



Volume 9 — Number 1

## Great Places - Great USFS Faces

*By Rendezvous Staff Writers*

The Rocky Mountaineers held this year's Annual Gathering in Rapid City, SD the week of October 9. We had 59 members attending including 25 from South Dakota. Other members were from Colorado, Wyoming, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Washington.

The Gathering kicked off on Tuesday morning with a round of golf at the Prairie Ridge golf course adjacent to Ellsworth AFB. No matter what your score, it was a gorgeous day for playing outside.

The afternoon included a tour of Ellsworth AFB and a trip into the cockpit of a B-1 bomber. The guides couldn't find the keys, so no one was able to fire up the engines and go for a ride.

Thanks to Blaine Cook for organizing golf and the AFB tour.



*The group lined up for a trip into the cockpit visit of the B1 Bomber at Ellsworth Air Force Base.*

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"The official newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Forest Service Association, the Rocky Mountaineers."

Editions are published Fall, Winter, and Spring and posted on-line.

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*Looking for our balls some times brought us in close proximity to other teams. Everyone got an attaboy.*

8th floor is haunted (according to hotel employees). Maybe ghosts will show up on some of the recordings.

At the same time during the afternoon, James Wall, oral historian from the National Museum of Forest Service History, was interviewing various retirees in a room on the 8th floor of the historic Hotel Alex Johnson. No one told James that the

On Wednesday, we all headed to the community center in Wall, SD just across the street from Wall Drug where several people took advantage of the 5 cent coffee. We headed out in a caravan for a couple of stops on the Buffalo Gap National Grassland, led by the Wall Visitor Center Director, Travis Mason-Bushman.

Our first stop was at a dispersed recreation area located on a rim overlooking the Badlands. This previous two-track dirt road has turned into a magnet for RV's and a big headache for the district. We then cruised through Badlands National Park and out the other side to Conata Basin and discussed the management of black-footed ferrets.

We returned to the community center for a great barbecue lunch. After lunch there were several speakers including Jack Isaacs, supervisor of the Nebraska N.F. and Associated Grasslands; Gerald Connor, Acting Deputy Regional Forester; Tom Thompson from the National Museum of Forest Service History; and Sharon Kyhl, Chair of the Rocky Mountaineers. Sharon conducted a short business meeting before we adjourned and headed back to Rapid City.

On Thursday, the rain came. BIG time! Several people headed home early due to the threat of snow in Wyoming and the rest of the group headed to the Mystic R.D. office where Research employees gave an update on their current work.



*Lunch was authentic Indian fry bread tacos prepared by the Boxelder staff. Jon Skeels and Dan Nolan talking in the foreground.*

In the late afternoon/evening we held our Welcome Social in the ballroom of the Alex Johnson where everyone ate, drank, and swapped stories with members they hadn't seen in a while. The band, **French Creek Folk**, provided music. They feature two Forest Service retirees. Edward Fischer on guitar and Kerry Burns on banjo, and Cheryl Stisser plays fiddle, who is currently Botanist on the Black Hills NF.



*We met at Mystic Ranger District. First we were informed of schedule changes as it was a fully rain event day...all day!*

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*As the research discussion progressed prairie dogs popped up, squeaked and scampered about.*

The field stop at Case 1, the first timber sale of the FS, was moved indoors to the Boxelder Job Corps facility. Members of the Job Corps gave an update on their part of the world and cooked a wonderful lunch. The group then headed home or back to Rapid City.

The Mickelson Trail bicycle ride on Friday was cancelled due to the weather. Thanks to Laura and Kerry Burns for planning the ride.

Also, thanks to Bob Sprentall and Craig Bobzien organizing this year's Annual Gathering. It was a fun time in South Dakota!

## Your Area Representatives

Denver Area Representative  
**Jim Thinnes**, Littleton, CO

Northern Front Range and Southeastern  
Wyoming Area Representative  
**Steve Johnson**, Ft. Collins, CO

Southern Front Range and Kansas Area  
Representative  
**Barb Timock**, Pueblo

Western Colorado Area Representative  
**Martha Moran**, Carbondale, CO

Wyoming Area Representative  
**Bill Bass**, Sheridan, WY

South Dakota/Nebraska  
**Craig Bobzien**, Custer, SD

NAFSR Representative  
**Sharon Friedman**, Littleton, CO

NMFSH Representative  
**Tom Thompson**, Littleton, CO

Liaison for Region 2 (not retired yet)  
**Jace Ratzlaff**, Golden, CO

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Membership & Others - P.O. Box 270462, Fort Collins, CO 80527



# A message from the Chair



*Sharon Kyhl and Laura Knepp Burns hiking on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. Laura was Sharon's classmate at Iowa State.*

I just returned from the Annual Gathering in South Dakota. We went from sunshine to snow during the week, so unfortunately, we had to forgo the bike ride scheduled for Friday. Thanks to Bob Sprentall and Craig Bobzien for organizing the event, and many thanks to all the speakers from the districts, forests, experiment station, regional office, and job corps. There were some excellent presentations. We missed those traveling with the Mountaineers to the Dalmatian Coast and Greece. It was so much fun to see so many friends I hadn't seen in years.

What came to my attention is that many of the current employees know little about our Retiree organization, particularly the opportunity to get funding assistance through our grant program, or the opportunity for scholarship help for graduating seniors. In addition, there are several retirees interested in assisting some of the district folks on special projects. I'd like to see us make more efforts in building more awareness with our regional office, forests, and districts. We find it difficult to hear about those that are retiring, despite our best efforts. Perhaps by increasing our local physical presence and presence via the newsletter and special all employee mailings we may be able to increase their knowledge and participation, and even membership, before they retire.

It's that time of year when we are inundated with requests for donations. We hope you consider the Rocky Mountaineers in your giving this year. Contributions to the Memorial Grove, Scholarship Fund, and Grant Fund are always welcome. They are tax deductible along with your membership and can be paid using your credit card online.

We are also currently taking applications for the grant program. Grant applications will be accepted from private, non-profit, or non-governmental organizations and individuals pursuing such goals. Grant awards will not be made directly to the U.S. Forest Service. We really need to get this information out to the district staff and our grants & agreements staff.

Don't forget to check out the Travel Section of the newsletter! Japan, Morocco, and Nepal are coming up.

It was an honor serving you this year, and I look forward to staying involved as past chair. I'd like to recognize all that serve on this committee, as many have been engaged for many years, including Dan Nolan who will serve once again as Chair. Please take time to vote for our Chair Elect, Karen Bergethon who has volunteered to run. All of the volunteers help us in our Mission: to enrich and add value to the lives of Forest Service retirees who care greatly about the agency and the Rocky Mountain Region.

## The Next Election



*Karen Bergethon being hugged by an unknown person with a wedding ring that matches hers.*

The Board of Directors has nominated Karen Bergethon for the Chair-elect position of the Rocky Mountaineers. Karen would serve as Chair in 2025.

All Rocky Mountaineer members are eligible to vote on this nomination by voting for Karen or you may write in another candidate. We will ask members to vote in November.

Following is Karen's statement for consideration:

Greetings from Grand Junction, Colorado! My husband Rik and I moved here from Pueblo a couple of years ago to be near our son and his family. I've enjoyed getting to know more FS Retirees here and joined the GMUG group.

I would like to be part of the leadership of the Rocky Mountaineers to help maintain the high profile and great reputation that the group already has. It would be an honor to work alongside the folks on the Board to serve the R2 Retirees.

I spent most of my Forest Service career in Fire in Region 2, getting promoted to Retiree in 2008. There are 3 things I am especially proud of: being part of the beginning of Pueblo Interagency Dispatch Center, being one of the first folks of the Pikes Peak Wildfire Prevention Partners and being one of the Founders and supporters of the Colorado Wildland Fire and Incident Management Academy. Working with cooperators was the best job in the Forest Service and I

was lucky enough to get to do that.

We are Smokey Bear fans and volunteer with organizations that carry his message. We have a Smokey room in our house that's full of collectibles and mementos and great memories of working with the Bear.

We also have a Bronco room. I'm a diehard fan, season tickets, etc., so if that'll get me your sympathy vote, I'll take it. Thank you.

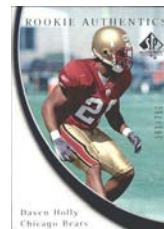
## 6 Degrees From Smokey Bear



**Taylor Swift**  
was born  
in 1989.



*In 1989 the San Francisco 49ers won the Super Bowl.*



*The 49ers drafted Daven Holly from the University of Cincinnati.*

*Jason Kelce has a podcast and interviewed his brother Travis about football and dating Taylor Swift.*



*Travis and Jason Kelce from Cincinnati University become professional football players*



*Jason Kelce wore an official **Smokey the Bear** hat during the interview.*

## Membership and Finance

October 16, 2023

*Ellen and Johnny Hodges*

The Rocky Mountaineers have reached our highest membership level ever with 472 members. This includes 154 Lifetime Memberships.

We are always looking for new members, so help us recruit. Membership in the Rocky Mountaineers is open to both retirees and current Forest Service employees.

### **Our newest members**

Karen Argys – Windsor, CO

Marcia Eisenbraun – Custer, SD

Mark Lambert and Mika Inouye – Durango, CO

Bart Lander and Cynthia Villa – Sedro-Wooley, WA

John Rawinski – Monte Vista, CO

Paul and Carol Rusch – Hatboro, PA

### **2024 Dues**

The Board of Directors has approved a ballot measure to increase dues by \$5 to a total of \$25 beginning in 2024. The dues increase must be voted on by all members. The election will be held next month in conjunction with the vote on our new Chair-elect.

The Rocky Mountaineers were chartered in 2013 with annual dues of \$20. We have never raised dues in the past 10 years, but inflation has finally caught up with us. Currently, we are not raising the dues for Lifetime memberships. They will remain at \$250 for now.

If the dues increase is passed by our membership, we will begin collecting the increase on January 1, 2024.

We will begin collecting 2024 dues in November 2023. If you want to avoid the possible dues increase, you can pay annual dues of \$20 through the end of this year. And we always appreciate your donations.

## 2024 Rocky Mountaineers Grant Program



The Rocky Mountaineers Forest Service Association is accepting applications for grants to help fund projects in 2024 that further the goals of the Rocky Mountaineers within the Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service as noted in the Project Selection Criteria.

Grant applications will be accepted from private, non-profit, or non-governmental organizations and individuals pursuing such goals. Grant awards will not be made directly to the U.S. Forest Service.

Approximately \$2,500 - \$5,000 will be available in 2024 for project grants. The Rocky Mountaineers will make these awards available annually as budgets permit, because they support many U.S. Forest Service heritage and natural resource projects; projects that advance public appreciation and understanding

of our nation's National Forests and Grasslands natural resources. Projects that focus on existing interpretive and education sites will be emphasized.

### How to Apply

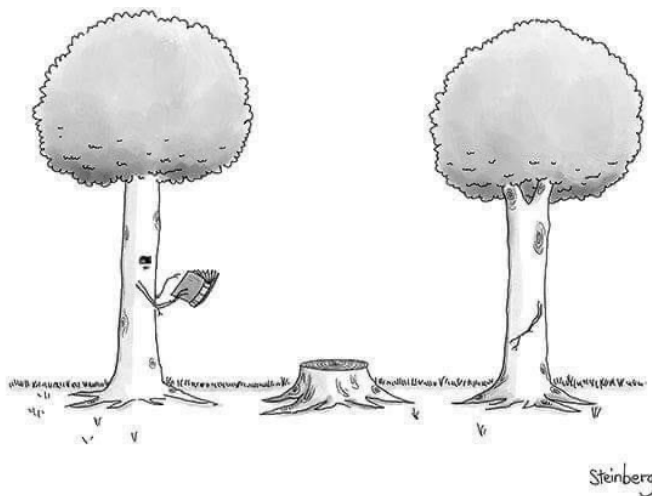
Grant applications should be prepared as letters that describe the proposed project and enumerates how its accomplishment would satisfy the selection criteria.

Please note that grant requests supporting U.S. Forest Service projects also must include an accompanying statement of support for and commitment to the project signed by the responsible line officer (e.g., Forest Supervisor or District Ranger).

### Due Date for 2024 Proposals

Grant applications shall be submitted electronically to the Rocky Mountaineers at [rmountaineers@gmail.com](mailto:rmountaineers@gmail.com) no later than December 31, 2023.

For more information, go to our website, [www.rockymountaineers.us](http://www.rockymountaineers.us) and click on "Grants" at the top of the page.



*"Pains me to say it, but Greg is much more interesting as a book."*



No! This was NOT posted on a Forest Service Office.



## What to Do When You Retire

By Mary Ann Chambers



*Telephone Lake Snowy Mountains - Carl Chambers*

We all know that the National Forests are just as majestic and awe inspiring as the National Parks. The Snowy Mountains on the Medicine Bow National Forest, west of Laramie Wyoming is one these majestic areas. It takes us the same amount of time to get there from Fort Collins as it does to get to Rocky Mountain National Park. Rocky is magnificent, but so well loved and crowded that they have established a reservation system and buses to popular trailheads.



*Lewis Lake*

Some National Forests have also become crowded too and require reservations. Impromptu trips are

not easy to these places. The Snowies offer equally beautiful views without the hassle of a reservation.

My husband Carl and I take a few trips to the Snowy Mountains every summer. We have to usually wait until July. Snowy is what they are and how they stay until July.

There is a fee, but our Senior Pass means it is free to us. We leave early to make sure we get a parking spot. The Snowies have b e e n discovered now, but not to the degree of the National Parks.

My personal favorite is the Lost Lake Trail, easy to get to from Lewis Lake, which is a breathtaking start to this hike.



*Lost Lake, Snowy Mountains 8/29/23 - Carl Chambers*

On our last trip, the wildflowers were still showing up in August. The trail passes Telephone Lake, another fantastic site. We saw a big bull moose before he saw us, thanks to really nice hiker we met on the way. He doubled back to warn us about the moose, who was lying down right beside the trail, and we all took a side trail for the final quarter mile to Lost Lake. We fished and I even caught a few on a fly. We had lunch, saw the moose again, at a safe distance of course and fished a little more before we headed back. The trail is rocky as this is not a National Park, but the views cannot be beat. There are many other lakes and trails in the Snowies. Try it if you are tired of the crowds on the Front Range. There are many National Forests with awe inspiring views that rival the National Parks. Tell us about your favorites!



## New Option for “The Rendezvous”

We currently send a link to all members for each new edition of “The Rendezvous.” This electronic version of “The Rendezvous” is in color and can be read on a computer or other device.

The current edition is posted on the home page of our website. Past editions are also available from our website.

We also print a few copies of each edition, primarily for those members without email addresses.

Some additional members have asked about receiving a printed copy of each edition. They would prefer reading a paper copy rather than reading it online. At a Board of Directors meeting earlier this year, we discussed making this option available.

It costs about \$7 (depending on the number of pages) to print, address and mail each copy.

The Board agreed that we would make printed copies of “The Rendezvous” available to all members starting in 2024, but members would need to cover the additional cost.

We will add a line to the “payment form” on our website to provide an option for paying for a printed copy. The cost will be \$20 per year which will cover 3 editions which are printed each year. This will be in addition to your annual dues. If you are a Lifetime Member, you do not owe dues and can just pay \$20.

This is strictly optional and if you are happy reading “The Rendezvous” online, you don’t need to pay anything extra.

We will begin collecting 2024 dues starting next month and you can pay the additional printing cost at that time or any other time of the year. The first 2024 edition of “The Rendezvous” will be published near the end of January.

Our newsletter is extremely popular and is the #1 newsletter of any of the regional retiree organizations (of course we might be biased).

Send us a message if you have questions – [rmountaineers@gmail.com](mailto:rmountaineers@gmail.com)





## National Museum's History Corner

Sharing the rich history and stories  
of America's conservation legacy

By Andy Mason



Hundreds of individual donors have made the Museum's mission and vision a reality over the past 35 years. Many have contributed to the Capital Campaign which has brought us so close to starting construction of the National Conservation Legacy Center. These supportive individuals and companies will be recognized on the Donor Wall at the Center.

Campaign Closers are individual donors who make Campaign-ending gifts between August 2023 and September 2025 specifically to help the Museum end the National Conservation Legacy Center Capital Campaign. Become a member of this elite, once-in-a-lifetime Giving Circle. This specific group will also be uniquely recognized on the Center's Donor Wall. An individual can be a part of both groups.

### 1905 CIRCLE Donation of \$1905

**1905 marks the first year of the U.S. Forest Service and members of this 1905 Circle will receive:**

- Invitation for donor and guest to attend the groundbreaking ceremony and VIP party
- Custom-engraved 1905 Circle champagne flutes
- Donor recognition on the exclusive CCC donor board
- 1905 Circle pin
- Dedicated recognition in the Museum's Annual Report with 10 personal copies to share

### FOUNDER'S CIRCLE Donation of \$10,000

**The Founder's Circle is in honor of State Forester and Museum Founder, Gary Brown**

- VIP invitation to the ribbon cutting and groundbreaking
- ceremonies for donor and up to five guests
- Custom-engraved Founder's Circle champagne flutes
- Donor recognition on the exclusive CCC donor board
- Founder's Roundtable lapel pin
- Dedicated recognition in the Museum's Annual Report with 10 personal copies to share

### CURATORS CIRCLE Donation of \$25,000

- Lunch and Private collections tour with Museum Curator for the donor and up to 10 guests
- VIP invitation to the ribbon cutting and groundbreaking ceremonies for donor and up to five guests
- Custom-engraved Curator's Circle champagne flutes
- Donor recognition on the exclusive CCC donor board
- Curator's Roundtable lapel pin
- Dedicated recognition in the Museum's Annual Report with 20 personal copies to share
- Life membership to the Museum

### DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE Donation of \$50,000

- Private Cocktail Party at the Center for the donor and up to 20 guests with welcome by the Museum Director
- VIP invitation to the ribbon cutting and groundbreaking ceremonies for donor and up to five guests
- Custom-engraved Director's Circle champagne flutes
- Donor recognition on the exclusive CCC donor board
- Director's Roundtable lapel pin
- Dedicated recognition in the Museum's Annual Report with 30 personal copies to share
- Life membership to the Museum

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### PRESIDENT'S ROUNDTABLE Donation of \$100,000

Our highest and most elite Giving Circle, the President's Roundtable receives the following exclusive amenities in addition to the benefits previously listed.

- Private VIP Dinner Party at the Center for the donor and up to 20 guests with welcome by the Museum President and Director
- VIP invitation to the ribbon cutting and groundbreaking ceremonies for donor and up to 10 guests
- Opportunity to speak at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony podium
- Custom-engraved President's Circle champagne flutes
- Donor recognition on the exclusive CCC donor board
- President's Roundtable lapel pin
- Dedicated recognition in the Museum's Annual Report with 50 personal copies to share
- Life membership to the Museum

For more information, please call  
Museum Executive Director Lisa Tate  
or Tom Petersen (406) 541-6374

P.O. Box 2772  
Missoula, Montana, 59806-2772  
406-541-6374  
<https://forestservicemuseum.org/>  
A Non-profit Corporation

## Welcome to the 2025 Forest Service Retiree Reunion

Monday, Sept. 22 - Friday Sept. 26, 2025  
Missoula, Montana



<https://2025usfsreunion.org/>



<https://2025usfsreunion.org/media/videos/promos/23jul20-Intertwined%2030%20Second%20Promo!/Reunion-intertwine-Promo-FaceBook.mp4>



## A Dispatch from Bill and Laura Disbrow



*Drive for money and putt for Doe!*



*A rare Double Crane on the tough 17th!*

We played the back 9 yesterday at Pinewood Country Club in Harshaw, Wisconsin. The doe was first spotted on the 15th fairway then slipped through the woods to the 16th where she watched Laura Disbrow connect with a magnificent tee shot.

Two Sandhill Cranes were on the 17th fairway. We waited for them to amble off to the side. Fred and Wilma spend the summers here. No young'uns this year, that we have seen. One got nailed a couple of years ago by an errant shot but recovered.

Wildlife abounds here. We spot eagles, hawks, deer, birds of many flavors and even a badger. Black bear are nearby.

Best,

Bill



*Bill and Laura in South Dakota with their security detail.*

# Things I Wouldn't Have Gotten To Do If I Hadn't Joined Up

By Lee Carr



## Editor's Note:

*We asked Lee for an interview and he declined multiple times. He agreed to be featured if he could author his own story. I honor my old mentor - here it is.*

*Lee Carr and his bride Dottie, on the banks of the Crystal River, Summer 2023.*

## A Bit About Growing Up

I was a city boy growing up in the suburbs of a town then also home to the 33rd POTUS (Truman) and the jumping off place 100 years prior for families starting west on the Oregon and California Trails – Independence, Missouri. A great place to grow up, hiking and playing in the limestone cliffs adjacent to the Missouri River and having a dad that took my brother and me on frequent fishing expeditions.

All kinds of fishing, sitting on a lake or stream bank with a bamboo pole, trolling for walleye and northern pike in Minnesota, running a trotline across rivers for catfish, popping for smallmouth bass with a light fly rod, casting for cutthroat trout at Fishing Bridge in Yellowstone NP or “hogging” (that’s catching by hand) catfish and carp in receding pools after Missouri River floods. In winter, with snow cover, it was rabbit hunting. You got use to picking shotgun pellets out when eating them.

My first trip to Colorado was at age nine, a quick automobile pass through on US 40 to get my uncle back to his ship in San Francisco following a brief furlough during WWII.

As a pre-teen I spent a few weeks most summers on northern Missouri farms gaining experiences useful in later life. The last two summer high school breaks were spent working on a ranch along the upper Green River in western Wyoming. My first wildfire fighting experience was there, on the Bridger NF. The District Ranger only had to crank one number on a party line shared by a half dozen ranches, because everybody (cooks!) listened in on all calls regardless of whose ring it was. Several ranch hay crews showed up as volunteers and soon had the fire contained.

## College Days

Since early teens I was interested in becoming a forester. The 1949 USDA Yearbook of Agriculture, a 900-page tome titled “Trees,” boosted my interest in working for the Forest Service. I still have a copy.

Colorado A&M College (now CSU), the closest school of forestry was in the west where I wanted to work, so I applied and was accepted. The freshman class starting in 1954 was a unique combination of recent high school graduates and a large number of GI’s just returning from serving in the Korean War. Many classmates became career long Forest Service colleagues. Another situation common in that era was that all 79 undergraduate degrees awarded in Forestry in 1958 were to males. One female graduated with a Master’s degree.



*Foresters Days CSU 1956. The competition to split a wood match. Don Campbell (checkered shirt and axe) is next up.*

During college summer breaks I had my first paid FS jobs. One summer was spent with a scientist at the Rocky Mountain Research Station doing a survey of issues related to livestock grazing in the alpine. This involved hiking and/or horse trips to areas above timberline on several National Forests from northern Wyoming to southern Colorado. Another summer was spent as a Forestry Aid on the Goose District of the Bighorn NF. Another important college event in those years was meeting, courting and falling in love with Dottie, which worked out pretty well. This fall we celebrated our 65th.

*(Continued on Page 14)*



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### A Notch in the Toe of the Boot

That was the symbol of folks working primarily in range management. I spent my early career doing range analysis which involved determining the condition of the grazing ecosystems and the number of livestock that would be appropriate to use it. The notch was a guide to help get an unbiased vegetation sample using a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " loop. Whatever fell inside the loop, be it rock, vegetation or bare soil was recorded to determine via a scorecard the condition of the rangeland. That was the summer job. In the winter all the info recorded on aerial photos was plotted onto maps to be drafted and printed for District use. Unless it has all been digitized into a computer, I'll bet they are still using range allotment maps made 60 years ago. Just look for my initials at the bottom of the map!

### A Large National Forest with a Small Staff

That's the Bighorn during the late 50s. Six District Rangers, three of them had an Assistant Ranger and a couple had one other permanent employee.



*Pack trip into the upper Greybull River. Shoshone NF 1956. District Ranger Ray Swigert glassing the slope for Pronghorn antelope which are unique for the alpine zone. The far right pack horse was named "Beans."*

Only a few had clerical help. Most moved their headquarters to the mountain ranger station each summer. With no clerical staff, the lowest GS grade worker got to do it. The "copy machine" was a piece of carbon paper between two sheets of white paper. There was always a stack of manual or handbook changes or addendums to be made to the Directive System. Often these would be stacked several feet high in the corner of the office just waiting for attention. It was a time of changeover from the alfa to the current numeric filing and directive system.

Infrastructure took up a lot of the time. There were miles of telephone line needing tending, particularly after windy periods with blowdown. Grab the tree climbing spikes, belt harness, a few tools, repair parts all stuffed in a backpack and hope the hike wasn't too long to find the break or grounding. Most of our lines were single wire strung between trees in the forest and on poles when crossing parks. Climbing trees with spikes and harness where you lean back is contrary to how you learned to climb a tree as a kid where you hugged it and shinnied up. Sometimes with spikes on you forgot the difference or panicked, reverting to your hug mode thus the new position pulled your spikes and you slid to the bottom of the tree with some wear and tear on your belly.

After a training session I was awarded the blasters card for the District. There was occasional need for explosives. Sometimes it was an errant beaver colony needing one of their dams removed because it was flooding the road. Most of the time it was for trail or road maintenance, and it was relatively safe since we always ignited with electric blasting caps with a long wire between the explosive and the ignitor. There was a lot of safety procedures built into the use, storage and transport of explosives.

It was an era of promoting rotation grazing systems, with lots of time spent with livestock permittees developing plans. Managed jointly by the Rocky Mountain Station and University of Wyoming a research experimental pasture on the District helped persuade them. In early summer you always carried your tallywacker to count livestock entering the forest. Sometimes there might be a tap on the bedroom window about sunrise by an anxious sheepman wanting a count so he could get the herd on the trail. You just counted ewes coming out of the corral chute not lambs.

Aerial 2-4D sagebrush spraying was common each summer with the District's job to make sure spray drift was kept out of streams and lakes or waving a large flag to help the pilot align his flight pattern.

There were 4 active fire lookouts on the Bighorn, one on the District I worked. In addition to their surveillance for fires they verbally passed along info to others before we got radio repeaters. The year the Forest got its first two-way FM radios everyone was trying to find out where they did or did not have reception. You heard a lot of code 10-97. It was considered a status symbol to have a mobile radio with a long whip antenna on your PU. I never did. I was assigned a big boxy portable that sat on the seat of the PU.



(Continued from Page 14)

Camping and picnicking sites required continual cleanup and maintenance particularly along the highway corridor that was a major route for Midwesterners traveling between the Black Hills and Yellowstone.

Fortunately, there were only small fires during the period I was there and district or forest crews could handle them. There was still fire prevention work with the schools and civic organizations and signs along the highways. A fire danger rating was made every day at the District's weather station and we also maintained several remote hand tool caches at main road intersections. These red boxes provided hand tools the public could get to if needed for a fire emergency.

There were a couple of small timber sales needing administration. Both had portable sawmills set adjacent to the harvest areas. The Forest was in the process of putting up a large sale to entice a larger operator into the area. The preparation for this sale was a fairly intense cruise with many sample plots to measure volume and make accurate maps of the sale blocks since the intent was to sell the timber by the acre. The area had previously been harvested by tie hacks many years before but they only removed trees of a size that could be shaped into railroad ties with a broad axe. There were still decks of rotting ties left next to the abandoned flume used to float them to the Forest Boundary several miles away. Much to the dismay of the Forest timber staff we usually left sale prep to the winter which was less efficient, time wise. Time killers were having to work on snowshoes, commute daily from town, and travel to the sale area in the worn-out surplus Korean War Weasel tracked snow vehicle. (You often had to back up steep hills to use the less worn side of the slipping track sprockets).

### A Roof Overhead

Six different headquarter towns and 11 houses over 36 years seems about average for FS folks. Hats off to the spouse and kids. They were the ones having to set up a new abode, find new friends and adjust to a new school situation. Yet there was a lot of social interaction with new FS folks. There was always Forest wide holiday parties and going away or retirement get-to-gathers where you got acquainted with those from other towns. Homes were often shared with out-of-towners to cut down travel costs.

The only Govt. housing we ever had was a temporary summer cabin. The first one was a surprise to my city-raised spouse. Two rooms, a wood burning range with a hot water jacket, ice box and a path to the outhouse. No electricity, except for a couple of hours before 10 pm after which the station generator was shut down. Then light sources were either a flash light, wick or Coleman lanterns. Our 2-week-old son took up residence at the summer station since he enjoyed the cooler weather on the mountain. His first night there I magnanimously volunteered to light the Coleman lantern for the 2 AM feeding and diaper change. The next morning, I conducted a FS type 3-step training session with Dottie showing her the sequential procedures necessary to light and extinguish the Coleman. After all, I could not offer much at 2 AM since she was nursing him.



*Daily Flag Raising at Big Goose Station, Bighorn NF, July 1957. (L.to R.) Penny the Cocker Spaniel, "Woody" Williamson, District Ranger, and Becky his youngest daughter hiding behind the flag pole.*

(Continued from Page 15)

**Giddyap and Whoa**

Sometimes the word whoa had a lot more letter ooooos but overall FS horses were pretty well behaved, if not, they went down the road. My favorite was a fox trotter named Fox. He was tall, long legged to the point where you often looked for a stump or steep slope to mount him. I hauled him in a PU horse rack with a tail gate more than 2 feet off the ground and he never hesitated to jump in or back out on command. Better yet was the smooth fast trot that would cover a lot of ground in a day.



*Mug shot of me in 1962. I don't remember the occasion but since I am in uniform it must have been for some official FS file.*

Early in my career I did a lot of horse packing to supply camp gear, tools, and grub for trail crews. Although I had harnessed and driven a number of teams before joining the FS, learning to pack with horses was new. One summer The FS San Dimas Equipment Development Center

wanted us to test out a new prototype duffle carrier. It had a bed built over two tandem rubber tires powered by a small gasoline engine. It required two operators, one in front walking between two handle bars whose job was to steer and balance the carrier and one in back walking between another set of handle bars to balance, control the engine and apply the brakes. With our rough terrain, large rocks and sharp switchbacks the two operators looked like they were wrestling a bear as they went up the trail. To my knowledge it never replaced the pack horse.

The only horse "wreck" I had was on a joint R-2 and R-4 show-me trip in the Teton NF with horses supplied by an outfitter. One of the pack horses put on a rodeo after its pack slipped to the side. After it settled, several of us were working trying to get the pack saddle off to redo the pack. The rodeo wasn't over, I spent several weeks carefully nursing several sore ribs. One final learning experience, never get stuck on a steep trail behind a horse named Beans.

**Faux paus**

A bridge along the sheep driveway needed replacing. The engineers wanted a designed

structure to replace original three log stringers and log decking bridge, but it required truck access to get the material in. The Ranger told me to stake out a way in that didn't exceed a 10 percent grade, with a bulldozer following me. After he saw the road, he said don't you think it exceeds the 10 per cent. I checked the Abney level and it had been set for the degree side rather than the percent side. I agreed with the Ranger's frown. We will need more water bars now.

Mining claims were frequently used as a pretense to build a cabin that then became a summer home. After a mineral examination by the Regional geologist and a lot of legal procedures and if the claim was determined to be invalid, we liked to destroy the cabin before somebody else moved into it with the same pretense. The technique was to place a small charge of explosives on the floor in the middle of the cabin and it would cave in rather than spread debris over a wide area. In this case it did just that, but mistakenly I had used a stick of TNT which tends to set fires. I spent a long afternoon fighting a debris fire.

One Fall the Supervisor on the Bighorn NF wanted some stock video and still aerial images of features and views throughout the Forest. It would be used later for various educational or informational purposes. Dave Steinke (now your Rendezvous editor) and I were invited up to shoot them using their contract helicopter. The week scheduled had a great weather forecast for the job but Dave had a conflict, his first wedding anniversary celebration. He and Sue had plans other than Dave being away that week. With a lot of persuading Dave reluctantly agreed to go. I don't think Sue ever forgave me.

Several years later after getting home from work one evening, I noticed a table for two set up on the patio. It had a candle and flowers and a greeting card and wrapped gift on one of the plates. With a subtle grin Dottie had a little celebration for my forgetfulness. Anniversaries are important to the distaff.

**Pawnee**

The years spent in the management of this National Grassland where some of my most enjoyable years with the FS, for a number of reasons. One was that the folks residing in the area were a delight to work with.

(Continued from Page 16)

With only two more employees to help manage 193 thousand acres I was lucky in that they were long time residents and well-respected members of the community. Lastly is the independence you had as Ranger. The supervisor and staffs on the National Forest you are attached to seem to orient more toward the mountains, not the prairie. They were rare visitors.

There was a lot of activities going on at the time. Oil and gas drilling and production while not directly managed by the FS did require access planning, and drilling site restoration.

The Air Force was constructing a cluster of underground Minuteman Missile silo launch facilities on the eastern side of the Grassland. They required many miles of ditching for underground communication cables. Of major benefit to our management for grazing were the miles of new overhead electric lines to each launch site we could also use to electrify existing or new water wells for livestock. In addition, many miles of public roads were improved to provide access and enhance the Air Force's security patrols to the silos. This was also an era when you had to periodically check the readiness of the District's geiger counter and dosimeters.

I worked directly with two grazing associations and their employees, not with the livestock owners. Unique to the Grasslands was that the association could spend part of the grazing fees they collected directly on range improvements. Fencing, new water wells, windmills, large excavated rubber lined water storage pools and plastic pipe lines for water distribution were common projects each year. Local teenagers soon discovered the storage pools were great swimming holes. Studies of ecosystem conditions and the amount of grass utilization were continual activities. One sound that would always raise the hackles on the back of your neck and caused you to anxiously look around is the unforgettable rattle of a rattlesnake. Where is that reptile that wants you to go someplace else? Cowboy boots were the preferred foot wear.

### Solicitude

Our oldest son was born with a congenital disorder initially expressed as deafness. On two occasions we requested transfers to be closer to hearing and speech therapy and later to a community with a high school with classes using American sign language. In both cases we know that a number of officials went to bat for us to find a NF position in cities that offered the needed opportunities. Our family is not the only one that has benefited from a FS culture that cares about employee welfare.

### I'm from the RO and I'm here to help you.

That was a chuckle field folks often expressed. I transferred to the RO the year our Nation celebrated its bi-centennial with an assignment to I & E. Within the Office of Information and Education my responsibilities were media, publications, and audio/visuals.

That was a tough year for a forester to break into the media field with the Vail Ski Area Gondola accident in March where two cars fell, killing four and severely injuring eight others, and the Big Thompson Flood in July on the Roosevelt NF which took 144 lives and much property. There were always FS news releases to draft, media to contact to pitch stories or run down info requests, catering TV and print reporters to local field units for stories. I particularly enjoyed working with the staff of Empire Magazine the Sunday supplement to the Denver Post, now long gone.

Fortunately, there was a creative and experienced staff. Larry Simmons, regional illustrator, was a wiz with an X-Acto blade and hot wax machine to cut and paste words and images for a final layout of a



*The Current Information Group: Lee Carr, Dave Steinke, Larry Simmons and Harva Lou Buchanan.*

publication. He was always in demand by RO and field folks to help them with a display or sketch an illustration. He could usually put their wild ideas into reality. Unrelated, were the hundreds of miles we shared on motorcycle trips.

I took no trips on a rubber boat with rafting enthusiast, our writer and editor of the old original Rendezvous, Harva Lou Buchanan. She was really good with words and press releases and speeches and all that stuff. What a nice lady and great professional.

(Continued on Page 18)



(Continued from Page 17)

The RO's video equipment at the time was a large B&W camera with an even larger reel to reel tape recorder/player used primarily in training sessions for critique. We "stole" Dave Steinke from the Pike/San Isabel NF and most of you are well acquainted with his story boarding, writing, shooting and editing hundreds of video productions for R2 and nationally, among other things.

### C-99, C-100, C-101, C-102, C-103, BINGO

That was the decades-long process of bringing the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 into Public Law. There were other folks involved with other Congresses before I became involved in the early '80s following a move to Wilderness Management in Recreation and Lands. The Wilderness Act of 1964 required the FS to identify areas without existing roads suitable for Wilderness designation. Our job was working with Congressional Aids trying to build identifiable boundaries void of potential conflicts that also met the Wilderness Acts criteria for Wilderness, and to provide the Chief with information needed for Congressional hearings. You often started with a new set of Congressional Aids and new boundary maps every two years.

It all came together in 1993 with political compromises and provisions in the Act. More than 600,000 acres in 19 areas were added to the Wilderness System. President Clinton signed the Act into PL 103-77 during a brief stopover at the Denver airport. Unfortunately, there was not enough time for me to get a security clearance to attend. My boss did give me a framed copy of the first and signature pages of the original signed Act which still hangs in our home. The Soldier Creek Wilderness on the Nebraska NF had been added in 1986.



*Wilderness Rangers Workshop, Routt NF, July 1988, Backcountry Skills competition, Two person cross-cut saw, (L) Lee Kirsch, San Isabel NF, (R) Linda Merigliano, Targhee NF R-4, Holding cant, Roger Keepers, Nebraska NF (B), Frank Swancara, Pike NF (F)*

### Passionate protectors

Another aspect of the job was management of existing Wilderness. All forests throughout R2 had a cadre of personnel dedicated to the concept

and management of Wilderness. Most were young men and women from a broad array of different disciplines. Some held full time positions and many were seasonals often striving for a full-time position. Most had many years of experience. Most would even slow down for a 50-year-old guy with the lightest backpack that was tagging along.

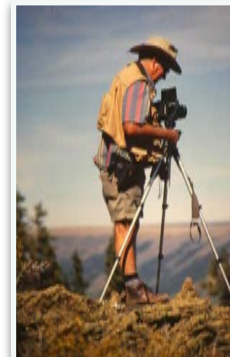
Some issues were unique to a few areas, like metal food storage boxes in grizzly bear country, but most issues were universal. How do you preserve the natural conditions and provide opportunities for solitude for recreation users that were growing rapidly in numbers. Education was a big part of their job; Human sanitation, dogs off leash, pack it in-pack it out, bringing camp stoves in lieu of campfires, keeping to the trails, wildlife needs, as well as many other issues. Restoration of campsites, removal of stone campfire rings, picking up litter and maintaining trails were some of the physical jobs.

I never saw a wilderness ranger coming out of the Wilderness without a bag of trash on top of his backpack, or llama or pack horse. It was their enthusiasm for the job that brightened my day. Even though they had disappointments for the untoward situation that occurred in Wilderness they still had hope that they would make a difference.

### Conclusion

Do I ever look back hoping for "the good old days"? No. As an example, I look at biologic evolution by natural selection (commonly called Darwinism) which has kept this thing we call life going for more than 3 billion years. The FS has also been evolving. Physical and social environments change, pandemics disrupt traditional ways, climates are warming, communication is more rapid, wildfire burns have enlarged, and on and on. The FS has evolved with a much better diversity in skills, races and gender to make better decisions that meet public needs. If I was a bit younger, I think I would join up again.

Isn't the Government's retirement system the greatest?



*Lee taking a shot of the Slumgullion Land slide from a high point near Lake City Colorado. Summer 2000*

## Western Slope of Colorado Shows Up

On June 21st a Forest Service retiree's picnic was held in Delta, Colorado. A total of 53 retirees and spouses attended. Most were retirees from the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison N.F., but there were others from the Regional Office, San Juan N.F., MedBow-Routt N.F., White River N.F. and Arapahoe-Roosevelt N.F. One retiree traveled from Arizona to attend.

A big shout out goes to Connie Barry, Karen Bergethon and Debby Barnhart for spearheading the reunion and also to all the folks who traveled from outside the Delta area. The group enjoyed time catching up on the latest news and also sharing old stories. The GMUG NF Deputy Forest Supervisor updated the group on current efforts underway and the evolution of the Forest Service post Covid-19. Martha Moran introduced herself to the group as the Western Slope representative of the Rocky Mountaineers. She told us a little bit about that organization and encouraged everyone to join if they are not already a member. There was some talk about an organized gathering this winter for a ski day at the Powderhorn Ski Area. John Almy shared his observations of the annual Memorial Grove Ceremony, which this past May celebrated the lives of twenty one individuals and their contributions to the Forest Service, five of which retired from the GMUG NF. It was a most enjoyable afternoon.



#1 Karen Bergethon, #2 Rick Oberhau, #3 Tim Garvey, #4 Connie Barry, #5 Liz Mauch,  
 #6 Howard Khaw, #7 Clay Speas, #8 Cathy Khlow, #9 Floyd Reed, #10 Jim Moran, #11 Nick Greear,  
 #12 Martha Moran, #13 Carmine Lockwood, #14 Andy Dobie, #15 Jack Cover, #16 John Almy,  
 #17 LeAnne Hunt, #18 Gary Shellhorn, #19 John Moore, #20 George Goehl, #21 Kathy Moore,  
 #22 Ray Kingston, #23 Cheryl Free, #24 Kim Ralston, #25 Corey Wong, #26 Sandy Rounds,  
 #27 Clare Hydock, #28 Peggy Dobie, #29 Dave Armlovich, #30 Anne Janick, #31 Jim Free

Present at the picnic but not in the picture: Kitty Tattersal, Kelly Liston, Steve Kelley, Mike Brown, Lee Carr, Nona Dale, Bill Hahnenberg, and Diann Ritschard.



## There are OTHER Regions?

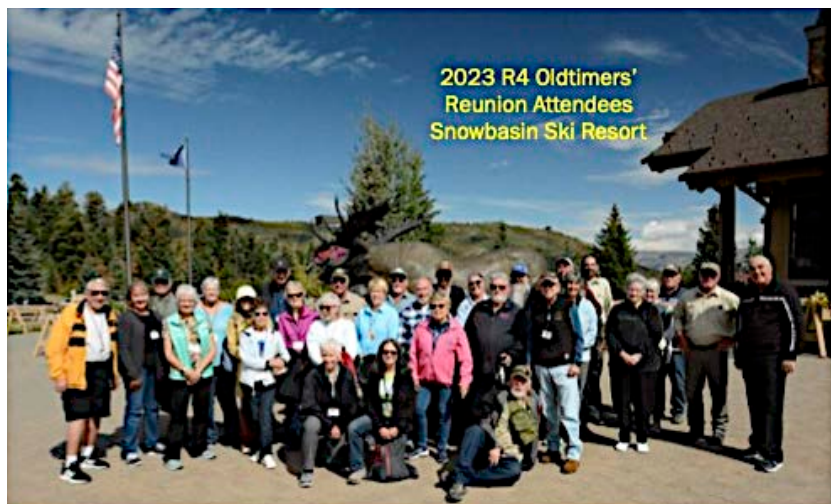


### The OLDTIMERS from Region 4

For all of the retirees who spent a little time in Region 4, the Oldtimers recently got together for a reunion in Ogden. Reportedly a good time was had by all and Roger McCarty, Brian Ferguson and Ed Waldafel took a bunch of pictures and put them into a little Powerpoint presentation. Here's a link if you want to take a peek.

[2023 Reunion Ogden.pptx](#)

Want to see their newsletter? Send a note to the editor, Ed Waldafel, for a PDF of their newsletter!  
[edandpatwald@gmail.com](mailto:edandpatwald@gmail.com)



## The Southern Region - R-8

### The SFSRA Newsletter

"The SFSRA Newsletter" is published two to three times per year and is included with the purchase of the annual dues. Articles, information and obituaries can be sent to the editor **Thurman Harp, 109 Dahlia Drive Griffin, GA 30223-5796.**

<https://www.southernforestretirees.org/>



### Old Smokeys Newsletter

Newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Forest Service Retirees  
[www.oldsmokeys.org](http://www.oldsmokeys.org)

Summer 2023



<https://www.oldsmokeys.org/Newsletter>

### Region 6 - The Pacific Northwest Retirees



## The Discoverer Blog

Something cool happens to your brain whenever you experience something new. There's a lengthy scientific explanation that involves words like "substantia nigra" and "stimuli" but the short version is that your brain likes to discover new things. And what better way to discover something new than by traveling the world?

People who travel are happier, healthier, and more creative. That's why we created The Discoverer - to change the way we discover the world. We wanted to inspire people to explore Earth's most incredible destinations, whether that means grabbing a suitcase and heading out on a new journey, or simply reading a story about an exotic location while curled up at home.

If you're a fan of national forests, you've probably explored many of the 155 forests throughout the United States. The U.S. Forest Service manages over 192 million acres of land, making America's incredible national forests one of the country's greatest public assets. Need some inspiration for your next national outdoor adventure? Check out these breathtaking national forests for hiking, camping, paddling, or simply relaxing.

[https://www.thediscoverer.com/blog/5-breathtaking-u-s-national-forests/XvHyVpKgiwAG5anc?utm\\_source=blog&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=1811423954&ST=RF\\_A](https://www.thediscoverer.com/blog/5-breathtaking-u-s-national-forests/XvHyVpKgiwAG5anc?utm_source=blog&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1811423954&ST=RF_A)



In the number one slot, just east of Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming is the protected wilderness of **Shoshone National Forest**. The forest was established in 1891 as the first national forest in the United States. Encompassing 2.4 million acres, this rugged landscape includes three unique mountain ranges, beautiful alpine lakes and endless opportunities for recreation. Visitors should definitely travel the Beartooth Highway, a National Scenic Byway that runs through Montana and passes over Beartooth Pass in Wyoming at 10,947 feet. Beartooth Campground provides access to several beautiful mountain lakes, as well as many high-altitude hiking trails.

*The Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness is the juncture of two mountain ranges with differing geologic types.*

*The Absaroka Range (pronounced ab-ZORE-kuh, the Crow Indian word for crow) is of volcanic origin, while the Beartooth Range (named for a spike of rock resembling a bear's tooth, can be seen in photo - upper right) is granitic in formation.*

The other 4 forests on their list included the **Nantahala National Forest** encompasses 531,158 acres in western North Carolina, just south of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Located in central Vermont, the **Green Mountain National Forest** surrounds the peaks and valleys of the Green Mountains, as well as numerous alpine lakes, the Vermont portion of the Appalachian Trail and several quaint New England villages. The **Stanislaus National Forest** is adjacent to the northwestern region of Yosemite National Park. This lush protected area is home to 78 alpine lakes, 1,100 miles of trails and 811 miles of rivers and streams. Located just an hour's drive from the Seattle metropolitan area, **Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest** extends more than 140 miles along the slopes of the Cascade Mountain range in Washington state. Because of its proximity to urban populations, this is one of the most visited national forests in the country.

## Bob Newlin - 36 Years in Region 2



Bob Newlin and Lorena Williams, PAO for the San Juan NF, September 6, 2023.

Robert P. "Bob" Newlin recently celebrated his 92nd birthday. In honor of Bob, I wanted to capture the thirty six year history of his Forest Service career.

Bob is a native of Illinois. Bob attended the University of Illinois and graduated in 1953 with a degree in General Agriculture. While in

college Bob was a member of Air Force ROTC. He wanted to fly, but due to his color blindness was unable to pass the physical for flying. Bob, however, attended Air Force Police School and then was sent to Japan where he was an Assistant Confinement Officer. Bob spent several years in the Air Force and when he was discharged went to Forestry school at Colorado A&M in Fort Collins. Bob graduated in 1958 with a Forestry degree.

Bob began his Forest Service career on the Mesa RD on the Uncompahgre NF as a "Junior Ranger."

In 1963 Bob was selected as the GS-9 District Ranger on the Medicine Wheel Ranger District, Bighorn NF. Bob ran the district with a part time clerk and a part time GDA (General District Assistant). Bob was stationed in Lovell for 4 years (1963 - 1967). While stationed in Lovell, Bob met and married Jan in 1966. Bob was eventually promoted to a GS-11 District Ranger while on the Medicine Wheel.

In 1967, Bob and Jan moved to Pagosa Springs, CO, where he was the GS-12 District Ranger on the Piedra RD. At that time there were two Ranger Districts in Pagosa Springs, the Piedra Ranger

*I recently did an interview with Bob and thought that this might be a good piece to include in the Rocky Mountaineers Newsletter. I believe that Bob is the oldest living retiree of the San Juan NF.*

**- Bob Sieger**

District and the Pagosa Ranger District. Danny Peters was the DR on the Pagosa RD at that time, and Bob and Danny became great friends. While in Pagosa Springs, Bob and Jan had two sons enter their family, Brett, 1968, and Kurt, 1970.

In 1974, Bob was transferred to the White River NF, in Glenwood Springs, where he was the Planning Staff Officer. Bob told me that this was definitely his least favorite assignment in his FS career. Bob was on the White River for two year and then transferred to the Regional Office, where he was in Fire Management (2 years) and Range Management (4+ years). Bob was in the RO for about 7 years and then transferred to the San Juan NF, where he was the Resource Staff Officer. As the Resource Staff Officer, Bob was in charge of Timber, Range, Wildlife, Fisheries and Hydrology.

Bob retired in 1992. In retirement, Bob continued to maintain his contact with the Forest Service and his many friends he made throughout his career. Bob ran a Forestry Consulting business for 15 years after he retired providing forest stewardship planning; timber, range, & wildlife management and prescribed burning planning.

Bob and Jan attended numerous National, Regional and local retirement reunions and gatherings. Bob also drove bus for a local rafting company for a number of years. He also drove bus for fire support when needed. Bob enjoyed hunting with his FS friends in many places in Colorado. Bob and Jan live in Durango, CO, and spend the winters in Green Valley, AZ.

Bob is very proud of his Forest Service career and especially for the friends he made over the years.

## Odds and Ends to Make You Smarter

### Tips for a new Westerner

How do newcomers manage this transition? Western writer Zane Grey never wrote a Code of the West, but it was clear from his novels that subtle rules operated in the 19th century. Key tenets were fair play, respect for the land and hospitality. Hit the link for more from the Writers on the Range.

<https://www.thespectrum.com/story/opinion/2023/08/11/writers-on-the-range-tips-for-a-new-westerner/70573358007/>

### American Climate Corps

**BREAKING NEWS:**  
*Biden Announces  
American Climate Corps*



A new initiative to train young people in high-demand skills for jobs in the clean energy economy.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/climatecorps/>

### Cocaine Bear

Ridiculous film - who authorized the use of the shield and Smokey? In director Elizabeth Banks' movie, actress Margo Martindale plays a gun toting forest ranger named Liz whose day takes a very unexpected turn when she crosses paths with a bear who has ingested a large quantity of cocaine. "She's no-nonsense," says Martindale of her character. Set in the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest in Georgia.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cocaine\\_Bear](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cocaine_Bear)

### Hot Shot Movie

"Hotshot" takes a unique look at the unfathomable world of the most elite firefighters in the world, providing a first-person perspective like you've never seen before. The Chicago Tribune calls #Hotshot "astonishing." Filmed by 1 guy over 6 years inside the biggest wildfires, it's a never-before-seen view of the craziest job on the planet. Stream Hotshot now on Amazon Prime Video.

<https://www.hotshotmovie.com/>

### Wildland Firefighters

Deputy Chief Jaelith Hall-Rivera, State, Private, and Tribal Forestry recently stated, "I know that some of you are living paycheck to paycheck and do not have the means to save for a rainy day. I hope that you find some reassurance in the news that the CR contains language that continues the firefighter pay supplement at the same levels of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law until Nov. 17."...

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/inside-fs/delivering-mission/excel/firefighter-pay>

### A Diet COLA?

The 2024 COLA of 3.2% is not nearly as large as the COLAs from the last couple of years — CSRS retirees saw an 8.7% COLA for 2023, and a 5.9% COLA for 2022.

The last few years of big COLAs means FERS retirees have continued receiving a 1% COLA deduction, the largest disparity possible. That came out to a 7.7% COLA in 2023 and a 4.9% COLA in 2022 for FERS retirees.

<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/>





## Where in the World is Jim Thinnese?

### Upcoming International Trips

The Rocky Mountaineers have three upcoming international group trip opportunities listed below. The trips are all planned for exclusive groups through Overseas Adventure Travel (OAT) with a maximum group size of 16 travelers.

Early payment discounts of up to 10% are available when paying by check or electronic fund transfer. An additional 10% rebate will be shared at the time of travel for groups with 11 or more travelers.

### ***Japan's Cultural Treasures*** **March 25 - April 8, 2024,**

We have one double occupancy room still available. The **base price is \$4,895** per person. Air transportation (from Denver) is available for \$1,900 per person (prices vary based on departure city). There's even a direct Denver to Tokyo flight. A 3-night Tokyo pre-trip extension is available for \$1,095 per person.

Details, including the itinerary, are available by clicking the suitcase below.

### ***Nepal & the Mystical Himalayas*** **October 31 - November 16, 2025**

We've opened for reservations last week. The **base price is \$4,195** per person. Air transportation (from Denver) is available for \$1,900 per person (prices vary based on departure city).

Details, including the itinerary, are available by clicking the suitcase below.

Yes, this trip is over two years from now, but we already have 15 travelers registered, it's full but I will keep a waiting list open. The Bhutan pre-trip is already completely booked (I'll keep a waiting list if there are any cancellations).



### ***Morocco Sahara Odyssey*** **November 6-21, 2024**

This is our latest offering. The **base price is \$3,895** per person. Air transportation (from Denver) is available for \$1,400 per person (prices vary based on departure city).

There is no pre- or post-trip associated with this trip.

Details, including the itinerary, are available by clicking the suitcase above.

Morocco may not be a destination you've given much thought, but it's OAT's top trip these days. Past travelers, including fellow Rocky Mountaineers, highly recommend this trip.

OAT has a promotion for new registrations on trips departing in 2024 - mention code ETXG 101 to save \$250 per person for new registrations before 8/31/2023.

We have 3 double occupancy rooms and 3 single rooms remaining for this trip.



## Remembrances



### Linda Austin

**Linda Austin** passed away on August 25, 2023. She was born on October 26, 1964, in Las Vegas, NV.

Linda grew up in Nevada, Oregon, California, and Colorado. She graduated from

Ft. Lewis College in Durango, Colorado with a degree in Geology. She made a lot of lifetime friends wherever she lived. She played a variety of sports growing up and in college. She was an incredible outdoors woman. What fun we had playing sports together and outdoor adventures. She had a lot of fun traveling adventures to see family, friends, and work trips. She also enjoyed crafts, puzzles, and cooking/baking. She was very active in her church, Community Church of the Rockies, 52 Weeks We Remember (Fire Organization), Wildland Firefighters Foundation, her community and many more organizations.

Linda had an incredible Federal career with the National Park Service and US Forest Service. She started her career with the Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grasslands and then she was hired by Rocky Mountain National Park (Grand Lake) in the Back Country

Office as BCO Supervisor. She has hiked almost every trail, ridgeline, peak, mountain, and cross-country zone in the park. She went on to Yellowstone National Park with the fire rehab crew and the YELL Heli-tack crew. She then went to Arrowhead IHC (Interagency Hotshot Crew) in SEKI (Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park). Onto Gunnison National Forest (range, wildlife & timber), squad boss for Gunnison River T2IA crew and filled in on the T6 engine (she got to see amazing areas in western Colorado). Then back to Rocky Mountain National Park as an ENGB/fire crew lead and filled in on the Alpine IHC. She finished her illustrious career back at Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grasslands from 2002 to retiring October 31, 2022, as 653 Engine Captain!

Linda made many friends wherever she lived, went to and worked with throughout her life. She will be missed deeply by many. We will miss her beautiful/contagious smile, kind/loving presence, loving generosity, and incredible sense of humor.

Linda is survived by her father, James Hagihara and siblings, Carol and Diane (Greg). She is also survived by numerous relatives in the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.



### Judy Dexter

**Judy Dexter** passed away on July 13, 2023. She was born in Rushville, Nebraska in 1953 to Lloyd and Eunice Dexter. She had older sisters Janice and Ilene and brother Gerald. Judy started work for FS in Wenatchee, WA as

a copy machine operator in 1972 and moved to Denver in 1974. She first worked in Building 86 at the Federal Center and over the course of her time in the Regional Office she worked for seven different Regional Foresters. Judy was a Rocky Mountaineer member.

# Remembrances



## Richard A. Dieckman

**Dick Dieckman** passed away on July 2, 2023. He was born in 1942 in New York in the Bronx to William and Irma Dieckman. He graduated from Colorado State University. He began his long career with the Forest Service on the Roosevelt National Forest and retired from the Regional

Office

Richard was much loved by his sister, Linda Kantor (Dennis), nieces, great nieces and nephew, his cousins, and his loyal and caring friends.

Rich was employed by the U.S. Forest Service for over 40 years, where he was lauded for his

dedication and hard work, and he proudly served our country in the Army in Korea.

After his retirement, his volunteer work teaching reading and math was a great source of pride to him. But most of all, Rich will be remembered for his gentle spirit, quiet kindness, wry sense of humor, his amazing woodworking skills, handcrafting beautiful guitars and kayaks, his love of the outdoors, hiking, kayaking, camping, and worldwide traveling. Dick was a loyal Rocky Mountaineer member.

Our family is grateful to all those who cared for Rich, especially Brian Morales, and his West Coast "family" Don and Debbie Virgovic of Bow, WA, with whom he shared countless happy times and great adventures.



## James P. (Jim) Dunn

**Jim Dunn** of Montrose, passed away in his home, surrounded by his wife and daughter, on June 16, 2023, after battling Type 1 diabetes since the age of 6. In 2012 he was diagnosed with a very rare, non-curable, form of leukemia. He even gave bone marrow donations for future research and in the end, a very

short fight with renal failure. He was born in Dell Rapids, South Dakota, on Aug. 31, 1950, the middle child of five to Carmen and Lorraine Dunn. At the age of 5, the family moved to Colorado and settled in Cañon City.

He graduated there, Class of 1969, where he excelled at academics, sports, and student government. He then went on to get a bachelor's degree, from CSU in Outdoor Recreation and Biology, followed by a master's in forestry. He worked for the US Forest Service for 40 years and during the summer he traveled nationally to supervise and coordinate the fighting of wildland forest fires, as an incident commander for aviation.

In 1971, He married his childhood sweetheart, Debbie McCormick. They had one daughter, Stacey

Meszaros, and she gave them three grandchildren. Being involved in his daughter's life, and his grandchildren's life, was very important to Jim, and while he would often have to travel hours, he never missed a game/meet, awards ceremony, band concert, or school play. He was lovingly referred to as Poppy, and many of his grandchild's friends and families still call him that today.

In 2009 he received the annual Lloyd McMillan Memorial Award. And in 2015 he was inducted into the Colorado High School Association of Officials. Jim officiated high school basketball and football for more than 35 years. He has also officiated wheelchair basketball for 15 years. And he coached the Montrose High School baseball teams for five seasons, even taking them to the state championship. He used overcoming diabetes in his own life to be active in area sports and to give back to hundreds of kids through their mutual involvement in local athletics. With the motto of "if I can, you can too."

He is survived by his wife Debbie of Montrose; his daughter Stacey Meszaros (Scott) of North Carolina, and grandchildren, Alexis-Jaymes Meszaros (Nate Navarro) of Georgia, Cooper Meszaros USAF, and Briar Meszaros of Washington, D.C.





## Remembrances



### Dennis John Eckardt

**Dennis Eckardt** died June 8, 2023, of complications of acute myeloid leukemia. He was born July 18, 1951, in Denver, Colorado, a third generation Coloradan, to Adam Eckardt and Virginia

Greenfield Eckardt. When Dennis was nine, Jerry Koch entered his life and became Dad. Jerry introduced him to fishing, camping, and the adventures outdoors. They became lifetime passions. In 1969 Dennis graduated from Platte Canyon High School where he played basketball, baseball, was in plays, and competed in a talent show. He attended Colorado State University where he double majored in Outdoor Recreation and Forestry.

He paid for his education by working on the Big Horn Interregional Fire Crew in Greybull, Wyoming, fighting fires “in every state west of the Mississippi, except Alaska and Hawaii, and Mexico.” There he met many of his lifelong friends and a waitress that Jerry thought was “cute. You should take her out.” Dennis and Ann Shelledy were married in 1975.

Dennis’ career in the U. S. Forest Service began in Colorado where he provided maintenance and groomed trails. His favorite job was in Wyoming as a wilderness ranger, spending 10 days in the Popo Agie Wilderness with four horses, living in a tent with a wood floor and stove, and being paid to do “stream surveys” (fish).

While living in Greybull, he groomed snowmobile trails before being hired fulltime for the Forest Service. For their first house Dennis, fire crew friends, and his dad took a house down to the studs and rebuilt it.

The next position was in Powell, Wyoming, where Dennis worked in timber, lived in the mountains in the summer, and Karen and Jerry joined the family. Then they moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado, and added Dan and Laura.

They moved back to Wyoming in 1986 in time for the Yellowstone Fires of 1988. Dennis led the crew that protected Pahaska. The next move was to Lovell as a district ranger, a goal since high officer for timber and minerals. The work in the field was wonderful; the litigation in court was school. He loved being the ranger. The final move was back to Cody where Dennis was a staff officer. Dennis retired in 2007.

His hobbies included golf (the Men’s League on Thursday), hunting (he provided 95% of the meat for the year), fishing (as often as possible), and woodworking (bird houses, boxes, toy chests, and cabinets). What he loved more than anything else was his family. Ann was his “best friend,” and the kids were his hunting and fishing companions, the best reason to travel, and his reason to fight the cancer. His grandchildren gave him laughter, joy, and exercise playing peek-a-boo and carrying them.

The family would like to thank their extended family, friends, and fire crew friends for their support and prayers. They extend their gratitude to the Colorado Blood Cancer Institute and Presbyterian/St. Luke’s Medical Center for the bonus 356 days they had with Dennis.

Dennis is survived by his wife of 47 years, Ann; Karen, Bob, Lauren, and Annemarie Stanga; Jerry, Tracy, Aubrey, Abigail, Annabelle, Owen, Amelia, and Elijah Eckardt; Dan, Louise, Elaina, Layla, and Dexter Eckardt; and Laura, Garrett, Gabriel, Elsa, and Ian Gfeller.



## Remembrances



### Floyd Charles Fowler

**Floyd Fowler** passed away on August 31, 2023, in Spearfish, SD. Floyd was born July 11th, 1932, on the Gasper Burley farm outside of Fowlerville, MI to Silas & Ida M (Diebert) Fowler. His eight years of grammar school was at the rural Briggs School, 2¼ miles

from the farm. It was a one room school with a wood furnace. He spent two years at Fowlerville High School and graduated from Howell High School in 1951. Floyd joined the U.S. Army in April 1952; he was assigned to Military Police School in Camp Gordon, GA. In 1953, he married a beautiful Spanish girl, Rebecca Navarro. They spent the remaining two years of military service together at Ft. Devens, Massachusetts. Becky gave birth to a boy, Lawrence Charles, the first of six children, on October 1, 1954, at Ft. Devens. Staff Sergeant Fowler was discharged in May 1955.

Following military service, Floyd enrolled at Jackson Junior College at Jackson, MI. He received an Associates of Science degree in 1957 and went on to Michigan State University on academic scholarship. At MSU, Floyd was a member of two honorary fraternities, Zeta Sigma Pi in the field of Forestry and Alpha Zeta in the field on Agriculture. He graduated with honors in August 1959 with a BS degree majoring in Forest Science.

He accepted a Forester position in Timber Management with the U.S. Forest Service on the Coeur d' Alene National Forest, Idaho. In 1961 he transferred to the Wallace Ranger District, in Wallace, Idaho as a Small Sales Officer and Assistant Fire Control Officer. In 1963, he transferred to Swan Lake Ranger District, Big Fork, MT where he was a Resource Manager in charge of wildlife, watershed, cattle range, timber, and special uses on the Flathead National Forest. In 1969, he transferred to the Lolo National Forest, Missoula, MT as the Timber Manager on the Nine Mile Ranger District. In 1978, he transferred to the Nemo Ranger District on the Black Hills National Forest, Deadwood, SD as Timber Manager. During his tenure on the Deadwood District, Floyd received a National Award from the

Chief of the Forest Service for introducing Cable Yarding Systems on the Forest. In 1989, he was assigned the position of Forest Timber Sales Administrator. He retired with 35 years as a Forester in January 1994.

Floyd cherished his family, which always came first. He also loved serving the Catholic Parishes at each location he was assigned to. His faith meant everything to him. He held various positions in parish life. His Christian faith was greatly challenged at the untimely death of his son Marvin Allen, 17. He joined his Savior while working on the Big Sky Ranch in Frenchtown, MT where he served as an Irrigation Supervisor.

Floyd passionately served many positions in the Father Szalay Council #6251 of the Knights of Columbus. His primary leadership roles were Grand Knight, Faithful Navigator, and District Deputy. He became an Honorary Life member of the First Degree in 1980 and in the Forth Degree in 1987. He also served in the Color Corps. The Fowler Family was chosen for the "Family of Year" for the State of South Dakota in the Knights of Columbus in 2004.

Floyd had countless hobbies. He enjoyed sports, especially baseball, and whatever activities his children and grandchildren participated in. He and Becky spent many years riding their road bikes and mountain bikes up Spearfish Canyon, to Belle Fourche, and several other scenic excursions in the beautiful Black Hills. He took several hunting and fishing trips with his son, grandson, and son-in-law, which included anywhere from Canada to Lake Texoma. His favorite was pheasant hunting. He also spent many hours woodworking and dabbled in photography, always documenting family memories.

Those left to cherish his memory are his brother, Samuel (Pat) Fowler, his children Larry (Marie) Fowler, Yorktown, VA, Brian Fowler, Billings, MT, Yvonne (Roger) Piane, Missoula, MT, Eric (Trayce) Fowler, Sturgis, SD, Angela (Jeff) Hebbert Huron, SD, his grandchildren Jessica (Dave) Schuster, Rachel (Josh) Green, Brandon (Callisa) Piane, Mandy (Brandon) Wipf, Jarrett (Abbey) Fowler, Sara Fowler, Zachary (Taylar) Hebbert; Lauren Fowler, Joshua Fowler, and four great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

(Continued from Page 28)

# Remembrances



## Sharon Green

**Sharon Green** passed away at her home in New Castle, CO on September 21, 2023. Sharon was born on September 11, 1946. She followed her husband's job to Glenwood Springs in 1971. She was a wonderful wife of 57 years and a loving mother and

grandmother. She retired from the U.S. Forest Service in 2001.

She enjoyed traveling with her husband, having fond memories of Hawaii and the Oregon coast.

She was also an avid reader, gardener, had an incredible talent for sewing and quilting and loved swimming laps at the Glenwood Hot Springs Pool.

She is survived by her loving husband Larry, daughter Tracie Green and daughter Brooke (Denton) Crofts. She was very proud of her granddaughters, Stella and Norah Crofts. At Sharon's request, no memorial service will be held. Sharon asks that each of you take the time to hug and embrace your family and loved ones every day.



## Ronald Lee Hassell

**Ronald Hassell** passed away on June 23, 2023. He was born to Ralph and Helen (Roper) Hassell on June 3rd, 1947 in Grand Junction, Colorado. A Salida graduate with ties to the Taylor Park area, he married Judith "Judy" Kay Francisco on May 23, 1970 and settled in Buena Vista.

Ron was a family man with a passion for the outdoors, love for his community and a heart for service. As an adrenaline junky he was always in pursuit of the next adventure. He was a founding member of the volunteer Chaffee County Fire Protection District serving over 45 years (Member, Chief, Board Member) and a Charter member of the Chaffee County Sheriff's Patrol/ Search & Rescue. Ron initiated the snowmobile trail grooming program in the county over 30 years ago, was a founding member of the Buena Vista Snowdrifters,

an EMT, an avid volunteer at Buena Vista Heritage, Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, his church and other organizations. Ron spent his working years as a police officer, local business owner and Forester for the USFS, where he fought and commanded numerous national wildland fires across the country.

Ron was a man of few words, a legend in snowmobiling, but a mentor to many often taking time to pass his expertise in forestry, firefighting, and the outdoors to his family and friends.

Known for doing things on his own timeline, Ron led with respect and authenticity and cherished his family above all else.

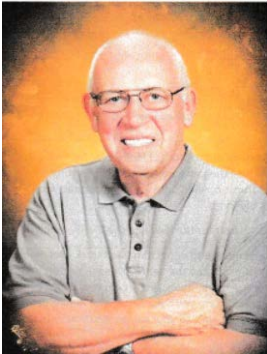
Ron is survived by his wife of 53 years, Judy Hassell, daughters Jacquelyn Schirmer (Henning Schymik) and Renee (Aaron) Nyhus, grandchildren Adam Nyhus, Kristin Nyhus, Kylee Schirmer, Jaidee Schirmer, Luka Schymik and Renya Schymik as well as numerous cousins and extended family.



(Continued from Page 29)



## Remembrances



### Gerald Gary Heath

**Gary Heath**, passed away at the age of 86 on March 15, 2023. Gary was born to George and Blanche Heath and grew up in Libby, MT. Gary went to Montana State University and graduated in Civil Engineering in 1960. He worked for the Forest Service for 33 years in land

management, balancing land and resource use with recreation and preservation. He worked on seven national forests across the northwest: Flathead NF (1959-1962); Idaho Panhandle NF (1962-1964); Gallatin NF (1964-1967); Colville NF (1967-1973); Mount Hood NF (1973-1984); Okanogan-Wenatchee NF (1984-1987). Gary concluded his career as Forest Supervisor of the Medicine Bow

National Forest (1987-1993) in Laramie, WY. Pat and Gary retired to Grand Junction, CO where he served as the Western Colorado Contractor's Association Director. He was an active member of Lion's Club and life-time member of Elks Club. He enjoyed the outdoors, including coaching baseball, skiing, hiking, and hunting. He was a kind, light-hearted person who loved his wife, children, grandchildren, extended family, and friends. He loved spending time at his log cabin in Montana that he and his father built when he was a young man. I hope there is a cabin waiting for him, with a walking stick, a loyal dog, and a fishing rod. Gary and Pat were Rocky Mountaineers.

Gary's wife passed away shortly after Gary on June 25, 2023, and they are survived by son Corey (wife Carla), daughter Tracy, and four grandchildren.



### Linda Kay Lanham

**Linda Lanham** died on May 14, 2023. She was born on May 25, 1957. She graduated from Colorado School of Mines in Environmental Engineering. Linda worked on

the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison NFs as the Environmental Engineer.



### Mark Douglas Lauer

**Mark Lauer** passed away, May 21, 2023, in Cortez, Colorado. He was born on June 18, 1957, to Willard and Audrey Lauer.

Mark graduated from Wichita Southeast High School and attended Concordia College in St. Paul, MN and Emporia

State University in Emporia, KS. Mark moved to

Dolores, CO, in the mid 1980's to work for the Forest Service at the San Juan National Forest. Although Mark was a Biologist/Wildlife Technician, his passion was fire. He worked several seasons in the Wildlife Organization while training for, and working on, the San Juan Type II Fire Crew. He became the Crew Boss and was later promoted as the San Juan Forest Fire Management Officer. During his tenure in Durango CO, he oversaw the implementation of an air tanker base at the LaPlata County Airport as well as the San Juan Hot Shot Crew.

*(Continued from Page 30)***Mark Douglas Lauer (continued)**

Mark was well known for his dedication to safe and efficient firefighting and to the protection of all firefighting personnel.

A strong and athletic hiker, Mark loved the outdoors. Fishing, hunting, skiing and being in the mountains were his passions. Mark rode in "Ride the Rockies" bike tour for several years where he rode with friends and several family members. Mark was a member of the Southwest Colorado Bassmasters and captured multiple trophies from their fishing tournaments. He also ventured into the cattle business in Ignacio and Dolores supporting his Godson Evan.

After retirement from the Forest Service, Mark saw the need for a good restaurant in Dolores where he leased and ran the Riverside Grill. He provided

employment for many and offered a social gathering spot for friends and visitors to Dolores.

Family and close friends knew the battle Mark was waging with a degenerative spine disorder that was stealing his mobility to hunt and hike but he continued to remain positive.

Mark is lovingly remembered by his father, Willard Lauer; Brothers, Michael Lauer (Diana), William Lauer (Pam), Sister; Marcia Harford (John), Nephews; William Lauer II, Joseph Lauer, James Lauer, Robert Harford, Nieces; Catherine Lies, Jessica Murphy, Megan Knutzen and his adopted family, Kay & Larry Fitzwater, their children and grandchildren. He was proceeded in death by his mother, Audrey Lauer.

**Barbara 'Bobbie' Brown Ledgerwood**

**Bobbie Brown Ledgerwood**, long-time resident of Durango, died August 25, 2023, where she resided at Sunshine Gardens in Durango. She was born October 13, 1924, to Alfred R. Brown and Annabelle

Higgins Brown in rural Cambridge, Kansas. She attended schools in Cambridge, graduating high school in 1942. She was one of eight siblings.

On July 25, 1942, she married Billy L. Ledgerwood, Sr., who was also a CHS graduate. He was inducted into the U.S. Coastguard in November 1942. Their first child, Billy, Jr., was born June 1943. She and Billy, Jr. welcomed Bill, Sr. home in January 1946. Two daughters, Julie and Nancy, were born while Bill, Sr. attended Southwestern College in Winfield, KS. Bobbie worked and Kansas.

The couple later divorced and Bobbie moved to Durango, CO to be near her daughters. She worked for the San Juan Forest Service as an Information Specialist for 7 years. Bobbie always said, 'It was

my favorite job, other than the job as wife and mother.'

Bobbie had many interests and hobbies throughout her life: homemaking, gardening, family and family reunions, travel, writing, American history and genealogy. She was a proud member of the Sarah Platte Decker Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Durango; the Manikintown VA Chapter of the French Huguenot Society; and the Baptist church.

She wrote and self-published her life story (*Secrets of a Cambridge Graduate*) so her grandchildren could know first-hand about life during the Great Depression - life without running water, a flush toilet, or electricity. She revealed relatives that fought in WWII and as far back as the American Revolution.

Bobbie is survived by daughter Julie (Scott) McCallister; brother Lynn (Bunny) Brown; daughter in-law Janelle Wulf Ledgerwood; 8 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and 7 great-great grandchildren.

*(Continued from Page 31)*

## Remembrances



### Gerald Lee Poe

**Gerald Poe** of Sandy, Utah, passed away on October 19, 2023, after a long battle with kidney disease. Jerry was born June 25, 1942, in Bisbee, Arizona, the eldest son of Leon Frank Poe and Laphrona Williams

Shugart.

He was employed by the Forest Service for 29 years, living in multiple places such as Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Nebraska, and Colorado. His favorite place was Paradise Valley, Nevada, where he lived and worked on a ranch for four years. Jerry was passionate about horse racing, and he was never happier than when he was in nature. He had many hobbies including rockhounding, hunting, fishing, bird watching, writing stories, and making jewelry. He made some of the most beautiful earrings, bracelets, and necklaces for family and friends. His jewelry will be a cherished reminder of his love for all those in his life.

In 2017, Jerry moved to Utah to be closer to some of his children and grandchildren. He treasured spending time with his family most of all. He enjoyed cooking, gardening, and sharing his life

stories with anyone he came across. He loved talking about his children and grandchildren and their accomplishments. He was so proud of all of them.

Jerry was a 1960 graduate of Superior High School in Superior, Arizona. He also studied at the University of Arizona and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Range Management. Jerry served in the Vietnam War with the U.S. Army from September 7, 1967, to July 4, 1969, earning a National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, and a Bronze Star. He was Honorably discharged in 1973.

Jerry is survived by his 5 children: Levi (Miklyn) Poe of Guthrie, OK; Justin (Andrea) Poe of Lehi, UT; Renee Poe of Sandy, UT; Tanner (Julie) Poe of Sandy, UT; and Lara (Banny) Umar of San Antonio, TX. Jerry is also survived by 15 grandchildren: Camryn, Clayton, Jaxon, Alivia, Journi, Avalyn, Nico, Max, Oliver, Marley, TJ, Troy, Riya, Kenna, Avren, and 1 nephew, Iric Burden.

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### Sandy Smyth

**Sandy Smyth** passed away on August 15, 2023. Sandy was first a seasonal compliance officer and then was hired permanently as an Administrative Clerk on the Salida Ranger District.

*(Continued on Page 33)*





## Remembrances



### Sam Leslie Suazo

**Sam Suazo**, 75, died June 12, 2023, at his home in Alamosa, surrounded by his family and under hospice care.

Sam was born in Alamosa, Colorado on August 23, 1947, the proud son of Samuel Suazo and Elidia Salazar

Suazo. He married the love of his life, Lynne Adam in Alamosa, Colorado on August 5, 2000.

Sam served in the United States Army and was honorably discharged as a Medical Corpsman. He worked for many years for the Bureau of Land Management and later for the United States Forest Service as a Visitor Information Specialist in

Estrella. For those who knew Sam, he was quite a character and a wonderful guy who brought much laughter to Conejos Peak. Sam loved spending weekends in the mountains camping and both stream and fly fishing. In his younger years, he enjoyed back country skiing with his wife Lynne.

He is survived by his wife Lynne Suazo of Alamosa; his siblings Dennis (Bernie) Suazo of Alamosa, CO, Becky Tonso of Monte Vista, CO, and Elmo (Stevie) Suazo of Colorado Springs, CO; his sisters-in-law Sherry (Dan) Price, Geri (John) Dessasure, all of Michigan; his brothers-in-law Mike (Debbie) Adam, and Tim Adam, both of Michigan; as well as his niece Rayanna and numerous extended family and friends.



### Charles (Chuck) Troendle

**Chuck Troendle** passed away on July 15, 2023.

Charles was born March 24, 1941, in Syracuse, NY, the eldest of four children of Francis and Rose Troendle. He grew up in Syracuse and graduated from Christian

Brothers Academy at Syracuse University. He received his BS and MS degrees from New York College of Forestry at Syracuse University.

It was at Syracuse University that he met his wife to be, Vineta. They were married February 12, 1966, and brought two daughters, Kathryn and Karin into the world. They lived in Georgia and West Virginia, where Charles began working for the U. S. Forest Service as well as his PhD in Hydrology.

In 1977, he and his family moved to Fort Collins to continue working for the U. S. Forest Service as a Research Hydrologist where he worked for many years. He completed and received a PhD in Hydrology from the University of Georgia during that time. His expertise as one of the leading scientists in the Hydrology industry found him sought after as a consultant, contributing to water-related projects, all over the world. Chuck was a member of the Rocky Mountaineers.

Chuck is survived by his two daughters, Kathryn (and Ryan) Erickson of Stanley, NM and Karin Troendle of Fort Collins. He is also survived by his sister, Patricia Ryan of Albany, NY; his brother, Thomas (and Annette) Troendle of Syracuse, NY and his sister-in-law, Leslie Troendle of Albuquerque, NM.

# The Last Word

By Tom Thompson

## The Last Word - "Tempus Fugit"

My how time flies by! It is hard to believe that it has been ten years since the Rocky Mountain Forest Service Association (*the Rocky Mountaineers*) was established, but the proof is on the signature page of the Rocky Mountaineers Bylaws dated **July 9, 2013**.

On this milestone for our association, it is only appropriate that I take time to present to all our members a "**tabula gratulatoria**". Yes, I did take four years of Latin in high school and still remember a few words and phrases, but this phrase is easy to discern...it means a "listing of congratulations." So here is my attempt to recollect ten years of accomplishment and at least ten congratulations that are in order.

Adopted and signed by members of the Rocky Mountain Forest Service Association establishment committee on July 9, 2013:

Interim Chair, Skip Underwood Fort Collins, CO	<i>Skip Underwood</i>	Date: July 9, 2013
Bjorn Dahl Genesee, CO	<i>Bjorn Dahl</i>	Steve Deitemeyer Wheatridge, CO
Bill Disbrow Rhinelander, WI	<i>Wm P Disbrow</i>	Johnny Hodges Fort Collins, CO
Lyle Laverty Arvada, CO	<i>Lyle Laverty</i>	Jim Lawrence Littleton, CO
Pat Lynch Encampment, WY	<i>Pat Lynch</i>	Dan Nolan Hot Sulphur Springs, CO
Dave Steirke Golden, CO	<i>Dave Steirke</i>	Tom Thompson Littleton, CO

- We have had great leadership since we started our association in 2013. Thanks go to Skip Underwood (2013-14), Kim Vogel (2015), Dan Nolan (2016), Sharon Friedman (2017), Nancy Warren (2018), Craig Bobzien (2019), Bob Sprentall (2020-21), Brent Botts (2022), Sharon Kyhl (2023) and now for the second time Dan Nolan, for leading us through our first 10 years.
- We have a great website and are so fortunate to have Bill Disbrow as our webmaster. Our website is loaded with everything but so easy to navigate. Bill keeps it up to date whether he is in Arizona or Wisconsin.
- We are on sound financial footing thanks to the support from our members. The Memorial Grove and Scholarship special funding has been especially important to continue providing these important Rocky Mountaineer programs. Ellen Hodges does a marvelous job of keeping our finances straight and watching our portfolio.

*(Continued from Page 34)*

- We have held steady in our membership numbers, and we remain in the mid-400's and always welcome new members...“the price is right.” Johnny Hodges keeps us focused on our membership and does a yeoman's job of managing our email communications. What would we do without Johnny and Ellen.
- We have published 32 editions of our newsletter, the Rendezvous, and believe it has been and continues to be one of best among all regional association newsletters. We are blessed to have Dave Steinke guide the production of each of these editions and Judy Dersch has also been our go to graphic arts person who brings it all together when it is time to put each edition in final form. What a team.
- We have sponsored 25 scholarships over the last nine years...providing a total of \$37,500 to the recipients of the scholarship program which was created in memory of Clint Kyhl in 2015. The Scholarship Committee, headed now by Frank Roth, works hard to ensure the program is done with thoughtfulness and integrity. The help we have provided to these young people is perhaps something that they will remember as they leave their mark on the world.

**Erin Glankler - 2015**  
**Abigail Hogan - 2016**  
**Anna Huckabee**  
**Delany Khung - 2017**  
**Wyatt Clark**  
**Sadie Hogan - 2018**  
**Zachary Barry**

**Truman Anarella - 2019**  
**Brook Beasley**  
**Karlee Nielsen - 2020**  
**Dawn Russel**  
**Matthew Mettler**  
**Casen Allman**

**Samantha Westfahl - 2021**  
**Caden Pitts**  
**Josie Kaufman**  
**Reece White**  
**Alaina Wray - 2022**  
**Micah Thompson**

**Emily Leane**  
**Amy Murdock**  
**Gracie Bragg - 2023**  
**Ella Hubert**  
**Evan Morrison**  
**Thomas Kaus**

- We have endorsed or sponsored at least seven international trips. These have been made possible by the outstanding work of first Johnny and Ellen Hodges and then later by Jim Thinnes and Cindy Dean working closely with Grand Circle Travel.

- **Ireland - 2015**
- **Italy, Switzerland, Austria, and Germany - 2016**
- **France river trip - 2017**
- **England, Wales, and Scotland - 2018**
- **Southern Africa - 2019**

- **(Trips were not taken in 2020 and 2021 because of the worldwide pandemic)**
- **Norway and Finland - 2022**
- **Croatia and Dalmatian Coast - 2023**
- **With upcoming trips to Japan and Nepal on the calendar.**



*Memorial Grove -  
 Photo by Lee Carr*

- We have supported the Memorial Grove for the Rocky Mountain Region now for 10 years, which has included covering improvements in fencing, irrigation, lunches for each of those ten years for honoree families and friends, engraving for the brass plates each year, and other general expenses. We are proud to partner with the Forest Service and thankful for those who work to keep this 100-year-old tradition alive in the Region.



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- We have held nine Annual Gatherings in Fort Collins, CO (2014) - Delta, CO (2014) - Cody, WY (2015) - Custer, SD (2016) - Durango, CO (2017) - Genesee, CO (2018) - Buffalo, WY (2019) - Woodland Park, CO (2021) - Glenwood Springs, CO (2022) - Rapid City, SD (2023).
- We have held ten official Rocky Mountaineer Ski Days at Winter Park/Mary Jane Resort, and these continue to be a great way to meet on the slopes and enjoy the Rocky Mountain snow. We are certainly thankful for Bjorn Dahl and his leadership in keeping this annual ski day going strong each year.

But wait, there is more...yes, we have accomplished a lot, but most importantly, if one examines the mission and purpose set forth for the Rocky Mountaineers ten years ago (see below), you will see that we have without question fulfilled our mission with flying colors. We have a vibrant, thriving organization that is destined to continue to be an important part of the Rocky Mountain Region culture for years to come. For all those who have contributed through their leadership, their financial support, or their continued membership, we thank you and hope you feel a measure of pride for being a "Rocky Mountaineer". We are also so thankful we have had the full support of the Region and especially thankful for the support Regional Forester Frank Beum has shown to the Rocky Mountaineers and retirees in general. "Gratias omnibus!"

## Rocky Mountain Forest Service Association Mission Statement

The overall mission of this Association is to enrich and add value to the lives of Forest Service retirees who care greatly about the agency and the Rocky Mountain Region by:

- Enhancing the connectivity of retirees, spouses, and others who take pride in having been a part of the outfit in the Rocky Mountain Region.
- Providing members timely updates of information about Association members, Regional and local happenings, meeting or special event specifics, special stories of historical significance, and other Association business.
- Encouraging local groups to either initiate or continue ongoing efforts to connect informally for lunch or other opportunities and gatherings.
- Ensuring there is opportunity for others who have special interest in the Rocky Mountain Region to also stay actively connected
- Helping retirees "give back" to the outfit through education and support to the resources and communities that defined their lives, and to other retirees and F.S. families needing special support.
- Improving the overall participation, ownership, and support of the Memorial Grove and ensuring that all R-2 folks deserving of remembrance are appropriately honored.
- Keeping Association administration effective, simple, professional, and designed to ensure a sustainable vibrant organization that represents retirees throughout the entire region and keeps them connected regionally and nationally.