the tops of all 40 posts. Now the job looks finished (except for one small detail that no one is very talkative about: The gate was installed upside down!)

There was more time available than scheduled work. So, what does the "Can Do Crew" do? They look around and find:

- a water line to repair (under Doug's supervision),
- refit a kitchen counter (under Cliff's supervision),
- build a section of barbed wire fence (under Jim's supervision),
- inspect and repair the perimeter fences,
- build a horse shoe pit (under Ron, after which he challenged all comers),

and surveyed for improvements to the water system. (Ask Doug to explain how to survey with a mason jar half full of water and an old measuring tape).

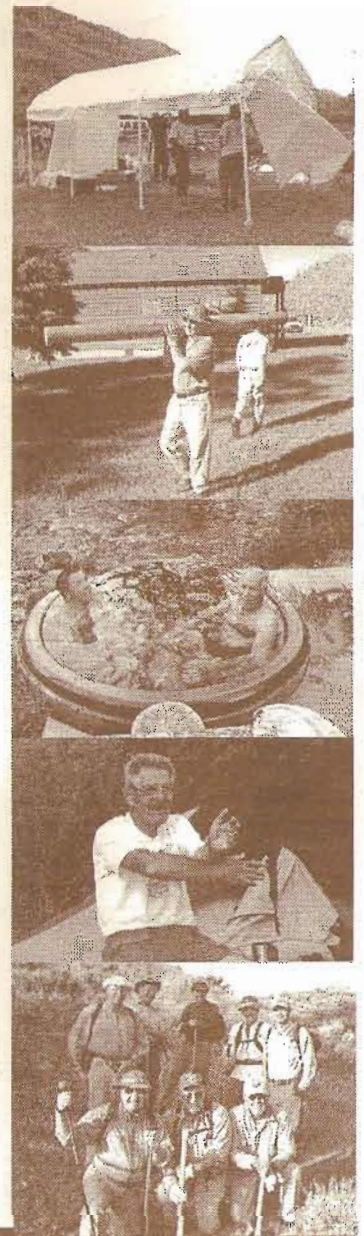
As with all projects, some unexpected events happen that you must just accept. In our case, Jim, our beekeeper, brought fresh honey. Don, the vintner, brought bottles of his best to complement dinner. Stan was always putting his special touch to the meals. June, the guard station volunteer, brought homemade chocolate chip cookies, salads, ice cream and watermelon and, on the day we left, got up before dawn and baked cinnamon rolls.

There was a natural hot springs to soak in and we hung in there for the whole week. It was tough but somebody had to do it.

So how do we score the project? It was great getting back into the woods with old friends and making new friends. The Sawtooth National Forest and the Sawtooth Society (which provided our meal money) got a lot of needed work done. A quick estimate was that over \$6,000 worth of value was added to the station. And the quality work was completed safely.

It was Karl's first time on a NSA trail crew. He said, "This is truly one of the more worthwhile things I've done, and I can only encourage everyone with the time to come and participate. You'll be glad you did."

Special thanks to Ron for arranging another great project. We look forward to next year.



NEWS RELEASE

Sawtooth National Forest

2647 Kimberly Road East

Twin Falls, ID 83301



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: AUGUST 26, 2003

1436-D4-118

CONTACT: ED CANNADY, Public Affairs

RETIRED FOREST SERVICE SMOKEJUMPERS COMPLETE TWO VOLUNTEER PROJECTS ON SAWTOOTH NATIONAL RECREATION AREA IN AS MANY YEARS: FENCES, TRAIL WORK AND OTHER PROJECTS COMPLETED AT BOWERY GUARD STATION IN EAST FORK OF SALMON RIVER OF SAWTOOTH NAT'L REC AREA

STANLEY, IDAHO.....The word "retirement" just isn't in the vocabulary of the 11 former Forest Service smokejumpers who recently worked on a number of projects for the Forest Service.

In mid-July, eleven "retired" smokejumpers reported for work at the Sawtooth National Recreation Area's (SNRA) Bowery Guard Station, up the East Fork of the Salmon River in the Boulder-White Cloud Mountains of central Idaho. They were met by SNRA employees Deb Peterson, Trail Maintenance Supervisor and Ed Cannady, Backcountry Recreation Manager, both of whom had a list of projects that they figured was too long for these "old guys" to get done.

The eleven members of the National Smokejumpers Association (NSA) completed an impressive list of work during their five day stay at Bowery. Their accomplishments included restringing the guard station's flagpole, construction of 400 feet of post and rail fence; built 550 feet of electric fence; removed 550 feet of old wire and post fence; relocated a stream crossing on the East Fork Salmon trail and built new trail tread at the crossing; constructed a number of water dips on the Bowery Cutoff trail; repaired a broken water line at the guard station; surveyed a project to build a sand filter for the Bowery Guard Station water system; remodeled cabinets in the guard station kitchen and built and tested a horseshoe pit for employees and guests.

During the summer of 2002, seven members of the NSA maintained trails in the Sawtooth Wilderness, of the SNRA. In just seven days, this crew cleaned 158 water bars, cut 49 small trees, removed brush along the trails, used two-person crosscut saws to clear the trails of 54 logs – some 40-inches in diameter. Most of the retired smokejumpers are in their 60s to mid-70s, and no strangers to hard work. "These guys are really impressive," said Cannady. "We had a number of projects lined up for them to work on. Even before I was done explaining what needed to be done, these guys were already starting to work. I just had to get out of their way and let them go to work." "Besides the work, these fellows like to have fun," Cannady added. "They make it a point to work hard and to get the work done, but they also have a lot of fun doing it. They have a tremendous amount of camaraderie and these projects are like a family reunion to them."

Deb Peters was also very impressed. She said of her experience working with these men on their trail projects, "These guys knew how to handle a cross-cut saw. We cut a lot of big trees out of the trail, but we also had a lot of fun. There was a tremendous amount of accumulated experience and knowledge in the group and I benefited from that. There was also a lot of great stories around the campfire, some of which were almost believable." Peters hopes that this hard-working crew will return to the trails of the Sawtooth backcountry many more times. The NSA Trail Maintenance Program started in 1999 with 18 participants working on a trail project in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. According to NSA Trail Maintenance Advisor Jon McBride, by 2002, 80 retired smokejumpers were participating in various trail maintenance, fence constructions and other needed field work for the Forest Service.

Ron Stoleson, who led the trail crew in 2002 on the Sawtooth Wilderness trail project and also participated in this year's Bowery Guard Station project, said that these kinds of projects allow the smokejumpers to get back into the woods with fewer demands and more time to re-establish old relationships. He summed up their feelings by stating that "once a smokejumper, always a smokejumper...we share a deep pride and brotherhood in what we have experienced. The trails program and other projects allow us to get together in a woods setting and recapture some of the feelings we experienced in the past while doing some much needed work." Stoleson, who was the Forest Supervisor of the Sawtooth National from 1982 to 1991, retired in 2000 after serving for 42 years in the Forest Service.

DIRTYFACE by Hal Howell (Missoula '55) Flathead N.F

Our NSA trail scouts told us it was beautiful country with almost no insects. They were half-right. I'm sure each of us lost a quart of blood to mosquitoes and flies during the week.

The other thing they told us was that the trail we were to work was non-existent most of the way. They were correct. The trail was there but 12-foot alders and other brush hid it.

Nevertheless our tough crew of Larry "Chain Saw" Nelsen (Missoula '56), Bob "Everybody Should Have a Gun" Reid (Missoula '57), Skip "Did I Break That Chair?" Stoll (Missoula '51), Tom "Doctor" McGrath (Missoula '57), and me Hal "What Have I Got Myself Into Now?" Howell prevailed over nature and cleared and built three miles of trail.

Our wonderful cook, Associate Member Karin "Don't Look in the Cooler" Connelly, kept us going with great food and a daily inspection of our progress. As usual, lots of stories, jokes, and banter occurred around the campfire and somehow a little beer found its way up the mountain.

Many thanks to the Backcountry Horsemen for packing and comradeship. More fun and games next year.

* * * * *

We Are Not Alone!

Following is an e-mail exchange between a group of trail enthusiasts who live east of the Rockies in Montana and NSA Trail Maintenance. It took place October 8, 2003.

My name is Mark Haemig. I am part of an informal group of hikers and scramblers from the east side. Last July, I met Ted Nyquest the day your group flagged the Logan-Dirtyface trail. We are pretty excited that you folks have been working on the western side of the trail, because we've spent several days working our way toward the west from Java Trailhead. We have brushed out the trail to about where it crosses Elk creek, approximately 4.5 miles in. We were wondering if you could tell us how far your group got this summer, and are there flags or markers we should start looking for. Please convey to your group our gratitude for the efforts you've made. It's a great route!

Mark: Thanks for your efforts. We are very pleased that your group is helping us clear the Logan-Dirtyface trail. As I said on the phone, our July 11 to 19 project cleared 3.5 miles down Dirtyface. We flagged the trail from the saddle to Elk Creek. All of our work followed the route of the old Forest Service trail. I have attached a picture of our scouting party flagging a few miles above Elk Creek so you can get an idea of the heavy brush. The trail tread is still good and easy to follow as you push the brush away. Our experience has been that the red flagging material lasts a few months at best. We western side trail crazies don't often hear about you guys on the east side and sure are glad to have you join forces with us. Good luck on your hike in to Elk Creek and trail clearing on Dirtyface Creek. We would sure like to hear how it went.

NSA Trail Maintenance

North Fork of the Blackfoot

By Harold Hoem (Missoula '57) *Lolo N.F*

The North Fork of the Blackfoot Project seemed simple: "Tack a new cedar shingle roof on a Forest Service cabin built in 1922 in the heart of the Bob Marshall/Scapegoat Wilderness. In your spare time clear 30 miles or so of trails."

Assured by Fred Brauer that this was the good deal of all good deals, an eager crew marched up the Hoenail Tom Trail through an eerily beautiful landscape, one of Montana's largest burns, the 1988 Canyon Creek Fire. The cabin had been rescued with no small effort from that fire and our job was to restore it to Forest Service specs.

To do that, old time jumper **Rod McIver** (Missoula '64) had volunteered in the spring of 2003 for a Forest Service school. He'd obtained advanced "Wilderness Structures, Roof Restoration" skills and, without his guidance, we probably would have committed far more grievous sins than necessary to add character. As it turned out, getting the roof on right required the lifetime skills of the entire crew. Failure was not an option.

We correctly identified gravity, time and heat as our chief obstacles. Gravity because of the steep pitch of the roof, time because we didn't have much of it, and heat because we had too much of it blasting our faces off the shingles. But we adapted.

Dan Hensley (Missoula '57) got us all checked out on prussic knots which helped considerably in scrambling around the steep roof.

Bill Tucker (Missoula '50) used his Appalachian axe to fashion "lumber" out of lodgepole.

Jim Anderson (Missoula '58), a real "lineman for the county" seemed to like it on the roof for some reason.

The administrative skills of **Jim Hagemeyer** (Missoula '57) and **Jim Lee** (Missoula '77) were needed to count tools, track how many nails were used, and count the number of hammer swings and curses were rendered per man per hour.

I declared the cabin wasn't much like the fishing boat I'm used to fixing up, but the same repair principles applied: use low tech when you can, take an extra hitch, one hand for the roof and one for yourself, and when in doubt use duct tape.

In the end we had a roof, acquired many skills, and all felt we had really been somewhere and done something to feel proud of. (All mistakes were carefully buried under more shingles.)

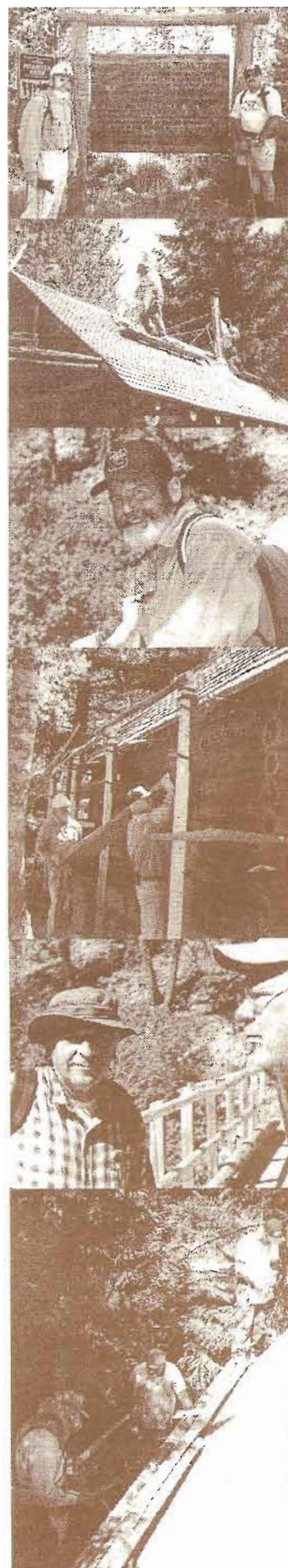
We were successful in not letting all that work get in the way of evening story telling fueled by a more than adequate supply of Vitamin B packed in by "Packer Glen." Extra carrots for the mules were a help.

Our cook, Associate **Dianne Tidwell**, provided excellent backcountry cuisine and cheerfully put up with our tall tales and us. Bill Tucker had the skill to make a tale of a falling steeplejack turn into a sex crime yarn and Jon McBride and Tom Blunn paid a visit during the week for a surprise inspection.



Lots of Vietnam war stories, malfunction tales of every description, and Rod McIver provided considerable "unbiased" political commentaries on the state of affairs of our current government. We were able to disagree (frequently) without being disagreeable and had a hell of a good time.

We decided unanimously that the new T shirt motto should be "Will work for food and stories." If new roof projects are proposed we know that our hard-earned skills will be as much in demand as we will be hard to find.



THE SILVERTIP PROJECT by Jim Phillips (Missoula '67)

Flathead N.F.

During remarks to trail volunteers, former Missoula jumper Superintendent Fred Brauer, conveyed his patented; "I've got a good deal for you!" speech.

His remarks were prophetic. The Silvertip Project was a "good deal." And it was punctuated with some tired, true and truly inane homilies that painted a patina of humor on all we experienced. I'm not sure how it started. Maybe it was the beer at the guest ranch at Spotted Bear which fueled speculation of which route was correct. The first strange statement may have been the opinion of **Roger Savage** (Missoula '57) who declared, "The Forest Service moved the mountain to another section!"

I gave **Jim Hutchinson** (Missoula '57) a quizzical stare while contemplating Roger's comment. Like Hutch, I was dumbfounded that the remark went uncommented on by the volunteers and made a commitment to myself that further incredulous statements would be recorded.

Chuck Fricke (Missoula '61) was our leader. When he was queried about the terrain over the seven and one-half mile walk to base camp, he said it was "a piece of cake," with only "one little pitch." As the pitches taxed muscles the sarcasm heaped on Chuck by the crew increased geometrically.

I don't remember who first forded the Spotted Bear River. However, we all managed its "only knee deep," wade. Some had tennis shoes, others Texas and **Jim Thompson** (Missoula '63) made it barefooted. Flushed with our success on the big water, the first ford of Silvertip Creek was met with derision until **David Lancaster** (Missoula '63) feared his hiking boots were floating downstream. A return trip solved the mystery: His boots were neatly positioned by the log where he'd changed to wading shoes.

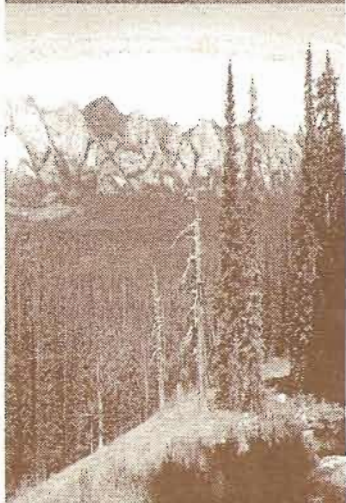
The conditioned few grew intolerant of the slow pace of the urban horde and elected to strike out at a "smokejumper pace." With directions from Fricke to, "follow the trail to the big meadow," **Manny Haiges** (Missoula '58), Thompson and **Mike Overby** (Missoula '67) forged ahead unconcerned over the lack of a definition for the word "big" or any consideration that there might be more than one meadow.

The remainder of us besieged Fricke with questions of distance and duration only to be met with his "it's just a little bit further," replies. We paused from time to time to admire the scenery and reflect on the solitude. But for men on a mission to saw out 60 logs, brush and blaze a trail last maintained in 1925, to hear **Jim Scofield** (Missoula '66) utter "Look at the plethora of flowers," strained at the collective testosterone-driven psyche. The sweat streaks from we tired hikers were matched by tears of laughter coursing down our cheeks. The bubble had burst. Now no comment would go unrecorded or uncommented upon! As a group we were coming together. The intolerable became tolerable. Nuisance mosquitoes would be cast aside.

There was a burst of serious work following our arrival at the "big meadow." The

Forest Service packer brought the supplies in and we set up camp. Our greatest concern was establishing a cordial relationship with NSA Associate **Chuck Corrigan**, backcountry horseman and volunteer cook. We were deferential to him, knowing you shouldn't irritate the cook.

The walk to work began and ended by crossing Silvertip Creek on a 25-foot log eight feet over the streambed. Prudent souls chose to quick step through the creek because they had gaiters or White's to keep their feet dry. The remainder wobbled across the log. We held our breath in anticipation of disaster and exhaled when relieved. The morning Fricke fell off the log and spread-eagled on the slash there was speculation he was demonstrating the Russian smokejumper aircraft exit routine. Haiges's conciliatory statement was, "Walking a log is all mental." (continued next page)



SILVERTIP PROJECT (cont'd)

Bill Breyfogle (Missoula '55), Boy Scout leader and flora identification expert, assembled and maintained the solar shower. Concerned for our hygiene and with a strong desire for us to benefit from his engineering expertise, Bill declared "The shower is great. You don't even get your feet wet!" Lancaster recovered first from the fits of hysteria at Breyfogle's faux pas and declared in his Texas drawl that he would not be using the solar shower but would be going to the creek for a manly bath.

Body language too played a large part in communications. Like when Scofield, lurching around on the streambed doing God knows what; was frozen by the sound of a beer being opened. His stance was identical to the pants-wetting posture of a hiker hearing a bear in the bushes.

One morning we were short one pulaski. All hands accounted for the tools they'd been using, then Thompson remembered having put a pulaski "by the big tree with the blaze on it." Mystery solved. And Breyfogle will be remembered for telling Haiges, "I didn't know you were an educated man. If I knew you were a college professor I would have had more respect for you." Or, Overby's encouragement to Breyfogle that, "when you grow up you can have a pair of White's too."

Nobody was spared. Not even our intrepid scouts, **Roy Williams** (Missoula '60) and Roger Savage (Roy Rogers). Having declared they were willing to do dishes after supper one evening, the cook directed that they, "Wash it, rinse it and put them right there!" Stung by the Corrigan statement, Roy assuaged his bruised ego by attacking Roger with, "Roger, everything bad that ever happened to me was when I was around you!" We discovered that Roy Rogers couldn't count. Our scouts marked one log as the last. The following two days our sawyers cut an additional 25. Roy Rogers was a singing cowboy, not a forester.

Our last workday was four miles and 2,000 feet of elevation gain. We drew in the beauty of the Swan Range and prided ourselves on accomplishing our detail and being able to say, "We made it all the way!" The crew ate potato pancakes the last morning and chuckled at Haiges's directions on the feeding of his golden retriever: "Don't feed him whole pancakes. Break them into pieces and feed him by hand." The walk out was shot through with remembered phrases, snatches of song and nostalgic silences. It wasn't as hard as the walk in; we were better conditioned and had a sense of accomplishment. Yet, we couldn't help but reflect that the trail, "was uphill both ways."

We had warm Trimotor beers at the trailhead while waiting for the packer. Thompson noted that he "hadn't done very much today, but I'm tired from doing it." Naps revived us enough to unpack the gear, say goodbye and consider Breyfogle's closing statement, "The scenery was beautiful and the camaraderie was good most of the time."

* * * * * **Game Lake: A Three-Man Effort By Chuck Mansfield (Cave Junction '59)**

Siskiyou N.F.

A three man NSA crew consisting of myself and Don M. Cramer (both Cave Junction '59) and Associate David R. Mansfield spent the second week of July opening the Game Lake Loop Trail of the Siskiyou National Forest for both horse and foot traffic. We also reopened an abandoned trail near Horse Sign Butte to bypass an area subject to landslides.

The work consisted of tread maintenance in steep areas subject to heavy erosion and building water bars to limit further erosion. We also built new trails to bypass areas of extreme tread erosion. Where burned stumps resulted in collapsed tread we filled holes with rock and dirt.

Work was done at the Horse Sign Creek and Sizeable Stream intersections to provide better access to water and to remove loose rock and debris for better footing. Some work was done at the Butt Camp Spring and the spring at northern intersection with the trail and the old mining road to create deeper holes for water access.

We collected a large amount of the litter and debris at the Game Lake Campground then chopped it into convenient lengths for camper use.

Heavy rutting in the Game Lake meadow resulting from construction was attacked with shovels and pulaskis. We also broke down and filled many deep ruts. More work will be necessary to return the meadow to its original condition, but further erosion may be stopped for the time being.

SPOTTED BEAR RIVER RATS

By Bill Kolar (Missoula '59) Flathead N.F.

The crew began with 12 members, but as Jon McBride fine tuned assignments, he began to realize that our trail projects were direct from hell, so he whittled our crew down to the toughest SOB's he could con into doing the jobs.

We were downsized to six, the most godawful bunch you ever saw.

There was **Stan "The Man" Linnertz** (Missoula '61), who turned out to be Hero of the Week when he stopped a possible major fire with help from some dudes.

There was **Howard Betty** (Missoula '48), **James "Honey Man" Cherry** (Missoula '57), **Rod "Wild Man" McIver** (Missoula '64), **Jack "The Texan" Saunders** (Missoula '61), and me, plain old Bill, who got stuck with this bunch as crew leader.

It all began the evening of July 20, 2003 at Applebees in Missoula where we tried to live up to our past, a past that had actually begun some 40 years ago when we arrived for jumper training.

The next day, we managed to find our way to Spotted Bear and proceeded up the Spotted Bear River to our assigned camp. Strike one was having no water. Our next suggested camp did have a trickle, but not an adequate supply for all our needs.

We ended up three miles further up the river at the Spotted Bear Hilton, otherwise know as Beaver Creek Campground. It was a river front property.

We were able to sweet talk McBride into letting us use his portable garage/cook shack. After several attempts, and with Jim Cherry's supervision, we finally got the damn thing up.

The evening began with some superb cuisine thrown together by chef Linnertz, and a surprise visit by none other than Jon McBride and his brother Joe. A lot of good or (depending how you look at it) bad information about Jon came out during the course of the evening.

The next morning began with a great breakfast. We said our good byes to the McBrides, and began what turned out not to be the best start of the week.

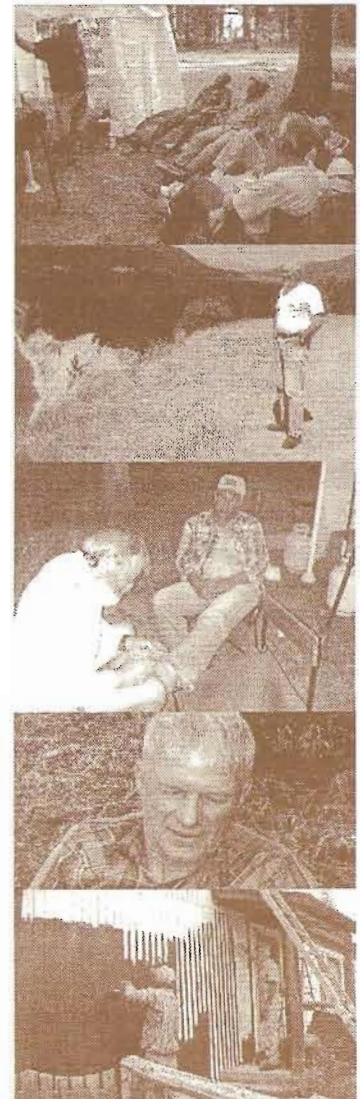
We had one heck of a time finding the start of the trail, but finally sniffed it out. During our cussing and fuming, a crew member took off without telling us. Considerable time was spent in trying to locate him. It turned out he'd heard there was a beer cache at the end of the trail, and you know jumpers.

Temperatures stayed in the mid 90s all week. The second day, I came down with a mild case of heat exhaustion that stayed with me all week. I thank Rod and Jack for doing their work plus keeping me going, picking up where I was slack. Jim and Howard were working on another trail.

We completed two of three projects, and spent better than a half a day trying to locate the third. It brought back memories of trying to locate a smoke that puffed only so often up an 80-foot tree. The trail had never seen a lick of maintenance, and was at a point where it would take reconstruction to make it usable.

We spent our last day painting a house at the district. Evenings were spent the usual way, telling tall tales and sipping beer. We had some good beer and then there was Rod McIver's. I believe it was called rotgut. No, now that I think about it, Schmidt's comes to mind!

The week was hot as hell and fires were raging all around us, but we had Stan. We were in Paradise.



United States Department of Agriculture	Forest Service	Spotted Bear Ranger District (409) 758-5376	8975 Highway 2 East P.O. Box 190340 Hungry Horse, MT 59915
File Code: 1234-4			Date: October 18, 2003
Stanley Linnertz 1520-442 SE-C Lincoln, NE 68516			
Dear Stan,			
Thank you! It was wonderful to see the article in the Lincoln paper relate to your firefighting efforts here this summer. You have probably thought I just learned as you did recently the events at the Beaver Creek Campground this past July and see it as a - and you are partly correct, but only because of our continued long wildfire season. I wanted to share the rest of the season with you and let you know how much your efforts and those of the entire National Smokejumper Association continue to mean to the Spotted Bear Ranger District.			
You were here as the wildfire activity was picking up. We had several different crews stationed here to help with fire fighting. We did not expect your retired smokejumper crew to be involved in the firefighting and were happy with your ability to fire with a serious situation. Thank you for the quick action while at the campground supporting the volunteer smokejumper crew. You recognized that there was fire outside of a camp fire and that there was a good potential for the fire to spread given the very hot and dry conditions that were occurring. By getting water and a line on the fire and using the radio to contact the district for additional help and mop up your actions assured that we did not have a larger incident occur. While you have at the office you gave credit to all, but in visiting more with you, I know your leadership and actions were the reason we did not have a larger fire occur. To highlight this cooperation that was occurring, the crew that responded and did more mop-up and monitoring was a Montana State Department of Natural Resource engine that was stationed here for 14 days.			
Back to the fire season - Spotted Bear Ranger District ended up with 49 different fires, resulting in approximately 94,000 acres affected wilderness and non-wilderness. The fire crews and incident management teams were able to head them in mid September. At this time we are continuing with fire suppression rehab and toward area restoration work. We have over 98 miles of trail in the wilderness that had fire activity occur. So it can be said there is going to be no lack of opportunity for trail work for the future!			
We have had a great working experience with the National Smokejumper Association and continue to hope between 250 and 350 volunteers (individuals and groups) annually. I hope that the Smokejumpers will be part of this in the future, as you do great jobs on the trails, trailheads, and facilities. Jon McBride has been working with me about helping an historic facilities this next season. It sounds like there is a national smokejumper reunion in Montana in June 2004 and we are working hard to find projects that match with the reunion dates to take advantage of traveling to the reunion.			
Thank you for your actions and follow-up! I look forward to the next National Smoke Jumper Association projects and hope that you will be able to participate.			
DEBBIE MCKELW District Ranger			
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div> </div> <div> <p>Caring for the Land and Serving People</p> <p>BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS COMPLEX</p> <p>Flathead - Helena - Lewis & Clark - Lolo</p> <p>National Forests</p> </div> <div> </div> </div>			

Webb Lake Project 2003

By Wendy Kamm (Missoula '82)

Helena N.F.

The Webb Lake crew assembled at Indian Meadows Trailhead for the seven-mile walk into the Scapegoat Wilderness. Thanks to the Charlie Russell Backcountry Horsemen, mules packed in all the heavy gear. That allowed us to hike at a leisurely pace through rolling terrain to Webb Lake Cabin and get a good view of Red Mountain. That's the highest point in the Bob Marshall-Scapegoat Wilderness complex and one of our trail assignments.

Our crew of six were from all over the country. Our talented cook and carpenter was **Bill Breyfogle** (Missoula '55) a retired teacher from Kalamazoo, Michigan who is now very involved with scouting.

Dan Hensley (Missoula '57), also a retired teacher, a reserve deputy in the Los Angeles area and crew EMT, delighted us with stories of his days jumping. Those included a 30-mile three-day, pack out. He told us we could believe it or not and could even claim the story as our own if we wanted to.

John Payne (Missoula '66) from San Marcos, Texas, a retired FBI agent, also joined us. John is a world-class unicyclist who competes in national and international events. We learned about the variety of events in the world of competitive unicycling including speed, obstacle courses, backwards races and rough terrain cross-country events. (Mountain bikers, beware!)

Gary Weyermann (Missoula '63) is still a part of the work force in mechanical engineering and used his vacation time to work on three of this season's projects. That's dedication! His energy and skills were a great asset to our crew. He lives in Missoula.

Tom Oswald from Bolivar, Ohio (Missoula '58) was another retired teacher, back for another year of fun, hard work and great stories.

Bill Ruskin (Cave Junction '58) joined us in hopes of taking back ideas for this kind of project to Colorado. Bill retired as administrator of the Colorado Springs park system, and now leads golf tours to Scotland. His yodelling alerted the cook as we approached camp.

I was the crew squad leader and EMT. I'm a Montana game warden and live in Fort Benton. Since there were no hunting seasons on and the water was too low and warm for fishing, it was the perfect time for a working vacation.

Our summer of 2003 was definitely hot, including the temperatures on the Webb lake project. It soared into the upper 90s and hundreds for most of the week. To beat the heat we spent the first two days working in the area of the cabin.

We hung the beautiful corral gate that was built by last year's crew. We also repaired many of the other gates, shingles, feeders and fences and cleared dead trees and debris from the area.

The tack shed, approaching 50 years, needed a new foundation, the logs along its base beginning to rot. As we pried up the building we learned the inner floor and outer structure were not attached. Without concrete and jacks our best option was to dig under the shed and place new logs all the way around.

By day four the temperatures gave us a break. Most of us went out on the trail to clear water bars and repair puncheons. We replaced walking planks and side rails on several sets of puncheons, working along the main trail between Webb Lake and Indian Meadows with a side trip around Heart Lake. That made for a long day and sore feet.

We spent our last workday on the Red Mountain Trail. Halfway to the top we got a good view of Webb Lake and the cabin site. By midday we reached the summit where there's evidence of an old lookout. It was in the 90s at the bottom, but on the summit the temperatures and wind were cold enough to make us put on every piece of clothing we had. Immediately to the east was the continental divide, to the west we could see almost to Missoula. To the north were the remains of the massive fires of 1988 and 2000. In every direction there was range after range of continuous mountains.

Sourdough Basin lay over a cliff to our north. Ernie Lundberg, our Forest Service trail supervisor, had advised us that this was an excellent place to look for grizzlies feeding on moth larvae, but we didn't see any that day. Soon after we left the project the Snow-Talon Fire broke. (No, we didn't cause it!) Much of the area visible from the top of Red Mountain to the north and east burned in the 39,000-plus-acre fire. At the time of this writing, the project area had not burned although the fire did make a run toward Heart Lake. The Webb Lake cabin and the tack shed we worked on were wrapped in reflective protection for the second time since the 1988 fires.



BENCHMARK CREW SETS STANDARDS FOR LOOKS, WORK

By **Carl Gidlund** (Missoula '58)

Lewis & Clark N.F.

Ours was the most handsome of the 10 smokejumper trail crews dispatched during the summer of 2003, according to Trail Boss **Jon McBride** (Missoula '54). Not only that, he said, we had the most challenging tasks. "We selected you to meet public expectations," he explained during our pre-mission briefing. "Since the guys on the other crews haven't aged nearly as well as you, we're sending them to hike-in jobs where few people will see them. You'll have to keep up the reputation of the outfit as good looking as well as hard working."

Although we were disappointed to be sent to a drive-in project since all of us had exercised during the winter in anticipation of packing in a camp 20 or even 30 miles, we understood and accepted Jon's reasoning. We were originally assigned to the Willow Creek Station on the Lewis & Clark Forest's Rocky Mountain District but, after the ranger saw our photos, he dispatched us instead to the Benchmark Station, much more popular with tourists. Unfortunately, the jumper who'd been selected as our crew chief, retired Marine Colonel **Bob Whaley** (Missoula '56) couldn't pass the good looks criterion. I was promoted to replace him. "Marines are okay for wars," Jon said, "but Bob's wispy little mustache just doesn't fit with the image we'd like to project."

John "Mike" MacKinnon (Missoula '57) was my deputy. His classically rugged looks would enable him to fill in for any of our crew snatched away for show biz duty.

Herb Fischer (Missoula '57), like Whaley, didn't make the cut. After looking him over at our pre-mission party in Missoula, McBride sent him home and selected **Ted Nyquest** (Missoula '54) as his replacement.

As all smokejumpers know, Missoula is the site for most movie and television filming because, according to one director, its jumpers are "the most handsome of the lot."

Idaho City, however, comes in a close second. Thus, **Clyde Hawley** (Idaho City 48) who trained there in '48 and **Steve Carlson**, (idc 62-69, boi 70) were assigned to us.

Carlson brought his telescope, which was useful, not only for watching planets, but also for spotting visitors when they were still at some distance. That gave us the opportunity to dust ourselves off if we'd been napping and to comb our hair before our public arrived.

A contingent from the Missoula rookie class of '56, **Joe Lord, Bill Murphy, Roland Pera** and **JB Stone**, was selected because, McBride said, "It was evident they'd worked out extra hard over the winter. They'd submitted professional photos, and their thongs and oiled bodies really showed off their rippling muscles."

Bill Tucker (Missoula '50) had been on another crew the previous week, and was scheduled for a walk-in trail maintenance job during our tour.

"He argued with me," McBride said. "Tucker felt he wasn't sufficiently handsome to fit in with the Benchmark Crew. But I convinced him that, although he didn't possess the classical looks of the rest, his 'Virginia gentleman' appearance would work."

Don Marble (Missoula '60) was our front man. When the crowds clamoring for our photos, autographs and snippets of our "wife beater" T-shirts became too obstreperous, he talked with them. As a lawyer, he could go on for hours, wearing down even the most determined fans.

Dennis Pearson, (Missoula '62) rounded out our trail crew. A virtual double for Clark Gable's Rhett Butler in "Gone With the Wind," his North Carolina accent was as soothing to us as it was exciting to the many autograph seekers who followed him at work.

McBride picked Associate Member **Tom Blunn** as our cook since he anticipated we'd have many visitors when word got around about our crew's presence. He guessed correctly, and Tom was kept busy fixing low calorie meals for us and snacks for our fans.

The work itself was designed to provide us maximum exposure. We cleared 16 miles of popular trail, pausing frequently to pose for photographs.

The district ranger came up with other jobs that would provide the public more opportunities to see us in action: We mended 6,000 feet of fence along a popular airstrip, erected signs in prominent places where visitors could watch us dig holes and toss rocks (shirtless, of course), and painted a barn (principally as a photo opportunity).

Our evening story telling sessions were one of the highlights for "civilian" visitors as well as the dozens of Forest Service employees who flocked to Benchmark to see and hear us.

In all, it was a memorable week, for us and for the crowds, many of whom were exposed to real smokejumpers for the first time.

Despite the many accolades we received from the Forest Service and fans, we declined the proffered plaques and monetary awards.

It's enough to know that we brought some cheer into a lot of lives and upheld smokejumper traditions for great work, good looks and modesty.

BENCHMARK STATION

by Ted Nyquest (Missoula '54) *Lewis & Clark N.F.*

I arrived one day late at the Willow Creek Guard Station where our crew had been assigned. It was empty. The very accommodating occupant of a nearby private cabin made several cell phone calls and learned of the crew's reassignment to the Benchmark work station, also on the Lewis & Clark Forest's Rocky Mountain District.

Compared to the somewhat primitive Willow Creek, Benchmark was luxurious. Its amenities included a hot shower and propane cooking facilities.

When we got down to work, **John MacKinnon** (Missoula '57) and I worked a trail toward **Don Marble** (Missoula '60), **J.B. Stone** (Missoula '56) and **Dennis Pearson** (Missoula '62) who started at the opposite end. The 10-mile loop was in excellent condition and took us through spectacular rock vistas and talus slopes.

That evening **Steve Carlson** (Idaho City '62) provided us with erudite astronomy lessons and telescopic views of sunspots. We heard a rebel yell and some excited southern dialect. North Carolinian Pearson had seen an airliner fly precisely between the sun and telescope.

The following day **Roland Pera** (Missoula '56) and Pearson planned to meet J.B. and me by walking from opposite ends on another trail. Initially, we didn't meet. J.B. continued on and I backtracked to a likely fork that they could have missed. Within a half mile and with a few smokejumper hoots we met and corrected course. They were irritated at having cleared unofficial trail for a probable private hunting camp access.

That evening, some poetry was recited with **Carl Gidlund** (Missoula '58) rendering several verses of "The Illiad" in Latin. I related Hawthorne's Village Smithy tale, and **Clyde Hawley** (Idaho City '48) told us of his experiences as part of the first Idaho City smokejumper crew. Then Eve Pauli, a strong young Forest Service seasonal employee arrived and soon endeared herself to us all. She was open and authentic, displayed respect to us old timers, and joined in our dinner conversations as well as the daily volunteer kitchen cleanup.

With the trail maintenance completed the entire crew worked on the fencing surrounding a 6,000-foot Forest Service runway. Initially, it was a comedy of getting in each other's way until some organization evolved under the leadership of straw boss **Joe Lord** (Missoula '56). Joe always had a quip to inject into any conversation. **Bill Murphy** (Missoula '56) had an opinion, comment or story on any subject being discussed. And **Bill Tucker** (Missoula '50) lent us his considerable carpentry skills.

All of us were keenly aware of the value of Associate Member **Tom Blann**'s efforts and the great satisfaction of having a well prepared meal after a day's work.

The last day was barn painting at Willow Creek Guard Station. Dennis Pearson, Clyde Hawley, Steve Carlson and I were assigned. The equipment worked well and we felt satisfaction at completing the job.

As I drove down out of the overthrust of the Rocky Mountain front into the flatlands of Augusta and back to my Missoula home I started singing, "From the mountains to the prairies."

It was a great week.



The Eagle Cap Expedition

By Bob Reid (Missoula '57)

Wallowa-Whitman N.F.

For Hal, Tom and me, the project actually began Saturday, July 19 when we set out from Hungry Horse to Missoula after a week in The Bob.

Hal Howell (Missoula '55), **Tom McGrath** (Missoula '57) and I had spent the previous week getting ourselves, our gear and our clothes absolutely filthy up Logan Creek and down Dirty Face. Now we were hurrying like Pony Express riders to meet another crew at Eagle Cap in Oregon, more than 300 miles away.

Tough as the actual trail work can be, the logistics of bringing it all together must be even tougher. I commend Jon McBride and his helpers for putting crews, tools, and supplies together. None of the projects could happen without their organizational skills. Thanks from all of us, guys!

Sunday, July 20: breakfast in the Motel 8 lobby with guys on other trail crews. A great bunch, sharing a great history; that's what it's really all about. My clothes had just finished drying when Hal arrived, his SUV jammed with food and gear. Following was **Dave Lancaster** (Missoula '63), with a pickup full of tools and more gear. Soon we were heading west over Lolo Pass. McGrath had gone ahead the night before to meet **George Cross** (Missoula '74) in Orofino, and we hoped to catch up with them there.

Another reason we wanted to catch George was to pick his mind as to the best place to buy adult libations -- Idaho, Washington, or Oregon? We missed George and Tom, who apparently had hot dates in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, but we solved the adult beverage question. It turns out that none of the states sells booze on Sunday, so we made do with supermarket beer for the week.

Finally met George, Tom, and rest of the guys in Enterprise, Oregon. **Charlie Brown** (Idaho City '56) and **Jack Sisco** (Missoula '60) completed our seven-man crew. **Dan Murphy**, Hal's grandson, came along as cook and to stand bear watch.

We also met packer **Larry Branford**. Larry is the trail coordinator for the entire north zone of the Eagle Cap/Hells Canyon Wilderness. He's the guy who requested our NSA crew.

Monday, July 21: Noisy robins have us up at 5 a.m. Hikers are already starting up the trail, most packing their own gear, some letting Fido get into the act as a packin' pooch. Larry arrives around 9:30 with a mule string, and after we lay out our stuff he waves us up the trail. It's only five or six miles to camp, but the going is steep until we get into the valley 1,500 feet above. We pick a relatively level spot away from stream and mosquitoes.

This wilderness is much different from the Bob Marshall, not only in appearance but also in popularity: People are crawling all over it. With our tents 30 yards from the trail, we see folks passing from day-break to dusk. While working we frequently step aside to allow hikers to pass. Instead of whacking brush that encroaches trails because of little use, work here consists primarily in prying out rocks that horses and hikers expose in their daily transits. That means this wilderness is frequented by people who will probably support its continued protection.

My most memorable experience of the week was sharing breakfast with two boys who camped a couple of hundred yards below us. I'd seen them with their fathers setting up tiny backpacker tents at dusk, and knew mosquitoes would be a problem. I'd suggested that they move into the trees, but their fathers liked the open area.

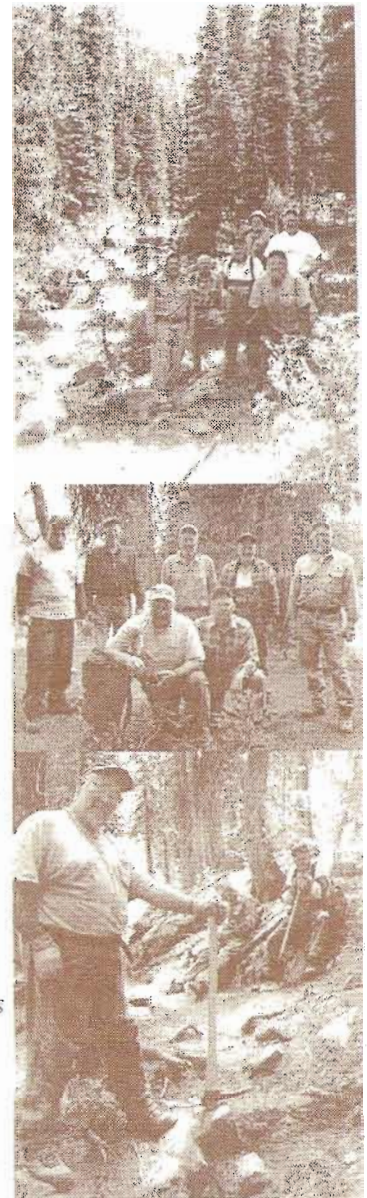
While getting water next morning, I noticed the glum foursome huddled around a tiny single-burner stove. Andrew, 8, and Sasha, 10, were not having fun, and prospects of a freeze-dried breakfast didn't help. We had plenty of batter, so I invited the boys.

In about 30 seconds two bright-eyed youngsters were bounding up the hillside while Dan was fixing flapjacks. By time the dads joined us for coffee, the boys were already on seconds. It was Andrew's unsolicited comment as he straddled a log, plate balanced on his knees, that really made our day: "You know, this is the best pancake I ever ate."

Our five days passed in a rush. We worked a network of trails that lead to Mirror Lake and thread the Lake Basin, the trail to the Minam Lake saddle up to timberline below Eagle Cap summit, then we stashed our tools for a hike to the top and a look around. There we had lunch with a trio of hikers we'd met the day before. We descended via a knife ridge to Horton Pass, then "shoe-skied" across a snowfield back to the tool cache. Those of us who spend most of our time close to sea level groaned and panted at the 9,500-foot elevation, but we wouldn't trade the experience for anything. We got a lot of work done. (Reports are that "Pry-bar Dave" actually heaved a couple of rocks that came up with Chinese writing on the bottom!) Hiking out we heard many compliments regarding the improved trail, and Trail Coordinator Larry was quite pleased, too.

Coming down from Eagle Cap was more emotional than physical. It meant returning to the "real" world, back from that laid back land of jump boots, pulaskis and crosscut saws, where everything is simple and few but smokejumpers even knew there was a wilderness. It meant leaving a landscape of 50 years ago and returning to the troubles and complexity of today's whirlwind world.

It's taking me some time to recover.





Veteran Smokejumper Stan Linnertz NSA Smokejumper of the year and awarded 2003 Art Jukkala award.

Veteran Jumper Bests Fire on Trail Crew Assignment

By Carl Gidlund (Missoula '58)

It wasn't your typical smokejumper fire. There wasn't a plane or parachutes, not even a pulaski. And, the jumper was 68 years old.

But the results were the same as with most jumper fires: The little blaze was knocked down.

Said Spotted Bear District Ranger Deborah Mucklow "If Stan hadn't taken charge, we might have had a huge problem."

Stan Linnertz, who jumped out of Missoula in 1961, was the cook for a five-man NSA smokejumper trail crew working for the Bob Marshall Foundation on Montana's Spotted Bear River in late July 2003.

His mess tent was at the Beaver Creek Campground and, remembers Linnertz, "With the rest of the crew working on the trail, I was thinking about dinner and swatting horseflies when I heard this high little voice coming down the trail hollering 'Mr. Smokejumper. Mr. Smokejumper.'" It was an 8-year-old boy, and he wasn't seeking an autograph.

He was summoning Linnertz to a fire. He and the boy ran across the campground to a grassy slope near the river. When they arrived, Linnertz saw eight to nine campers grouped around the fire. Three- to 4-inch flames were licking from duff and creeping up a 60-foot pine. A nearby rotted log was fully engulfed.

Linnertz had the men gather tools — a chainsaw, some shovels and a pair of folding army entrenching tools — then formed them into a crew.

He lined out the women as a water brigade. They passed it up from the river in diaper pails, wash buckets and cooking pots. He also formulated an escape plan. "The vegetation was dense," he explains, "and there were a number of small children around. If the fire got above us, we would all go for the river. Fortunately, we didn't have to activate that plan."

Linnertz had the men dig a line and directed the sawyer to cut the burning portion from the log. Then, they tossed it into the river.

A camper dressed in running clothes said he was going for a jog, but would stop by the ranger station after his workout to let them know of the fire.

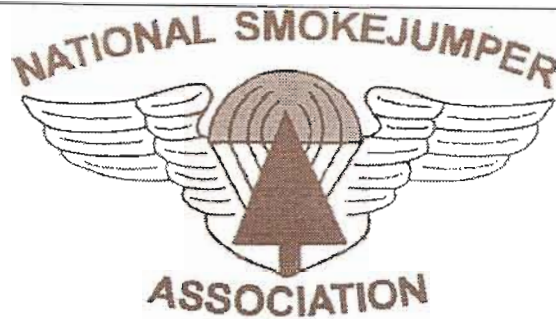
Linnertz says he "suggested" that he should run by the district office before, not after, and the runner agreed to do so. "Once we got the fire line established and the water had put down the flames, we had the tallest member of our team take an axe and shovel and skin the bark off the tree," Linnertz says. "Then, we dowsed the tree with water."

He broke his crew into small groups and put them to digging into hotspots. "When we finished, there were handshakes all around, and people committed to watching the burned area until the crew came from the ranger station."

Linnertz credits the volunteers for the success of the effort but, says Ranger Mucklow, "I think it's important to relate Stan's actions and our appreciation of the action and interaction he did."

"We had extreme fire conditions at the time, and he and the campers did an excellent job supporting our forest's suppression efforts until our district initial attack crew arrived to support them."

"The volunteers eliminated the potential for a large fire, as it did have the potential to spread and grow rapidly."



October 21, 2003

A Thank-You Note to the Ladies

We very much appreciate the use of your old man, and we thank you for lending him to us.

We all know he's not what he used to be. He moves a bit slow on cold mornings, and groans now and then. He doesn't hear everything you say, and has to hold things at arm's length to see them. His brand of aftershave is Old Spouse. But we assume you still like him. We want to assure you that we still like him, too -- which is why we like to borrow him from you for a week or so a year.

You may recall that the old guy used to be something special. He worked in a good cause, sometimes 26 hours a day, carried fantastic loads over the wildest country in the world, took risks that would make a movie stuntman turn pale. In fact, we did, too, once upon a time. We were the people on each side of your old man when he was young and doing all that stuff. We were members of a very small and very special group of very special people. We trusted him with our lives and he trusted us with his. We were brothers.


We still work in a good cause: setting things in order in the wild mountain country we used to know, maintaining trails and cabins and corrals and whatever else needs some volunteer work. We're not all that special anymore, but we give it all we have, with pride and good cheer, and the Forest Service treats us well and is very happy with our work.


Your old man joins us because it is in a good cause, in beautiful country, and because it is work that he knows how to do pretty well. He enjoys being with us and we sure enjoy having him around. He enjoys the work and the stories and the jokes and good fun, as do we all. But the secret reason he comes is built into him: he knows that a bunch of old smokejumpers are getting together way out in the wild country, and that if he doesn't show up *he might miss something*.

That's the man you married. He's like that. We're *all* like that, and so very proud of it.

Thanks again. We'll take good care of him.

Our Sincere Best Wishes,


Ron Stoleson
Pres. NSA


Jon McBride
Trail Maint. Adv.


Fred Brauer
Former Missoula Smokejumper Proj. Mgr.

**The following descriptions of pictures in the
Special Report apply to pictures from top to bottom**



Front Cover

L to R: NSA President Ron Stoleson presenting Stan Linnertz with the First Annual Art Jukkala Award for outstanding service in representing the NSA.

Stan Linnertz in NSA cook tent July 21 2003 in Beaver Creek campground, Flathead N.F.

Hells Canyon Page 5

L to R: Getting ready to cross the creek. Spud DeJarnette with Rod McIver and Dave Poncin watching. Dave Poncin taking matters into his own hands and walking on the waters of Clark Fork Creek.

Tom Blunn, working in the cook tent on the Snake River.

The USFS net boat working on the Snake River camp site.

Tom Kovalicky and his dog on Clark Fork Creek.

Tom Blunn, Bob Whaley, Ted Nyquist, cooking up a storm in the cook tent on the Snake River.

The whole crew back in camp after a long days work.

The Snake River Outlaws, L to R, front row: Bob Whaley, Tom Kovalicky, Rod McIver, Tom Blunn, Ron Stoleson, Dave Poncin. Back row: Jon McBride, Spud Dejaruette, Hal Howell, Chuck Fricke, Ted Nyquest, Gary Weyermann, Bob Derry.

Beartooth Project Page 6

Dennis Friestad clearing rocks from the trail.

Dennis Friestad, Terry Danforth, Joe Kroeber and John Payne installing wilderness boundary sign.

Terry Danforth pruning with his lopper.

Terry Danforth, Dennis Friestad, Joe Kroeber "crosscut work".

John Payne topping off a rock cairn on the Silver Run plateau.

Bill Thomas, Dennis Freistad, John Payne, Terry Danforth, Joe Kroeber "The crew at the trailhead."

Wag Dodge Search Page 7

NSA scouts, L to R, front row: Roger Savage, Don Murray. Back row: Eddy Bangen, Ron Larson, Chuck Fricke, Jon McBride, Roy Williams, Tom Blunn, Ted Nyquest, Dan Parsell (Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, Clearwater N.F.)

Sawtooth Page 8

Setting up the cook tent.

Don Baker carrying post.

Charlie Brown and Jim Cherry testing out the hot spring near camp. A dirty job but...

Cliff Dazell explaining the ins and outs of trail maintenance.

L to R, front row, Don Baker, Doug Daniels, Charlie Brown. Back row, Jim Cherry, Karl Maerzluf, Ron Stoleson, Cliff Dalzell, Gary Weyermann.

L to R, front row, Jim Cherry, Don Baker. Back row, Debra Peters (Forest Service), Stan Linnertz, Karl Maerzluf, Charlie Brown, June Newman (Forest Service Volunteer), Ron Stoleson, Gary Weyermann, Doug Daniels, Cliff Dalzell

Dirtyface Page 10

L to R: Larry Nelsen, Skip Stoll, Bob Reid, Hal Howell, with Dirtyface drainage in the background.

NSA Trail Scouts, L to R: Rod McIver behind and still in the brush, Jon McBride, Terry Danforth, and Roy Williams flagging Dirtyface Trail in early July. (Picture by Roger Savage)

Larry Nelsen at Logan Creek.

L to R: Hal Howell, Skip Stoll, Bob Reid, Larry Nelsen, Tom McGrath in camp.

North Fork of the Blackfoot Page 11

Rod McIver and Jim Lee standing at the Hoenail Tom Trail sign with the long explanation of what it's all about.

Restoring the roof.

Rod McIver.

Jim Anderson and Bill Tucker building/adjusting scaffolding.

Harold Hoem and Jim Anderson on the bridge over troubled waters.

More roof restoration.

Entire Crew: L to R, front row: Jake, Diane Tidwell, Bill Tucker. Back row: Dan Hensley, Jim Anderson, Jim Lee, Jim Hagemeier, Packer Glen, Rod McIver, Harold Hoem, in front of completed project.

Silvertip Project 12

Roy Rogers (Roy Williams and Roger Savage) scouting.

Jim Hutchinson and Mike Overby bucking a 36 incher.

Packing in.

Silvertip view.

Entire Crew: L to R, front row: Jim Scofield, Jim Thompson, Bill Breyfogle, Kootney, Roy Williams, Manny Haiges, Roger Savage. Back Row: Jim Phillips, David Lancaster, Jim Hutchinson, Chuck Fricke, Mike Overby, Chuck Corrigan.

Spotted Bear River Page 14

Stan Linnertz preaching to the assembled congregation.

Jim Cherry on the banks of the south fork of the Flathead River.

Rod McIver performing first aid on Howard Betty's poor feet.

Squadleader Bill Kolar in camp.

Painting forest service facilities at Spotted Bear ranger station.

Letter from Debbie Mucklow, District Ranger, Spotted Bear ranger district, to Stan Linnertz thanking him for his timely work in preventing a major forest fire in the Spotted Bear River drainage.

Webb Lake Page 15

Entire Crew: L to R, front row: Gary Weyermann, Bill Breyfogle, Bill Ruskin. Back row: Wendy Kamm, Tom Oswald, Dan Hensley, John Payne.

Tom Oswald and Wendy Kamm cutting dead tree in corral.

Gary Weyermann, John Payne, Wendy Kamm, Tom Oswald building new foundation for tack shed.

L to R: Gary Weyermann, Bill Breyfogle, John Payne, Wendy Kamm, Dan Hensley, Tom Oswald, Bill Ruskin (just out of photo on right), with mules.

Benchmark Page 17

The crew getting a forest service briefing.

John Stone and John McKinnon unloading lodgepoles.

Steve Carlson and Clyde Hawley building fences.

Tom Blunn's kitchen in Benchmark Guard Station.

The crew taking it easy after a long days work at Benchmark G.S.

Bill Murphy working with one of the new "Poulan" chainsaws.

Entire Crew, L to R: Joe Lord, John Stone, Steve Carlson, John McKinnon, Bill Murphy, Carl Gidlund, Ted Nyquest, Bill Tucker, Dennis Pearson, Tom Blunn, Don Marble, Roland Pera, Clyde Hawley

Eagle Cap Page 18

Entire Crew: L to R, front row: Charlie Brown, Tom McGrath, George Cross, David Lancaster. Back row: Bob Reid, Jack Sisco.

L to R, front row: Dave Lancaster, Tom McGrath. Back row: Dan Murphy (cook), Hal Howell, Charlie Brown, George Cross, Jack Sisco.

David Lancaster working with pick while Tom McGrath and George Cross with shovels relax.

Atop Eagle Cap: Jack Sisco, Charlie Brown, Hal Howell, Tom McGrath, Bob Reid.

Smokejumper of the Year Page 19

Stan Linnertz in camp in the cook tent on the Spotted Bear River two days before the fire.

A SPECIAL THANKS

The Missoula Smokejumper Base (AFD)

Ed Ward for their strong support of the NSA trail projects. They continue to loan the NSA high quality cross cut saws, pulaskis and specialty trail maintenance tools when requested.

Northern Rockies Fire Cache

Phil Mason Missoula, for their donation of trail maintenance tools and equipment.

U.S. Forest Service, Redmond Air Center

Mark Corbet Redmond, for his donation of the bulk of our trail maintenance tools and special equipment.

Bob Marshall Foundation

Carla Cline and Paul Travis Whitefish, for support with tools, equipment, planning and financing.

Tom Blunn, Hal Howell, John MacKinnon, Dan Hensley and Tom McGrath

For showing up early in July and taking care of the dirty work.

Newsletter Editor

Carl Gidlund who has given many hours of his time in editing this Newsletter.

Map Research

Dale Floerchinger for research at his job with the USFS in providing many years of USFS maps, plus aerial photo's of old trails in areas assigned to NSA for trail maintenance. This service assisted NSA trail scouts immeasurably in finding and flagging correct trails, and thereby helping to eliminate wasted time by the scouts and maintenance crews in trail identification.

A Thank-You Note to the Ladies

Don Courtney for writing the "Letter" and thanking them for the temporary use of their husbands each year.

ExxonMobil Foundation

For their generous support in helping to finance the NSA Art Jukkala Trail Maintenance Program

Master of Ceremonies

Tom Kovalicky for coming to Missoula and providing good cheer for the send off dinners.

Chief Cook

Tom Blunn for his many hours of menu planning and food shopping.

T-Shirts

Dave Poncin for his efforts at getting designs and production for this years award winning trail maintenance T-shirts.
(See page 24)

Thank You!



NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

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Email: N2601@aol.com



**Remember to fill out and mail the
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