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Smokejumper Magazine, July 2001

National Smokejumper Association

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THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER
ASSOCIATION

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
JULY 2001

SMOKEJUMPER



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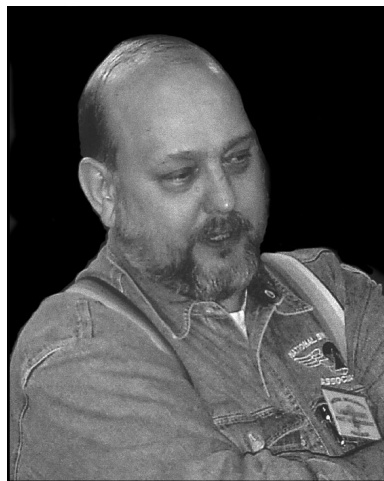
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Cover photo: *Herb Hidu coming into the Squaw Creek Fire on the Okanogan National Forest in 1956. (Courtesy of Bill Eastman)*

Observations From the Ad Shack



by **Larry Lufkin**
(Cave Junction '63)
PRESIDENT

THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER Association needs to start long range planning today to prepare for decisions that will be made five or ten years from now. Your Association has grown rapidly in the past year and a half, we have solved the most immediate issues, and we need to start looking to the future.

About two years ago, membership stood at 1,100 and we were having trouble maintaining even that number of members. Also, all positions on the Executive Committee became vacant, new officers had to be found and installed, and we barely had enough annual revenue to maintain minimum operations.

As of April 2001, our membership is nearly 1,900 members. These new members mean that today we have an additional \$16,000 per year we can use to provide more and better services to members. Last year, we had about 44 life members. As of April, we had 61 life members and another four are in the process of becoming life members. Chuck Sheley reports that he is grossing about \$4,000 per quarter from merchandise sales.

Here are other recent changes

you may have noticed. The NSA Board and Executive Committee now include members from nearly every base. We now have sufficient funding for *Smokejumper* magazine and it has increased from about 20 pages to 48 pages in length. Fred Rohrbach and Steve Smith, the two primary movers on our Smokejumper Video Project, have been able to sell video clips to other film producers. The sales of these clips, which many of you saw on Discovery and other channels, provided additional income. The Board and Executive Committee have met at nearly every base and hosted jumper socials that have been met with enthusiasm.

We are now at a point where we need to begin thinking about our future. We have a graying membership and need to establish a plan for recruiting younger jumpers as members and officers of the NSA. Our total assets have increased from about \$75,000 two years ago to about \$125,000 and we need to start planning on how the income from these assets can be used to provide improved services to our members.

To address this issue, I am asking for volunteers who will serve on a long range planning committee, and one volunteer in particular who will serve as the chair of that committee. If you would like to help out the NSA on this or other projects, give me a call or send an e-mail. ☎

**Deadline for articles,
news and features for the
October issue of
Smokejumper is July 15**

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Kickin' Cargo with a Bum Pilot

by Jeffery R. Davis (Missoula '57)

It was the summer of 1961, the biggest fire season I ever enjoyed as a smokejumper. I flew a lot of cargo missions in addition to the many runs I made dropping jumpers and jumping myself. This day I had a C-46 loaded with cargo for a large fire in Idaho's Salmon River country near the Forest Service's Shearer Airstrip.

As a new squad leader, it was my first season dropping men and supplies. The chief pilot of the C-46 was green, too. He'd just been hired by Johnson Flying Service as the intense season depleted the number of regular mountain pilots on Johnson's staff. He was basically untrained in the smokejumper/air cargo operation. So, an inexperienced crew sallied forth.

We arrived over our fire some 40 minutes after takeoff, and I quickly realized I had a poor pilot. His drop patterns were too high, and worse, he was flying too fast. "The faster the safer" is the code of the inexperienced airdrop pilot, but that attitude doesn't mate well with the job. "Low and slow" was the watchword for a proper cargo drop, and I faced a conflict. I was too new at my job and too intimidated by the pilot to tell him I was in charge of this end of the operation and that it was my responsibility to kick the cargo out safely and accurately.

In those years, we used a separate static line for each cargo chute. I had three to five bundles stacked in the door to push out on each run over the spot, depending on the bulk of the various loads. On my first pass I realized we had a problem: The pilot was flying the '46 so hot that the loads were "sailing" high instead of dropping well below the horizontal stabilizer. The chutes were opening far too close to the empennage for comfort. I didn't feel assertive enough to correct the pilot.

We made our second run over the spot and I kicked another load, this time five bundles. The loads streamed out, and before the chutes fully opened and broke free from the static lines, one canopy flew up over the tail. It inflated, held tightly to the tangle of twisted static lines. The loads finally broke free and fell below us, but a problem remained: I had an inflated 24-foot cargo chute tethered to the aircraft aft and above the tail. It was a drogue that threatened to pull us out of the sky as surely as a drogue on the ground will bring a race car or military jet to a halt.

We immediately started losing altitude and I could tell by the erratic motions of the aircraft that the pilot was no longer in control. There was only one thing to do before we crashed, free the tangled static line and release the parachute.

I was the only jumper aboard; my other "kickers" were Forest Service warehousemen, drafted to assist me under the pressures of the hot fire season when jumpers were in as short supply as pilots. There was no time to instruct these men in the emergency steps I had to take right away, and

the noise around the open door prevented communication anyway. In those years, our airdrop safety procedures were far looser than they are now. Pilots didn't wear parachutes, of course, and kickers didn't wear tether-straps on cargo drops. For some reason I wasn't even wearing my emergency parachute and neither were the other kickers. A C-46 crash would take a lot of explanation, even if I lived through it. Further, I'd just begun my drop and the equipment we carried was needed on the fire below.

All these thoughts were running swiftly through my mind as I grabbed the big emergency knife mounted aft of the door for situations like this. I reached out the door as far as I could to cut the offending static line, trying to leave the other lines undamaged. Without them, I couldn't complete the drop. I carefully determined what I thought was the culprit line and sawed it in half. Nothing happened; I'd cut the wrong one. And I wasn't far enough out the door to reach the entanglement. I reached out farther. One of the guys behind me had more savvy and quicker reactions than the others who were huddled away from the doorway in fear and confusion. **George Cross**, later to become a jumper

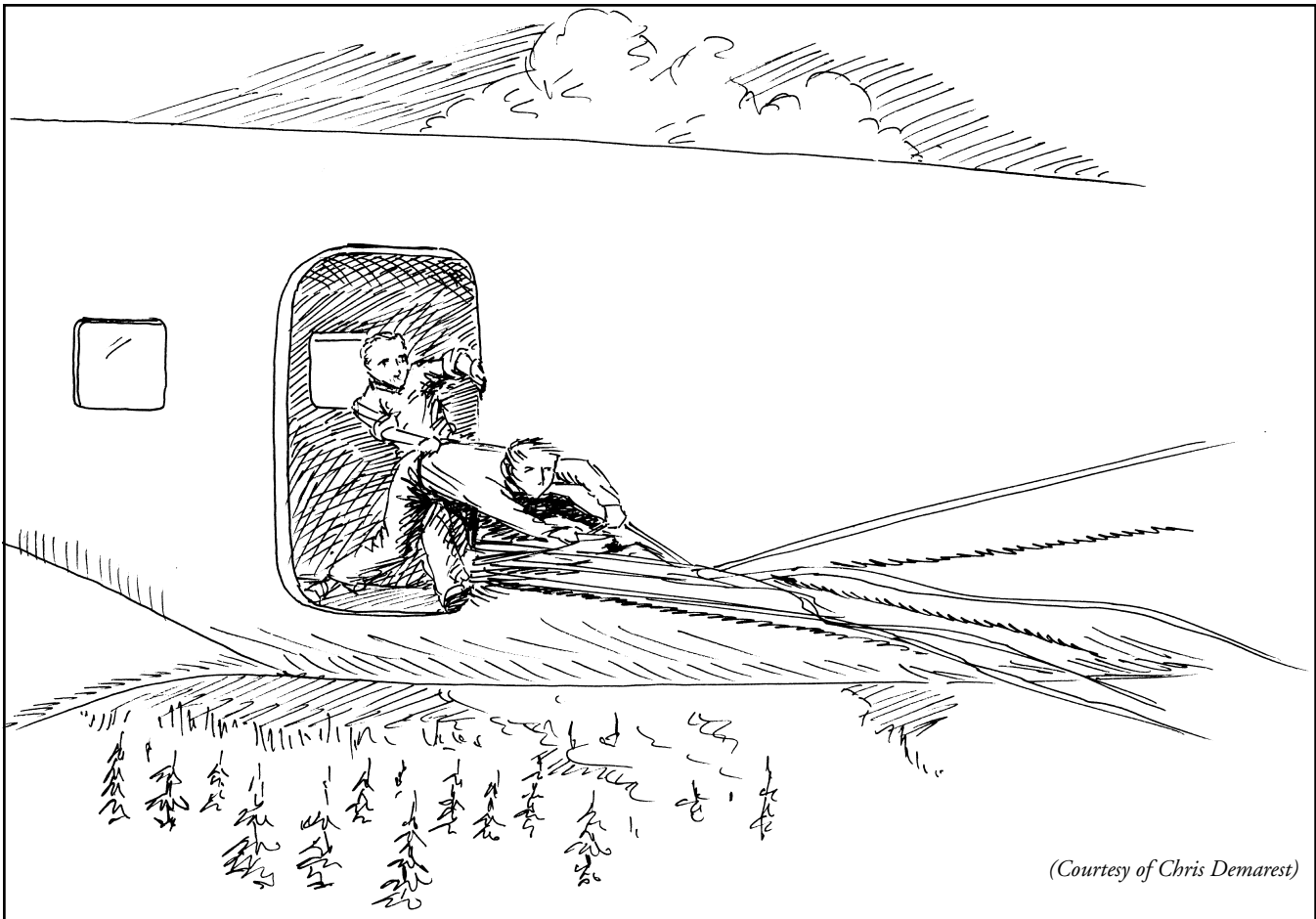
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(Courtesy of Chris Demarest)

(Missoula '74), grabbed my belt in back of my waist so I was able to extend over half my body outside the aircraft and reach again for the tangled line.

This time I was far less fussy about getting the right one. I started sawing away at all of them in frantic haste as the aircraft headed down at a sharp angle. I learned later that the pilot, having completely lost control of his ship, was simply guiding it down to the best crash site he could find. But there wasn't any "best" site in that country—nothing but timbered mountains and craggy rockslides.

On about the third try I finally slashed the right static line. The parachute flew off the tail and we were free. I had even salvaged enough static lines to complete the drop. I didn't know what the boys in the cockpit were doing about then; I was too busy dealing with the situation in the ascend. But that pilot put the ship's nose into the air and climbed to 10,000 feet where he orbited in slow airliner circles and took deep drags from his quickly-grabbed oxygen bottle. He damn near had a heart attack, I was later told. He was all for going home, but I had a load of cargo to drop and I'd finally had it with this candy-ass pilot. I threatened to write him up on our return if he didn't complete the mission, and told him to slow the damn thing down or I'd throw the cargo out the door without benefit of parachutes and blame him for it later.

We finished the drop.

When we returned to the Aerial Fire Depot a half-hour

or so later, I thought nothing of the episode, really, other than to process the shock of a near miss as I went about my wrapup duties of filing paperwork on the drop. But the pilot, I later learned, had been a bit more affected by the drop than I'd been. He parked his C-46 next to Johnson's hanger, shut 'er down, strode to the pilots' shack and announced in a loud clear voice that he was quitting, right now and for all time. We never saw him again. He probably went back to being an airgoing bus driver, as Johnson's real pilots called airline pilots, or maybe he quit the flying game entirely. I never knew and I didn't care. The drop was over, I'd learned a lot about cargo dropping in a hurry, and I chalked up the whole episode under the well-worn headings I mentally carried labeled "business as usual" and "other duties as assigned." 🦋

A native of Duluth, Minn., Jeff worked a single season on the Lolo National Forest, Montana, before he was selected as a Missoula smokejumper in 1957. He worked up to foreman by 1966, his last year with the Aerial Fire Project, when he transferred to the Missoula Equipment Development Center. There, he produced slide-tape training programs and helped develop parachutes and related equipment. He suffered a compression fracture and spontaneous compression of two vertebrae on a ED jump in 1978 and, since then, has been retired under Workman's Compensation and Office of Personnel Management programs. He is 63 and lives with his wife Claudia in Silver City, N.M.

Source to Sea

The following article was taken from the *Newsletter of the Kenai Watershed Forum* winter 2000 issue. "As far as we know, Dixon is the first person to run the upper section of the Snow River." In this story, Jerry tells of his journey and the observations made along the way.

by Jerry Dixon (McCall '71)

The source of the Kenai River is the north fork of the Snow River, just 15 miles north of my home in Seward. Flying in we pass over the section where the river plunges 600 feet in 1.5 miles. The cascades put my heart in my throat, knowing that soon I'll be running them in a raft.

At the Kenai's headwaters is a glacial lake that spills its contents into the Snow River every two to three years when the ice dam can no longer hold the water behind it. When that happens, this valley falls with a raging torrent. The river goes from 1,000 cubic feet per second to more than 50,000 cubic feet per second in a matter of hours.

A year ago when I scouted the area the lake had just emptied. Now it is almost full, 350 feet deep with glacial melt. Astounding! Thirty-seven billion gallons ready to spill into this river where I am doing the first descent. I ponder this as I fly down to land on Paradise Lake, a short portage from where I will begin my trip down the Snow River. If the lake breaks when I'm on the river, I don't think I would get out alive.

Paradise Lake is a magnificent spot, surrounded on three sides by glaciers and a stretch of falls 11 miles below. Between here and the falls I will encounter Class I to Class III whitewater in my flimsy, 16 ounce, backpacker's raft.

Just above the falls, I see a most interesting sight—a mountain goat walking along the river. I have seen many goats but always high on a cliff. Here they are so unmolested that they walk right by on the river! Then I step onto the sandbar and cross two sets of brown bear prints. It seems I have chosen to camp on a bear trail. There are large wolf

prints using the same right of way.

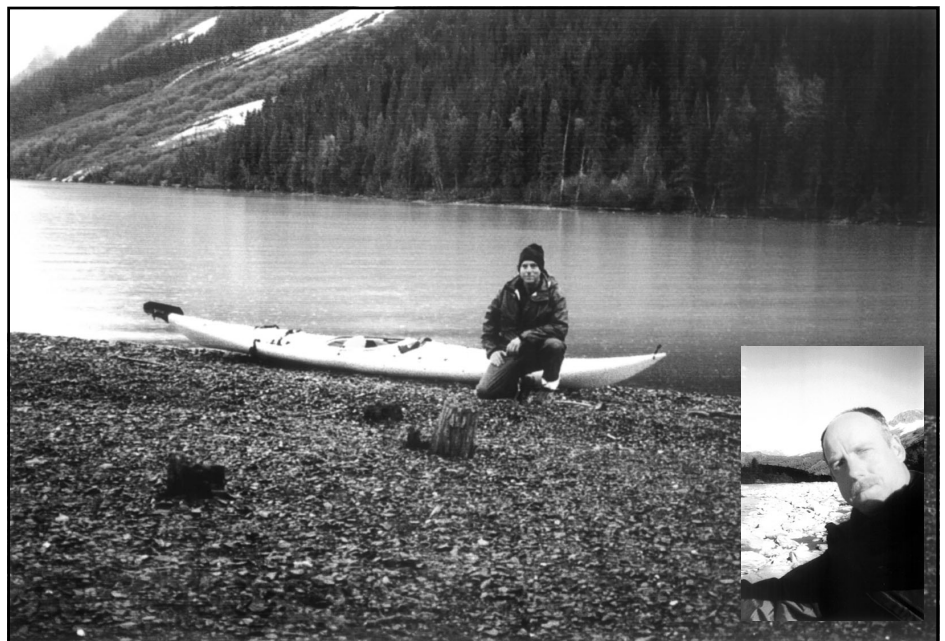
At Kenai Lake I trade my rubber raft for a sea kayak and paddle to Cooper Landing. In this section I see only one small fishing boat. The boaters wave. Essentially I have the entire lake to myself. Except for the beetle kill, this place looks the same as it did when I first saw it in the 1960s.

Even the Cooper Landing section has changed little. From the river, most of the bank looks in good shape. Only one place do I see people still throwing trash over the bank into the stream. On this entire section to Jim's Landing I come across only one other boat in the river.

Floating the canyon section of the Kenai River and paddling across Skilak Lake, it is so apparent what an outstanding resource this is and how it is available to all Alaskans and our visitors.

Hiking above Skilak I glance across the sun-drenched hills and see a brown bear running up a slope to the east. Its fur ripples in the sun as it moves. I am downwind and retrace my steps to find a snow patch to glissade away. The wind picks up to 35 knots and I wait for more than 24 hours to kayak across Skilak. On my second day of waiting I decide to put on my full drysuit and try it. I use all of my 30 years of whitewater expertise as the waves crash over my boat.

Living in Seward I paddle Resurrection Bay 12



Jerry Dixon on Kenai River 1999. (Courtesy Jerry Dixon)

months a year and have paddled when the salt spray froze on my boat. But the sea in January is still warmer than Skilak in June.

It is heartening to know that a pioneer would recognize Skilak Lake and the first few miles of the Kenai River as it flows out of the lake. Beginning at the Kenai Keys, though, the river winds through suburbia. From Skiik Lake to Cook Inlet, I find only one place to camp that isn't an established campground. Even the islands are claimed.

In some places the No Trespassing signs are posted every 50 feet for miles on both sides of the river! Try stepping ashore anywhere but at a park below the Keys and you will find, Keep Out, No Trespassing, Don't Even Think About Tying Up Here, Stay Off. Other than a sign advertising a bed-and-breakfast and one marketing hamburgers, I see only one sign that doesn't say stay away—A God Bless in Soldotna.

No one who knew this lower river from the mid-1960s and who sees it now can doubt the habitat destruction that has gone on. When you float it source to sea, the difference between federal land and that

which is private stands in stark contrast.

Something else that jumps out at me is the half-million-dollar homes with lawns flowing to the river on one side and the shacks falling into the river opposite them. The lack of planning is staggering. Only in Alaska would such a treasure be developed so haphazardly. Some owners have bulldozed right to the river and dumped a trailer on the clearing. Alaskans accept this as "progress" and "personal property rights."

My last day on the Kenai I float in the sun to the bridge with fishermen waving. Then I have a five-mile paddle against the tide and the wind. As I pass cannery row before paddling into Cook Inlet, the entire expanse of the Kenai Mountains is spread out before me and I hope that there will be salmon in the Kenai and wildness in the mountains for generations of Alaskans. 🐟

Jerry started kayaking while a jumper in McCall. He currently teaches gifted students in Seward, Alaska. He can be reached at: js2dixon@hotmail.com



(Courtesy of Nick Holmes)

LETTERS

Editor,

Troop Emonds' article on "The Tiniest Marine, The Smallest Smokejumper" was perhaps one of the best human interest stories I have read in a long time. I am sending it to my grandson at Annapolis. He and I have had several discussions over "respect" for minimum height folks, both male and female, who have the sheer determination to meet up to the required physical standards of the military ... and smokejumpers. We have talked about the 5' 6" person weighing 130-140 and is

able to carry a 100# pack, pace with a 6' 1" person weighing in at 180 and pass all the other tests.

I had the privilege of surviving a Marine Corps' screening program for OCS candidates with a 5' 6" marine. He was first up, first out, and last in as he encouraged the stragglers. He did not make the cut and there was no doubt in the minds of the 114 of us who did that he should have been #115.

Thanks, Troop ...

—Ted Burgon (Idaho City '52)

NSA SEEKS INFO ON JUMPERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Roland Stoleson (Missoula '56) compiled this list of jumpers killed in the line of duty. Forest Service and BLM records are incomplete, so we seek information from you to ensure historical accuracy. Please send any information or corrections to Carl Gidlund, 3700 Tobler Road, #C-12, Hayden Lake, ID 83835, or e-mail them to: gidlund1@earthlink.net. The corrected list will be a part of the NSA "yearbook."

Malvin L. Brown, (Headquarters Company, 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion "Triple Nickles"). Pfc Brown, a medic, fell 150 feet while making a letdown in the Siskiyou National Forest, Oregon on *August 6, 1945*.

Lester Lycklama, (McCall '46). He was struck on the head by a tree limb during a felling operation on the Fall Creek Fire, Payette National Forest, Idaho, on *July 4, 1946*.

The following, all Missoula jumpers, died of burns incurred on the Mann Gulch Fire, Helena National Forest, Montana, of *August 5, 1949*. Their rookie years follow their names: **Robert Bennett**, '49; **Eldon Diettert**, '49; **William Hellman**, '46; **Philip McVey**, '48; **David Navon**, '49; **Leonard Piper**, '49; **Stanley Reba**, '48; **Marvin Sherman**, '49; **Joseph Sylvia**, '48; **Henry Thol, Jr.**, '49; **Newton Thompson**, '49; **Silas Thompson**, '48.

The following, all North Cascades jumpers, died *June 23, 1958*, in the crash of a Twin Beech during cargo dropping operations on the Eight Mile Ridge Fire, Okanagan National Forest, Washington. Their rookie years follow their names: **Robert Carlman**, '57; **Gerald Helmer**, '53; **Keith "Gus" Hendrickson**, '47.

The following, both Missoula jumpers, were killed on *August 4, 1959*, in the crash of a Ford Trimotor while landing at Moose Creek Ranger Station, Nez Perce National Forest, Idaho. Their rookie years follow their names. **John Rolf**, '57; **Gary Williams**, '59.

Dale Swedeen, (Missoula '61). Died on _____ of a broken back sustained on a fire jump on *July 8, 1961*, at the _____ Fire on the _____ National Forest, (State).

Kenneth Salyer, (McCall '54) was killed *July 9, 1965*, in the crash of a Twin Beech during a cargo drop on the Norton Creek Fire, Payette National Forest, Idaho.

Arden Davis, (Fairbanks '66) was strangled on _____, *1966*, during an attempted letdown on a practice jump at the University of Alaska Experiment Farm, Fairbanks.

Tommy Smith, (Cave Junction '61) was drowned on _____, *1966*, during a packout from a helispot building project in Oregon's Kalmiopsis Wilderness.

Tom Reginnitter, (Redding '67). His static line wrapped around his neck on *May 23, 1970*, while exiting a DC-3 on a jump to the Oak Fire, Shasta-Trinity National Forest, California. He died of a broken neck.

Steven Grammer, (Redding '70) died in the crash of a helicopter on *September, 1970*, while working the Forks Fire, Angeles National Forest, California.

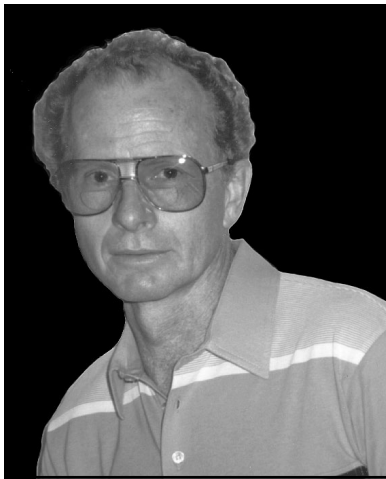
Bill Martin, (LaGrande '79). The Missoula squad leader died on *May 31, 1991*, on a practice jump near Missoula with the Quantum Ram Air parachute. His main did not deploy, and his reserve was deployed too near the ground.

Don Mackey (Missoula '87), **Roger Roth** (McCall '92) and **Jim Thrash** (McCall '81) died of burns on July 6, 1994, while fighting Storm King Mountain/South Canyon Fire on BLM lands in Colorado.

David Liston (Fairbanks '98) died *April 29, 2000*, on Fort Wainwright near Fairbanks during a refresher jump when his parachute failed to open.

Additional information on these men and the incidents that claimed them can be found on the NSA Web site, www.smokejumpers.com. ♣

Sounding Off From the Editor



by **Chuck Sheley**
(Cave Junction '59)
MANAGING EDITOR

THE NSA HAS CAUGHT A tremendous break in my estimation. On February 9th, four of us from the NSA met with the folks from Evergreen Aviation in McMinnville, Oregon. Evergreen is in the process of setting up the Evergreen Aviation Educational Institute. They have already constructed a \$16 million building with 121,000 square feet under the roof.

We were hoping that they would let us in the front door and consider having a smokejumper display somewhere in that huge facility. It was one of those days where "everything was coming up roses." Penn Storr introduced us to Institute president Bill Schaub and curator Tracy Buckley. What a meeting! There is room for the NSA in the Aviation Institute.

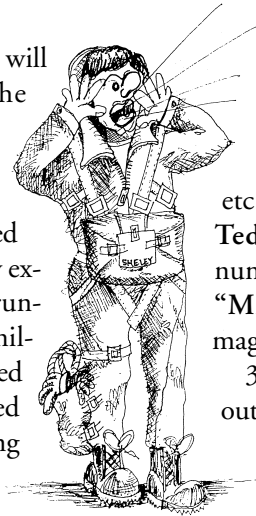
The feature of the Institute will be Howard Hughes' *Spruce Goose*, one of the world's largest aircraft which is currently being restored in a \$4 million project. Twenty-three aircraft will be exhibited around and under the 320-foot wingspan

of the *Goose*. One of these will be the Ford Trimotor. The smokejumper display is planned to round out the Tri-motor exhibit. Many details will have to be worked out. We looked at the many exhibits being planned and running in the \$500,000 to million dollar range. An expected 250,000 visitors are expected to pass through the building annually. The Aviation Institute should become a national showcase. The NSA is a small time player among some real big exhibitors but the working relationship between Evergreen Aviation and smokejumpers goes beyond money. I know that we can set up an exhibit that will be a highlight to visitors and make smokejumping an asset to the Evergreen Aviation Institute.

I would like to bring a couple more items to your attention.

1. You might have hesitated in submitting a story or article to this magazine because you do not have a computer or ability to type the document. Write them out with your pen or pencil. One of our members has volunteered to rewrite and edit your written articles.

2. We would like to start keep-

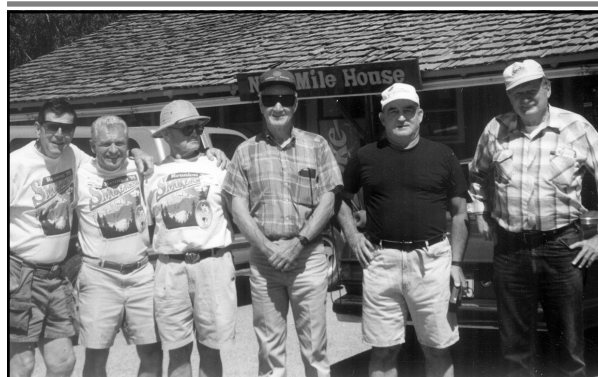


ing records of families that have had a couple generations of jumpers—father/son, father/daughter etc. Send this information to **Ted Burgon** whose contact numbers can be found in the "Milestones" section of the magazine.

3. Is there a female jumper out there who would be interested in becoming involved in the NSA's history and records? We need

to have someone start developing this phase of smokejumping. Again, contact Ted Burgon.

4. In the April edition of *Smokejumper*, the first of a series of "Milestone" articles appeared, "Record Big Tree Landing?" It is hoped that the reader will take part in this project to establish an unofficial "Hall of Records" for use in the future in the magazine and in the museum. Become part of the history of our great organization, don't be shy. If you know of an event that might qualify please send it in and give details and names. We will contact the others involved for their input. Even if you don't think the "happening" was all that important we might tie it in with someone else's story. 🐿



"Spending some of D.B. Cooper's Bucks." This photo of some old-time Missoula jumpers was taken outside the Nine Mile House during the 1995 Reunion. L-R Chuck Pickard ('48), Jerry Linton ('48), unidentified, Bill Tucker ('49), Jack Matheus ('48) and Jack Demmons ('50). (Courtesy of Chuck Pickard)

The Log of a Rookie Smokejumper

by Herb Hidu (North Cascades '56)

“Another thing, rookies, you will bring back parachutes and all equipment from all fires.”

The smokejumper training cadre Elmer Neufeld (Cave Junction '44) et al, at the North Cascade, Wash., base in 1956 did not consider the elemental forces unleashed with such an order. First, all of that flotsam with added rainwater must weigh over 100 pounds. The jumpsuit, two parachutes and hardware, sleeping bag, tools, food, water, kits, etc., made it a heck of a burden even under bluebird conditions. But add some adversity, a two-man fire in remote terrain, fatigue, weather, injury, and there is created a condition that would max out Paul Bunyan. But the rookie, to be well thought of, must return his gear. After all, smokejumpers cannot exist with poor economics. Consider this rookie's experiences with seasoned jump partner, **Bill Eastman** (North Cascades '54).

First fire jump: routine with four jumpers into a creeping two-acre blaze on Squaw Creek. We encircled the fire in two days, then left it to ground troops and proceeded out. It was a 10-mile hike, with up and down terrain and giant packs, the way smokejumping was advertised to be. Upon our return, I noted abnormal bulging blood vessels below a knee, and those persist to this day.

Second jump: Bill and I on a very small smoldering snag fire on a ridge of Wolframite Mountain, an eighth of a mile from the Canadian border. Dead and dying lodgepole pine with sparse clearing, I kept my chute upwind until a couple of hundred feet over the zone, then slipped to approach the postage stamp landing space. My chute just caught in the tip of a pair of lodgepole pines and I swung into a tree trunk. I unbuckled and clambered to the ground using convenient limb stubs. When the fire was just about out, I went back to the chute. The remainder of the day I spent sawing every freaking limb out of the 75-foot dead pine and half the limbs from another. I wound up with an outsized pile of sticks and torn panels. We packed up, and it was a tough time off the ridge, through jack-strawed lodgepole to the trail and a 25-mile hike to the road.

At 10 A.M. it started raining steadily, and it continued into the dark. The packs were now exceeding weight limits. We found weekend campers at the roadhead and scared the hell out of 'em when we bolted from the darkness with our tall packs edged in orange and white. I fell at their feet, and one of the guys offered me a large glass of Canadian Club. I bolted it down in two gulps. We broke into a ranger cabin where we slept the night.

Amazing, back at base no one asked how we did or how that orange and white pile of crap we used to call a parachute got in such condition. Maybe they questioned Bill, but not this rookie. I'd brought the equipment back and apparently virtue was its own reward.



Herb Hidu, years later, as a gentleman farmer still contemplating abandoned and destroyed parachutes. (Courtesy of Herb Hidu)

Third Jump: Bill and I to a small lightning-induced fire on remote knife edged Rimrock Ridge above Lake Chelan. The fire was very confinable, burning slowly in downed trees with no place to go on the ridge top. We used an adjacent snow bank to help shut things down.

Bill made a mistake by consulting with this rookie on the best exit route. Should we take the gentle but longer slope on the valley floor with an uncertain trail or should it be the steep slope much closer to Stahekan? The map says there's a distinct trail at the base of cliffs and on the valley floor. We'd go the steep slope. It was 8 a.m., and I thought we should be down by noon, still with adequate food.

I tried dragging my gear with a hand-fashioned Indian travois as used on the Lewis & Clark expedition, but we soon encountered formidable cliffs and threw our packs down to rock shelves. Indian traverse method abandoned. “Bill,” I asked, “Is there any chance of rattlesnakes in these rock formations we are negotiating?”

At the base there wasn't a trail, just a wide impenetrable alder swamp. We penetrated the thicket and found a stream small enough to wade but with a current strong enough to knock down a racehorse, and it was gonad-shriveling cold. Our packs grew heavier with periodic dunkings. We picked our way downstream for several hours, the canyon walls narrowing. Then there was a roaring sound, and we entered a flume ending in a 30-foot waterfall. We threw our packs from the top ledge, shimmied down leaning dead trees to the base of the falls, and finally reached valley floor at dusk. The food was gone and there was no trail. We decided to sleep there and find the trail the next morning.

At dawn, the trail still wasn't evident under the large trees, but we decided to beat down-valley until something appeared. At that point this rookie decided to leave my pack

under a large tree and proceed into the unknown unimpeded. I thought it expedient to at least save this most valuable two-legged piece of equipment. They'd like that back at base. Bill kept his gear. A couple of miles down-valley a trail appeared by Agnes Creek. We encountered a fisherman who offered ham sandwiches that I bolted down like the previously mentioned-whiskey. We hiked 10 miles more to Stahekan at the head of Lake Chelan. There, we found a cliffside restaurant, and I consumed a whole boysenberry pie to the amazement of management.

Back at the base nobody asked, "How did you do? Have any trouble? Where is the parachute?" Nothing. Maybe they debriefed Bill, but not this rookie.

Fourth Jump: Back again to what smokejumping was advertised to be, a hundred-acre fire on steep slopes high on the McAllister Creek Ridge of Mt. Baker. It was crowning at mid-day, and a dozen jumpers were put down in the burn area in the late afternoon. We built a 100-yard firebreak from the burn to a cliff to corral a possible blowup from below. At 1 p.m. the next day, this rookie, manning the break, heard what he thought was a freight train out of sight in the valley below. A crown fire in 30-foot trees was rapidly approaching sparse fuel just below the line. The crown fire turned into a quick-running surface fire through what looked like bare ground. There was ground fire everywhere, and we jumpers escaped to the burned area. Then, the fire jumped the break on a 50-yard front. An awesome sight, it burned through camp, crowned again and finally stopped at the rocky ridge top.

We inspected the burned-out camp and found tins of hams opened and simmering to perfection, just in time for lunch. That evening, to prevent another mid-day conflagration, we lit fires in the islands of trees that had somehow been spared. The next day many ground troops arrived from

the valley and eventually encircled the fire. We had a pleasant hike off Mt. Baker then enjoyed a boat trip down Diablo Lake. To top that, we rode in an ancient Ford Trimotor from the town of Concrete to Winthrop. No trouble with unwieldy packs on this one.

And no comments from management when we returned to base. I mused a lot about this inscrutable group of people on my trip back to Connecticut that fall and in later years. It must be the unwritten code of the smoke-jumper: Nobody compliments anybody, and nobody gets patted on the back for a "mission impossible." Must be too many mission impossibles to worry about that kind of thing.

"There's a fire back there, the Noorduyn Norseman is gassed and warmed up. Are you going to suit up and board that jump plane or aren't you? And rookie, we are counting on you to bring back all of that expensive equipment."

After 45 years I still feel guilty about leaving that chute, but I don't know why since we saved half the State of Washington a couple of times. Did they go back and get it? Nobody ever said. Guess I'll just never know. 🙄

Herb, prior to his college and smokejumper experience, was in the 82nd Airborne Division. He received a bachelors in fisheries management from the University of Connecticut in 1958 and subsequently received a masters in zoology at Penn. State and a Ph.D. in zoology at Rutgers University. Through the late 1960s he conducted shellfisheries research for the University of Maryland on Chesapeake Bay. In 1970 he moved to the University of Maine and carried out research that helped launch new enterprise in oyster, clam and mussel culture. In retirement (1992) Herb maintains a small farm. His old jump partner, Bill Eastman, found him on the Internet providing the stimulus for this article.

Can You Help Me and the NSA?

by Chuck Sheley

When I took over the NSA merchandising in October of 1998, I promised to develop new products, change the marketing strategy and increase the volume of business. All of that has been done. Total dollar volume has increased 20 times. Last year I handled an *average of three orders a day—seven days a week.*

My emphasis has shifted to *Smokejumper* magazine which usually starts at 0630 on a daily basis and help is needed with the merchandising effort.

Somewhere out there in Jumperland is someone who could help me. Here's what I have in mind:

1. Find a person who could package, address and mail NSA orders on a timely basis.

Please remember that all work is done on a voluntary basis in order to get the most return to the NSA. You would be reimbursed for mailing expenses.

What would that person need?

1. *E-mail*—rapid working contact is needed.

2. *Storage room* in your house. We ship USPS Priority Mail. They supply the boxes but the boxes have to be put together and

stored. Merchandise would also have to be stored.

3. *Time*—I like to fill and ship orders ASAP to keep the customers happy. Can you do three trips to the post office weekly? Do you have reasonable access and travel distance to the post office?

How would this work?

1. You would be supplied with stock items which are ordered on a regular basis. I will handle the special order items, e.g. the sweatshirts and jackets.

2. Orders to fill would be forwarded to you via email. You would package, address and fill that order on a timely basis.

3. You would be reimbursed for postal charges at the end of the month from your receipts.

4. If you take time off for vacation, no problem, I continue to handle the operation as I do now. This would also allow me to leave home while you handle the job. This is a team effort.

The NSA is making some big strides but we need to spread the workload. Think this over and let me know if you are willing to help out. My contact: cnkgshley@earthlink.net

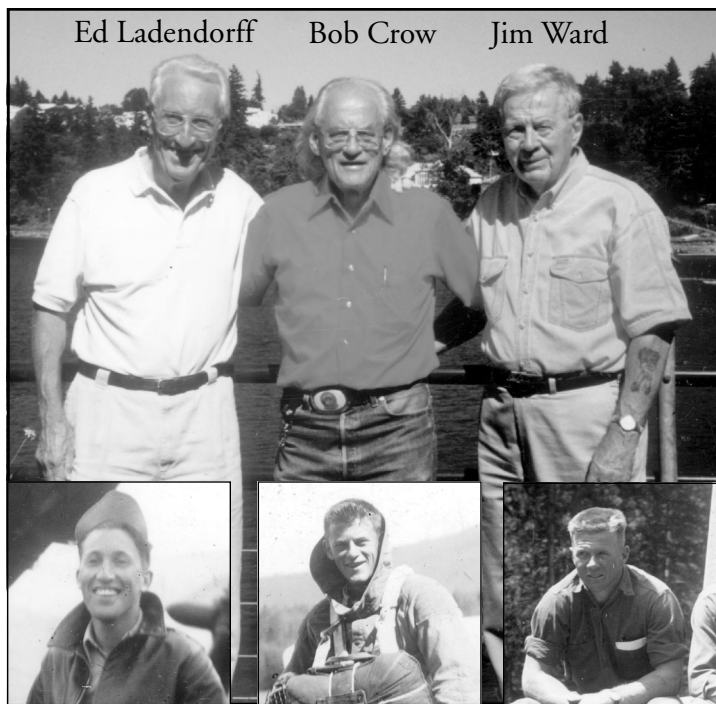


A REUNION OF OLD FRIENDS

In May of 1946, **Jim Ward**, just out of four years with the Marines, joined the smokejumpers in Missoula. **Ed Ladendorff**, a B-17 navigator with 29 missions over Germany, and **Bob Crow**, who served in the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment also rookied that year. The three of them became close friends jumping fires and working at ranger stations in the local forests over the next three seasons. Jim left after the '48 season but both Bob and Ed jumped one more year in 1949.

In July of 2000 they met at Jim and Joyce Ward's home in Lake Oswego, Oregon, for their first reunion in 52 years! Ed flew up from his home in San Antonio and Bob came over from his place in Miles City, Montana. Bob still rides a motorcycle but decided that flying was easier for this trip.

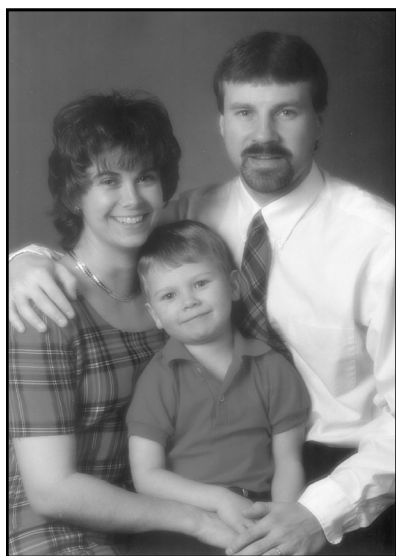
It was non-stop talking for three days, as they relived their experiences in WWII and the smokejumpers. A short tour of a submarine left them convinced that jumping from an airplane was a hell of a lot better than submarine duty. They also agreed not to wait so long for their next reunion. 🐿



Smokejumper Magazine Thanks Melody Martinsen

Contributing copy editor Melody Martinsen, 35, of Choteau, Mont., has 15 years experience in the news industry and has a personal link to smokejumpers—she married **Jeff Martinsen** (Grangeville '87) in May of 1989.

A Montana native, she grew up on a sheep and cattle



Melody, Jeff and Madison Martinsen.
(Courtesy of Melody Martinsen)

ranch at Bynum, Mont., attended a four-room rural elementary school and graduated from high school in the larger near-by town of Choteau. Jeff moved to Bynum from Castle Rock, Wash., in 1980, and they went to high school together and were in the same graduating class.

After graduating from high school in 1983, Jeff and Melody went their separate ways. She attended the University of Montana

in Missoula, graduating in 1987. In college, she worked for the student newspaper and was a member of university marching and symphonic bands. After college, she worked for the regional daily, the Great Falls, Mont., *Tribune*, as a reporter and copy editor for three years.

After the summer of fires in 1988, she and Jeff, a Missoula-trained smokejumper, started dating while he was doing off-season work for the Rocky Mountain Ranger District and living in Bynum again. They were married in 1989, and he left the life of a seasonal smokejumper behind, just two jumps short of his 50th jump pin. "That's something he'll never let me live down," she says, adding that she hopes he will someday get that 50th jump accomplished.

In the summer of 1990, both at age 24, they purchased the *Choteau Acantha* weekly newspaper and moved back to Choteau to operate the newspaper and commercial printing company.

"We felt very strongly about returning to our home town and bucking the trend of the 'brain drain' that saps Montana of its young people," she says. "I had never envisioned myself as a community newspaper editor, but I love it now, and I am very content to raise our son here and to invest in this town."

As a weekly newspaper editor, she has won writing awards in the Montana Newspaper Association Better Newspaper Contest. In 1997 she was named the Montana Jaycees Outstanding Young Montanan.

She was a member of the Montana Newspaper Association board of directors and became the third woman to serve as MNA president for the 1996–97 term. She is active in the Choteau Jaycees and the Choteau Chamber of Commerce.

She enjoys writing, reading, playing her clarinet, camping and running.

The Martinsens' son, Madison, 4, thinks he would like to be a cowboy, a doctor, a rancher and a smokejumper when he grows up. "Madison loves climbing to high places and jumping off, so I think there must be 'smokejumper' blood in him," Melody says. 🐿

Memoirs of a Lookout

by Bob Scott (Associate)

[Part One]

In the summer of 1938 I had a chance to work on a few grass fires near Okanogan and got acquainted with the local warehouseman. He called me later the next week and asked me if I'd like to take a job as a relief lookout for a man going to guard-training school. I reported to Walt Anderson, the fire-suppression officer, and had a one-hour orientation on the duties of a lookout.

I was soon up on Leecher Mountain in the Twisp Ranger District. After four days I was taken back to Okanogan, and shortly after July 4, I was asked if I'd like a lookout job in the Winthrop District. I was stationed on Peanygin Peak, a 6,600-foot mountain overlooking the Methow Valley.

I enjoyed the outdoors and soon settled down to the routine. Luckily, I had the *Guard Training Manual* to study and to fill in all I had not learned in my brief orientation in the Okanogan Office. Because I had taken botany classes at college the year before, it was very interesting to study the plants in the area. I was sent on several hikes to learn the country and get used to finding my way around with a compass.

Because my station had no phone, I had to report smokes by SPF radio to Howard Culp on North Twenty-Mile Lookout. I got to chase one smoke, which was a good lesson. Except for the several false smokes I reported, the summer was relatively uneventful. We had no storms during the time I was on station. When the station was closed, Howard asked me to hike up to see him at North Twenty-Mile Lookout.

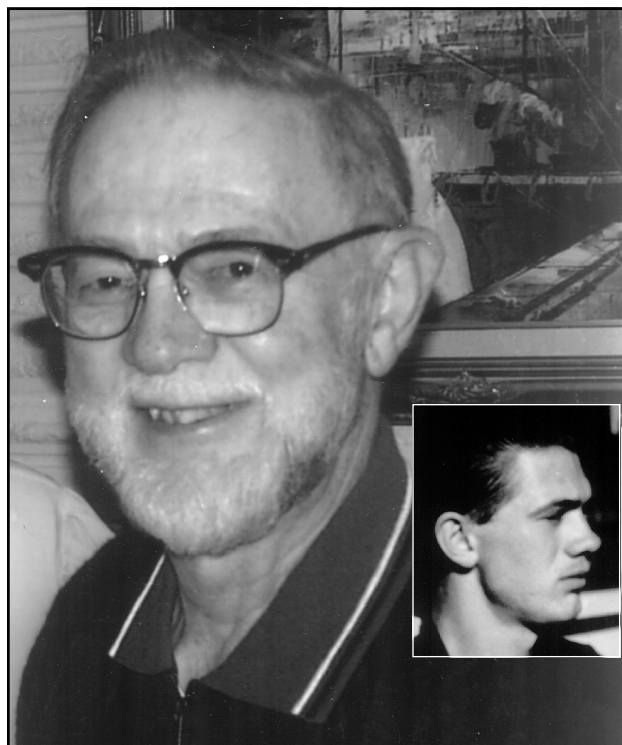
The hike was 13 miles. I packed up with Howard's mail and a few groceries for the trip, and set out. I was lucky as the district packer came along and gave me a ride for the last four miles of the thirteen.

That night the whole North Cascades was hit by a severe storm. The lookout house had a cupola, in which Howard logged the fires, while Fred Yockey and I spotted strikes that produced fires. Most of the fires were rained out before morning.

After sunup we could still see several smokes. One was on North Twenty-Mile Creek about three miles south of the station. Frank Burge, district ranger, suggested that I chase the fire for experience and that the smokejumpers would come along to back me up, if necessary. The smokejumpers, he said, had been practicing most of the summer, but had no real fires on which to jump.

I quickly found the fire and lined it (it was only about 50 by 100 feet). That done, I sat down and waited for the plane. I was really excited when the plane arrived and the smokejumpers jumped out.

I was surprised at how easily it was to converse with the smokejumpers as they came drifting down. I thought that maybe they couldn't see the fire, as it was not smoking, and because they drifted away up the hill.



Bob Scott. (Courtesy of Bob Scott)

George Honey, whom I got to know well later, shouted that they had spotted a better place for landing with their chutes. I hiked up the hill and found that they had picked what at first looked like an open grassy place, but turned out to be a pond that was almost dried up. George was in the pond up above his knees in the muck. He had to get out of his jump suit and wade ashore in his underdrawers!

Virgil Derry was suspended in his harness about fifteen feet up in a snag that had speared his chute.

After a period of good-natured banter, they hiked down to the fire and pronounced that it was "okay."

As I hiked back to the lookout I got turned around on a level part of the ridge and I had to resort to my compass and map to get my directions.

I'll never forget seeing George and Virgil make their first jump on a fire. 🦅

Bob Scott lived on a ranch just south of the Intercity Airport where the NCSB smokejumper base is located. During the summers he worked as a firefighter and a lookout fireman. During WWII he spent three years as a flight instructor in the Army Air Corps. After graduating from Eastern Washington College, Bob taught science at the junior high school level retiring in 1984 after teaching 37 years at the same school.

Who We Are, and Where We Come From

By Carl Gidlund (Missoula '58)

Membership Chair **Fred Cooper** (North Cascades '62) has compiled a mass of statistics depicting the NSA membership and the U.S. smokejumper program as of February 2001.

Smokejumpers and the NSA

Based on findings by NSA researchers, 5,306 men and women have trained as smokejumpers in the US since 1940. That includes those employed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management plus members of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion whose headquarters was Pendleton, Ore. The 555th was an Army paratrooper unit loaned to the Forest Service in the summer of 1945.

Of that total, 1,532, or 29 percent of all jumpers trained, are members of the NSA. About 8 percent, roughly 425, of those are dead, so about 32 percent of all living smokejumpers are Association members.

Membership by Base

West Yellowstone, which 25 jumpers refer to as their "home" base, has the highest percentage of members. A total of 11, or 44 percent of the 25 jumpers that have been assigned to that base, are NSA members. Following are statistics related to the number of jumpers with initial assignments at other bases and their percentage of participation in the Association

	No. of Jumpers	No. of NSA Members	NSA Membership %
Idaho City	136	56	41
Cave Junction	394	142	36
Redding	446	152	34
Missoula	2162	710	33
Winthrop	445	125	28
LaGrande	43	11	26
Fairbanks	215	54	25
McCall	705	179	25
Grangeville	80	18	23
Redmond	355	67	19
Boise	88	16	18
Anchorage	36	5	14
Pendleton	173	2	1

Membership by Year Trained

Not surprisingly, nearly 100 percent—60 of the 61 rookies trained in 2000—are NSA members. That's because the Association gives a free one-year membership to each man and woman who graduates.

That percentage drops off sharply following their rookie years; only seven of the 40 jumpers trained in 1999—18

percent—"repped" to retain their NSA memberships.

The statistics rise and fall for the preceding years. Thirty-five percent, or 20 of the 57 jumpers trained in '98, are Association members, but only 3 of the 42 – 7 percent—who rookieed in 1997 are still paying their dues.

Membership statistics rise and fall from 1997 to 1966, varying from a low of 8 percent for the 48 jumpers who trained in '89 to a high of 41 percent-or 11 members—from the 27-member rookie class of '72.

The big bulge in membership occurs from 1947 to 1965. Nostalgic "old-timers" are obviously the backbone of the Association, with 46 percent of the 44 jumpers trained in '60 members of the NSA.

Again, the numbers rise and fall, but the lowest percentage of membership in those years is 25 percent for the class of 1950. There are 21 Association members of the 84 trained that year.

Membership for earlier years, from 1940 through 1946, varies from a high of 27 percent-three of the 11 jumpers trained in the first smokejumping season-to a low of 6 percent—20 of 301—who graduated in the rookie class of '45.

NSA Membership

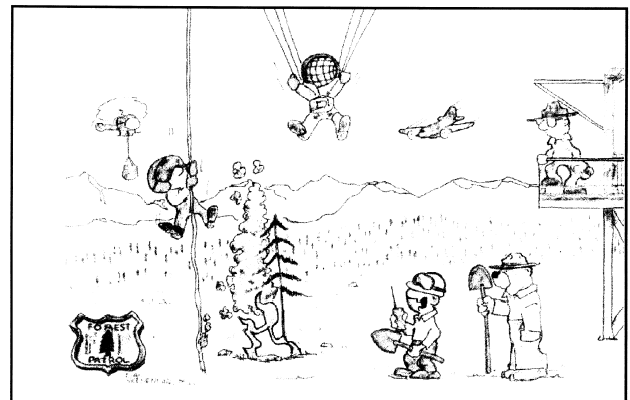
NSA membership leapt from 1,579 in Sept. 2000 to 1,845 in Feb. 2001. Associate membership took the biggest leap, from 222 to 284, as many jumper "wannabes" joined the Association to obtain employment information and application forms through the NSA Web site.

In terms of percentage, pilot membership took the biggest leap, from five to 10 in that five-month period.

The Life Membership Program is growing. Sixty thousand-dollar members were on the rolls in April, up from 42 the previous September. 🦋

The Forest Patrol

by Dan Veenendaal



"This is one fire that isn't going to get out of hand"

HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ALASKA SMOKEJUMPERS

Bill Cramer of the Alaska Smokejumpers has been digging through some of the old files and has forwarded copies of original documents to *Smokejumper* magazine.

Under the direction of Orv Looper the Alaska Smokejumpers opened shop in 1959 with 18 jumpers including Looper. All the parachute rigging was done at Ladd Air Force Base since the loft was not completed. Project work consisted of sewing projects, construction of rigging tables, cargo chute conversion, training area leveling and preparation and other activities connected with the project.

The fire season started off in the evening of the practice jumps and continued through the middle of August. About half of the 35 fires jumped during the summer were located near Fairbanks and four fires were manned north of the Arctic Circle. One fire was jumped south of the Alaska Range with several more located near McGrath and in the Lake Minchumina area.

The crew made 87 practice jumps and 164 fire jumps for a total of 251 jumps for the season. The crew averaged a little over 9 fire jumps per man.

All jumpers returned to the lower 48 by commercial airlines at the end of the season except for Looper who was the only permanent and stayed on at the project.

Members of the initial crew were:

Orv Looper	Louie Banta	Dave Bevan
Don Brennan	Joel Chase	Phil Clarke
Bob Fleming	Bill Fogarty	Tom Greiner
Don Hansen	Bob Herald	Tom Johnson
John Lewis	Glen Marlowe	Mike McCullough
Roy Percival	Bill Shears	Hans Trankle

Did You Lose Your Rookie Jump Pin?

Here's a chance to get it replaced. Order item # 132 on the merchandise order form. Each pin is \$10.00. Only sold to smokejumpers listed in the NSA master database.

Down in the Salmon

by Steve McDonald (Associate)

I heard awhile back
They don't do down there
Anymore:
Into the Salmon River.

Not worth it,
Fighting fires in the lower Salmon.
Too dangerous.
Hell, we knew that, before.

Scrub pine and grass,
Steep as a cow's face.
It burned all the time,
By nature's decree.

But for the Outfit
It was "do or die."
A macho commandment:
Stop all fire!

I still hear the cry:
"Rock!"
We would hit the ground
Like seasoned infantry.

Grass burned out around the rocks.
The ground was so steep
They came down the slopes,
Buzzing and bounding 10 or 20 feet in the air.

Dry camps on
Knife-edged ridges.
Sleeping in bags wrapped around trees
To keep from sliding downhill.

Food and water
Air-dropped
By creaky tri-motor Ford airplanes
Going 75 miles per hour full throttle.

Then the long hike up and out afterward.
But I rode out in a helicopter
On a stretcher
To the Doctor, like many others.

And in the bars they said, as always,
"Those Goddamned Fed's!
Huntin' and fishin' on payroll
An' us payin' taxes for it! Shit!"

The poem above is from an unpublished book (*Echoes in the Forest: A Forester's Collection of Poems* by Stephen McDonald) that will become available in 2001 (SM & Associates, Publishers, 371 E 3700 N, Ogden, UT 84414). The author, a U.S. Forest Service veteran, writes novels (*Baker 30* and *Bitterroot*) and poems with forestry themes.

BOOK REVIEW

Fire on the Mountain: The True Story of the South Canyon Fire

By John N. Maclean

Hardcover - 275 pages

William Morrow & Co.

ISBN 0688144772

Also available in paperback (288 pages) or on audio cassette (abridged).

Book review by **George B. Harpole** (Missoula '49))

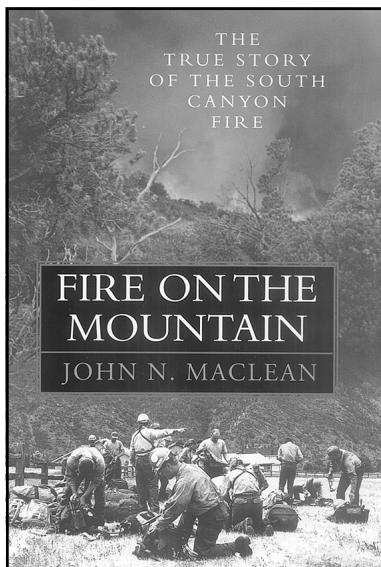
I just finished reading John Maclean's book *Fire on the Mountain: The True Story of the South Canyon Fire*. This happened about 90 miles from where I live. My overall reaction to the book is "Wow!"

Maclean is the son of Montana author Norman Maclean, who wrote *A River Runs Through It* and the posthumously published *Young Men and Fire* (1992), an account of Montana's lethal 1949 Mann Gulch Fire.

John Maclean worked for 30 years as a writer, reporter and editor for the *Chicago Tribune*. Retired, he now lives in both Montana and Washington, D.C.

In this investigative report, Maclean chronicles the events surrounding the South Canyon fire in Colorado, which burned for 10 days in 1994, cost \$4.5 million and took the lives of 14 firefighters from Oregon and Montana. In researching the book, Maclean filed numerous Freedom of Information Act requests and conducted interviews with family members of those killed, survivors and investigators.

Fire on The Mountain is a spectacular piece of journalism. The book should probably be required reading for U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management



personnel. In fact, any critiques I make are significantly overshadowed by the content and overall quality of the writing. However, some of the details need a few grains of salt. For example:

- Page 17: I read these passages as a challenge to Winslow Robertson's character (wallflower?), rather than possibly a sometimes sound approach to fire management. This guy might have really been trying to maximize the benefit of limited fire-fighting resources. Some civilians don't realize there are limitations to FS and BLM capacities.

- Bottom of page 17 to page 18: Joe Temple, a property owner, said it was a one-man, one-shovel fire. Why isn't there some property owner responsibility for one-man, one-shovel fires? Why not? Could have saved 14 lives. Local residents were calling bureaucrats to come put the fire out four days before the Forest Service crew got there to protect their personal property.

Without locating pages, I question comments about smokejumpers going on fires in street

shoes and with hangovers (maybe with hangovers, but not without boots on); that chain saws were without extra saw chains, and that saws were self-destructing as described; that FS explicitly requires one "must be wearing gloves" while climbing a tree with spurs and safety belt (well maybe, but I never did, or would); White's boots with "high heels" (underslung, yes; but, not high); and, that the Hilton Hotel in Grand Junction, Colo., is on irrigation ditch. The Hilton (now Adam's Mark Hotel) is on I-70. The Grand Vista Hotel is next to an irrigation ditch. This is kind of picky, but I therefore suspect the book did not have any technical reviews in spite of the comment, that: "A group of smokejumpers based in Boise, Idaho, and their wives read the manuscript as it developed and offered thoughtful advice ..." (3rd par., page 270).

Lastly, I think Maclean missed an opportunity to enlarge upon "pucker factor" that Don Mackey, a Hamilton, Mont., smokejumper based at Missoula, Mont., was reportedly experiencing, and probably others. I think the "P" factor should be recognized and discussed in wildfire safety training.

Also, Gibson's comment read loud and clear, e.g. "Goddamn it, why does it happen again? After about one in the afternoon there ought not to be people above these fires." (Next to last paragraph on page 181.)

For a really positive note, look at comments with reference to Wayne Williams (20-year MSO smokejumper) per pages 171 through 173. You've got to read these paragraphs for yourself.

Overall, this is a spectacular book! Be sure to read it if you haven't already. 📖

A Steve Nemore Update

My name is Steve Nemore. I've done 26 seasons as a smokejumper (Redmond '69-70, NCSB '73, Fairbanks '75-86, Boise '86-97). I've been written about in *Smokejumper* magazine by five other smokejumpers within the last year. In this article I will try to explain my activities over the last 30 months. But first, here are some heartfelt thanks.



Steve Nemore. (Courtesy NSA files)

To **Chuck Sheley**, for sweating over the controversy and printing the articles and letters. That was journalistic courage and a help to all smokejumpers. To then-President **Carl Gidlund** for phone calls, letters, personal support and direct intervention on my behalf. To **Fred Rohrbach** for phone calls, direct support, and the vision and gumption to produce a smokejumper history video; while pushing this totally new concept to a faithful but tired NSA membership and leadership group. To my old smokejumper pals: **Jim Veitch**, **Murry Taylor**, **Mike Silva**, **George Steele**, and **Rob Collins** (all members in good standing of the NSA) ... they listened, advised, inspired, and energized me through the molasses of bureaucratic processes. To US Senator **Patty Murray** for requesting USFS assistance with the NSA history video (assistance denied by the Forest Service). To **Steve Smith** for care and involvement beyond the duties of videographer.

To the **Smokejumper Brothers and Sisters** who signed the letters of support for me during the summer of '98. To **Bill Moody** and **Steve Reynaud** for making the trimotor jump happen and for their continued support and concern.

Presently (January 2001), I am sewing in the Boise parachute loft and diligently training to be able to pass the Smokejumper Physical Fitness test in late March. ... I need to jump fires this summer.

Here is a summary of my "case":

June 1, 1998: Jumped and spotted the Ford Trimotor from McMinville, Ore., on my own time (without pay) using BLM smokejumper equipment and parachutes. Proud to be of help in the production of the NSA video *Smokejumpers—Firefighters from The Sky*.

June 15, 1998: I cancelled an appointment to take the newly

BLM required stress EKG. Began seeking answers as to why, at 51 years old, we were for the first time, required to take an EKG and also asked what were the consequences of failing the EKG.

June 18, 1998: Received proposed suspension from duty without pay for "refusing a direct order" to take the EKG. Filed first part of Department of the Interior (DOI) grievance.

June 20 thru July 5, 1998: Temporarily detailed to the Equipment Development Unit warehouse at National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), where I counted fire engine plumbing parts.

June 30, 1998: Received proposed suspension-without-pay for "taking government property" (meaning: I used my BLM smokejumper gear to jump out of the Trimotor). Filed my second DOI grievance.

July 28 thru August 10, 1998: Suspended for 13 days without pay before the grievance process was completed.

August 11, 1998: Reassigned from the BLM Boise Smokejumpers (where I had been chief of Smokejumper Operations for 12 years) to the Equipment Development Unit at NIFC. My new job was fire equipment specialist with the specific duties of developing new fire engines. (the only experience I ever had with an engine was riding on the bumper) This is the only involuntary reassignment in BLM Boise smokejumper history.

August 25, 1998: Filed the formal portion of the grievance asking for reversal of my reassignment and return to the smokejumpers.

October 14, 1998: Formal hearing in Boise on the two grievances: 1. Refusal of direct order to take EKG and 2. Taking (theft) of smokejumper gear for Trimotor jump. Hearing administered by the DOI chief of Personnel Hearings and Appeals. Both grievances were reversed and set aside within two hours, because of gross procedural error by BLM. (I received back-pay for the time I was suspended and my attorney fees were reimbursed).

January 1999: Filed formal grievance on reassignment. (My letter of reassignment said I was no longer a trustworthy supervisor because I had refused a direct order—EKG—and I had stolen government property and refused to answer questions about it).

Winter 1999: Met several times for settlement talks with BLM NIFC management ... no settlement reached.

July 12, 1999: Formal Hearing held in Boise. Hearing was administered by the same chief of Personnel Hearing and Appeals. Lasted 3 days. 900 pages of testimony from 10 witnesses. Recorded in an official transcript.

October 1999: BLM deputy director received a written recommended decision from the Hearing Administrator. The administrator recommended my return to the smokejumpers. This decision was based on the "arbitrary and capricious" nature of the reassignment and the reassignment was "for no valid management reason."

December 1999: BLM deputy director refused to make a decision on the recommended decision and elected to for-

ward my case to the DOI Office of Personnel Policy. The DOI Office of Personnel Policy reviewed the case for 9 months.

October 2000: DOI made a decision and issues orders to BLM. The orders were to return me to my smokejumper position. BLM then orders NIFC to return me to my smokejumper position.

November 8, 2000: I am reassigned to the BLM NIFC Smokejumpers (finally!) I am now a generic (GS-6) smokejumper without supervisory or management duties and with the same pay as my previous position of chief of Smokejumper Operations. My extensive attorney fees are also paid by NIFC.

Well, if you consider that the usual reasons to write and read about smokejumpers are exciting flame and airplanes things, then my story really is boring and there's no reason to print it. However, I tried to find a reason why my story has been popular and why people have wanted to know about it ... and I think the real reason for my even being on the radar screen is that I (unknowingly and unintentionally) exemplify the things "the system" can do to individual smokejumpers.

There is always a concern for one's organization. People make efforts to maintain their organization (their class, school, church, team, job, club). In every endeavor that people are dedicated to ... there is a fear and a worry about the continuance of that endeavor and that organization. The organization can be created from nothing, and it can just as surely be destroyed back to nothing. People don't worry about their organization just because it is a paycheck or it is fun, they worry because their organization means something deep ... the members are proud and it is part of their being. The organization gives them a place to belong, (and in America that is all too often lacking as we Americans are always moving) a place to be attached and a chance to be confident as part owner of that organization. The organization is a family. Being part of the family is a good secure feeling and a reason to give one's best efforts. Smokejumpers feel that theirs is a right and noble family. Smokejumping is a job that needs to be done, and they are willing to risk their lives to do it.

I think that people are interested in my case because something similar could happen to others and this sort of treatment can damage their organization. There are lots of current and former smokejumpers (likely a very high percentage) that continue to care about their time as smokejumpers and try to keep in touch with their old pals and they remember fondly their glory and pride in being a smokejumper. These current and former smokejumpers don't want to see their smokejumper organization damaged and maybe even disbanded. They want smokejumping to endure and continue to uphold its pridelful reputation. In that continuance they can maintain their connection with the group that has so deeply affected their lives.

Now, some belated comment on several letters to the editor of Smokejumper magazine.

Mr. Quillin's (*Smokejumper*, July 2000) voice begs for sameness and the avoidance of controversy. He wants no ruffled feathers and no rocking boats. Hey, we're all retired now

so let's be happy, enjoy ourselves only in the remembrance of the good times. I suggest that Mr. Quillin order a few more AARP smiley-face refrigerator magnets and forget this politically charged smokejumper atmosphere.

For Mr. Beebe (*Smokejumper*, January 2000), his allegiance to the boss is somewhat commendable. There is no secrecy lid placed upon the dissemination of knowledge about the DOI grievance process. The processes of the DOI grievance program are available to the public and can be spoken about at any time. The specifics of the charges, allegations, and arguments may be personal and private, but the progression of the process is public.

To Mr. Silva (*Smokejumper*, July 2000) who revealed that management remains silent in more cases than mine. It appears that this tactic of silence is a widespread management tool ... the theory being that if you keep quiet long enough, the little troublemakers will go away and we'll be able to continue on with our heavy-handed cronyistic ways. I too, certainly appreciated Mr. Taylor's article but I don't know that it opened up my case. However, it surely put pressure on some management people. But finally, it was up to the system to vindicate me ... that long slow system finally did the right thing (28 months), that system that kept me from being a smokejumper for three seasons. I appreciate your thoughts Mr. Silva, and I hope Editor Sheley agrees that provocative letters and contentious issues need to be aired. As you say, lance it open and let's see what's inside.

To Editor Sheley, I applaud your printing of the articles and letters. However, you do not have to apologize (*Smokejumper*, January 2000) for printing them. It appears you received some allegations of bias and took some political heat. It was right that you persevered. I believe you would have printed the opposing views if any had been offered. There were no opposing views because the opposition chose to remain silent. And because they chose to remain silent, they labeled you as biased. Don't buy it! They want you to believe that because they were "not allowed" to speak then you should "not be allowed" to print the other side ... this is censorship via silence. If they don't want to respond then they have voluntarily given up their right to free expression ... and because they give up their right, does NOT mean that you must give up your editorial duties.

FINAL Word

I wouldn't be writing and you wouldn't be reading if not for our altruistic "brothers in the sky" who feel responsible for the rest of us and who put out such great effort to allow us to be together ... the reunion was wonderful and the magazine is essential.

NSA, keep up the good work!

Jim Veitch's articles are "spot-on," and although very scholarly, with some concentration you can be as up to date on the present critical smokejumper issues as the smokejumper base managers.

OK people, get out there and get some ... make your voices heard thru this magazine or thru your congress people ... keep the smokejumpers viable, growing, and together ... we're worth it!!!! 🐼

Uncovering a Hero's Story

by Steve Smith (NSA Historian)

On March 16th, a brave man was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. Dieter Dengler was a Vietnam war veteran and former POW. The Navy awarded him the Navy Cross, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart and the Air Medal.

Dieter was a friend. **Fred Rohrbach** (Missoula '65) and I visited him when his time was short. ALS, (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, withered his body but the man we knew was inside and we connected.

Several years ago I met Dieter on a trip to Laos. It was his first trip back to the land where he was held as a POW. He was charismatic, energetic and joyfully unpredictable. A fun guy to travel with.

In 1966, Dieter's Skyraider, a propeller-driven bomber was shot down while bombing the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. At a time when Dieter could have really used a parachute he rode the plane into the ground.

He was captured and put into a prison camp with six others—three were Thais, one was Chinese and two were Americans. All but one of the Americans held prisoner were captured when their Air America C-47 was shot down in 1963. They had been prisoners for two and a half years.

It was a brutal place with little food and frequent torture. The first American Dieter met was Duane Martin, a captured helicopter pilot. The other was **Eugene DeBruin**, (Missoula '59) a cargo kicker with Air America. Gene's condition was dire, reflecting years of torture and starvation.

Weeks, then months went by, with Dieter shackled in leg blocks to his fellow prisoners. He soon learned that Gene was the unofficial leader, the man who kept everyone going and made peace when the close confinement caused tempers to flare.

Desperation and ingenuity inspired an escape attempt in the summer of 1966. After a shoot-out with guards, the prisoners disappeared into the jungle in a bid for freedom. But fate intervened when one of the POWs was too sick to go on. Gene chose to stay behind to hide and care for his sick comrade.

Dengler and the others promised to send help when they were rescued. But the help never arrived and it was the last time Dengler would ever see Gene DeBruin.

So in 1998, Dengler returned to Laos, looking back in time, and hoping somehow, to find the

remains of the man he considered a hero, former smokejumper Gene DeBruin. There was virtually no chance of success, and soon after the trip Dieter discovered he was terminally ill.

Now, plans are in the works for a second video that tells many of the smokejumper stories that we had to leave out of the history documentary. Eugene DeBruin is one of those stories.

If you jumped with Gene or worked with him at Air America please contact NSA Historian, Steve Smith and help fill in the details. You can reach Steve at 206-601-5656 or via e-mail at Stevansmith@Juno.com. We have a story to tell. 🔔

Procedures for Handling Donated Historical Smokejumper Items

The NSA, through Historian Steve Smith, is collecting any items of historical smokejumper nature. Photos, jump logs and other documents tend to get lost or thrown away—especially with the passing of an individual. Should you desire to donate to the NSA, here are some helpful hints.

Any mailing should be sent to:
Steve Smith
25657 Marine View Dr. S.
Des Moines, WA 98198 206-601-5656

We need to ask those who send things to please—

1. Don't write on the back of photos—use a Post-it on the back or tape a piece of paper with the info on the back. Identify the individuals in the photos, where it was taken and the year.
2. Separate early glossy color photos—they had a tendency to stick together.
3. When sending memorabilia, photos or newspaper clips, please add a note that tells us where you jumped, the years and background information about the item or photo. If it was taken on a fire, please identify the fire.

The Race at Wilderness Lake

by Jason Greenlee (Redding '99)

This, like all my jumper stories, is an absolutely true and accurate story of what occurred one day in July 2000 at Wilderness Lake. The events that transpired have begun to be called "The Race at Wilderness Lake." Although this story is 100-percent true, Ray Rubio and Cindy Champion are both threatening to write a rebuttal. Let them try. You have to give them credit, though had it not been for some quick thinking on their parts, the Race at Wilderness Lake might have become the Slaughter at Wilderness Lake.

I saw Cindy just before roll call Saturday morning. She looked haggard. We were on our second week of boosting Alaska. My load had been pulled off cabin protection, and Cindy and Ray had been on the load that was sent to replace us. Then the two of them appeared back in Fairbanks a few days later.

"So, Cindy, how did your fire go?"

She looked at me and croaked, "Not so good." Her voice sounded like she'd just been to an Ozzie Osbourne concert. "I'm hungry. See you later."

Next I saw Ray. He'd been to the same spot, so I asked him, "So Ray, how did *your* fire go?"

Ray, who is not known for lengthy discourse, paused a moment to think, and then replied thoughtfully, "Okay."

Then he added with a little smile, "My radio kinda got messed up a little, though."

This information was offered in a way that just begged for more detail. "What happened to your radio?"

"Well, it got some bear hair on it."

"How'd it get bear hair on it?"

Ray had to think hard now. How could he answer a question like that without making me look stupid? "Well, I threw it at the bear," he offered, trying not to sound like it was too obvious that radios get bear hair on them by being thrown at bears.

This was interesting. I repeated what he'd just told me. "You threw it at the bear?"

"Yeah, this bear was running by, so I threw my radio at it. I didn't aim at his head, because I didn't want to piss him off. I just wanted to get his attention, so I threw it at his flank."

"Why?"

"Because he was about to catch up with Cindy."

"Cindy was there, too?"

"Yeah, he almost caught her, too."

"Why was he chasing Cindy?"

"Maybe it was her Spam, or maybe the bear thought

Cindy was a mobile snack."

"Oh." I thought this over. "So he was chasing Cindy?"

"Yeah. First Cindy ran by. She was yelling something to me, but I couldn't understand her. She was really moving out. I didn't know that girl could run that fast. Then the bear ran by, and I threw my radio at it."

"So what did the bear do when you threw the radio?"

"He stopped."

"What did you do?"

"I was kinda thinking about that when I threw the radio. Now that I had the bear's attention, I wondered what I was going to do. I didn't really have a plan, you know. I thought he might want to chase me for a while, so I was sort of yelled at him and waved my arms."

"What did Cindy do?"

"She stopped and she was yelling, too. I guess she wanted the bear to stop chasing her. She was yelling so loud that she was scaring me and the bear."

"So what happened next?"

"The helicopter came over."

"There was a helicopter there?"

"Yeah, he was over at the other side of the lake chasing another bear away, so he came over to help out."

"Did he scare the bear?"

"Naw."

"What happened then?"

"Well, Cindy and I were yelling, and the helicopter was hovering over my shoulder. I wanted to get in but I didn't have my boots on."

"Your boots weren't on?"

"No. I'd been washing my socks when Cindy ran by."

"Oh. So what did you do?"

"Cindy and I sort of jumped in the helicopter anyway and we left."

"What did the bear do?"

"I suppose he went back to camp to look for more Spam."

"So your radio was messed up?"

"Yeah, it has some bear hair on it. Wanna see?" 🐻

Jason Greenlee is former editor of "Wildfire Magazine" and former director of the International Association of Wildland Fire. This year he is jumping out of Missoula. In the off-season, he directs a nonprofit library called the Fire Research Institute. He can be reached at: fire_research_institute@hotmail.com

Checking The Canopy



Stan Tate
(McCall '53)

WHERE LEAPS OF FAITH LAND
HIM

by David Johnson

Lewiston Tribune Oct. 2000

IN ONE FASHION OR ANOTHER,
dealing with death has become a
way of life for **Stan Tate** (McCall
'53) of Moscow, Idaho.

Take, for example, his experiences as a smokejumping priest, told in *Jumping Skyward*.

"In a few moments," Tate writes in his book, "I will leap from the questionable safety of an old airplane into an awesome physical and spiritual abyss."

Or consider his almost half a century of working for the salvation of souls in both Presbyterian and Episcopal ministries. There's also the past decade serving as a bioethicist and hospice chaplain at Gritman Medical Center.

Mostly, says Tate, he sees a trip he took to Princeton University as a culmination of his career. "I'm a Christian and Jesus Christ was framed and put to death for political reasons. That's how Tate explains his decades-long study of

capital punishment and his unwavering dedication to two black brothers who faced the electric chair in the late 1950s.

"I'm more convinced than ever that Bland and Eugene are innocent," Tate asserts.

Technically, the Williams brothers are convicted murderers. They were found guilty of using a baseball bat to kill a night watchman. But after spending some 17 years behind bars, the two have been free for many years. Their circumstances, says Tate, underscore the biggest reason why the death penalty should itself be killed in this country. "We almost put two innocent men to death."

Tate and one of the Williams brothers, Bland, were reunited in Princeton, N.J., as participants in

First Jump

Smokejumpers are way by far,
A bit of a different lot.
Never taken aback for what they lack,
They give everything one good shot.

The instructors are rough and the training is tough,
Something that is relished by few.
The pay is bad and you're always glad
When the day is finally through.

When you've taken your lumps and you're ready to jump,
And you've put on all your gear.
You get in the plane all cramped up in pain
And think, "Why in the hell am I here."

It's a job to be done and you happen to be the one,
that's next in line to go.
You tremble with fear as your time draws near
and you look at the ground below.

As you go out fast, you feel the prop blast
And you take a terrible dive.
With lines around your neck, you're a terrible wreck,
But by God you're still alive.

You untangle your line, hoping everything's fine
And finally feel free at last.
But time's not on your side and you just can't hide,
That the ground is coming up fast.

(continued on next page)

a seminar titled “Dilemmas on the Death Penalty.” Participants became enamored by the story of the Williams brothers, says Tate, an account in which Tate himself modestly confessed to have played a major role.

“I was a student at Princeton Theological Seminary,” says Tate, thinking back to the days when he volunteered to do “field work” at the state prison in Trenton, N.J. “The prison chaplain there didn’t want to go down to the death house,” Tate recalls. Death Row was deep in the catacombs of the penitentiary. The condemned looked out between the bars to see the electric chair waiting in a nearby corner.

“I had enough training to know they all said they were innocent.” But he began to believe the Williams brothers. Tate began reviewing their case, digging deeper and deeper into the records and eventually talking with another inmate who eventually

confessed to having provided false testimony against the brothers at their trial.

The police were pressured into finding suspects in the killing and eventually rounded up five suspects including the Williams brothers. Bland Williams refused to admit to the murder. “I’d rather die than have anyone think I killed somebody,” Tate recalls him saying. After a second trial, the charges were reduced to second-degree murder and the brothers were spared the electric chair. Tate says that he will always be thankful for that. But the experience has convinced him society must rise above executing human beings, if for no other reason than the ever-present potential of putting the wrong person to death.

Life without parole is perhaps a more severe punishment, he says. Some people may deserve to die. But that sort of sentence should be decided by a higher

authority. “And some people should never be paroled,” he adds. That’s the kind of decision society can make, realizing it can be changed upon discovery of new evidence. “It costs more to put someone to death than it does to put them in prison for life,” says Tate. And the death penalty is not a deterrent in the minds of those bent on murder, he insists. “It doesn’t accomplish what you think it would.” 🦋

Tate, who has been retired for some three years, says he hopes to someday tell the Williams brothers’ story more completely, perhaps in another book. He has letters from prison and other documents stored away. In the meantime, he urges all spiritual people to learn about the country’s prison system and the practice of killing those who have killed. On death rows everywhere there is the potential to look into the faces of men like Bland and Eugene Williams, he says.

(continued from page 20)

You check on your spot and confident you’re not
Because things are happening too fast.
The things you were taught, just don’t come to thought
And this jump may well be your last.

And in one quick flash, you take a terrible crash,
You forget your Allen Roll.
The wind is strong and it drags you along
And down the field you go.

But the winds abate and you just can’t wait,
To put your feet on the earth.
You have a feeling of pride that you just can’t hide,
Because now you know what you’re worth.

After the jump, your heart starts to pump,
As you did take a terrible fall.
But damn it to hell you did real well,
You walked away from it all.

It’s an experience not to forget and don’t ever let,
Anyone say you weren’t good.
Because not many try, to fall from the sky
And most wouldn’t, even if they could.

And the effort shown is none but your own,
From the plane out into the blue.
And the thrill of it all is that one minute of fall,
The blue sky, the chute and you.

—Dirk Chandler (Redding ’64)

MEMBER PROFILE

PHILIP B. STANLEY



Bryn Hammarstrom, Phil Stanley, Gordon Ratigan at Seeley Lake 1943. (Courtesy of Pic Littell)

Philip B. Stanley

Smokejumper 1943–45

Missoula/CPS 103

Ground Foreman and Photographer, Forest Service/Air Force Aerial Fire Suppression Project, Missoula 1947

By Wallace “Pic” Littell

(Missoula '44)

As noted in the NSA video, “Smokejumpers—Firefighters from the Sky,” as well as in Gregg Phifer’s article on CPS Smokejumpers in the July 2000 issue of *Smokejumper*, Phil played a key role in getting Civilian Public Service men (conscientious objectors) assigned as smokejumpers during the 1943-45 war years.

While assigned at the Civilian Public Service camp at Colville, Washington, in 1942, Phil heard from the Mono Forest Engineer, Ray Brieding, of a new method of firefighting called “smokejumping,” which was being tested in Region One at Missoula, and of the difficulty the Forest Service was

having in getting and keeping able-bodied men during the war years. It occurred to him that CPS had more than enough men who would volunteer for smokejumper duty.

So, in his words, “I started a two-pronged letter-writing campaign.” On the one hand, he wrote Axel Lindh, at Region One Fire Control in Missoula. On the other, he wrote the NSBRO (National Board for Religious Objectors) in Washington, D.C., where his brother was on assignment. “Apparently all parties were interested,” he continued. “Arrangements were made quickly, and the first of us arrived in Missoula, Mont., for rigger school and jump training at the Seeley Lake Ranger Station about the middle of May 1943.” Starting with 60 men in 1943 (selected from 300 applicants), the CPS Smokejumper Unit expanded to 120 men in 1944 and 220 in 1945. 1945 was an active fire season and by the time it was over, smokejumping

was well-established as a fire-fighting method.

Phil was born in China, the son of missionaries, and lived in Northeast China for the first eight years of his life. He graduated from a private school in New York City, founded by Felix Adler and run by his Society for Ethical Culture, and attended Oberlin College in Ohio prior to induction into Civilian Public Service in 1942.

Following his time as a Forest Service smokejumper and photographer in Missoula, Phil spent most of his career working in color photography, including establishing the 1 HOUR PHOTO SERVICE. He was so taken with Missoula and Flathead Lake that he stayed in the area for his entire career. For some years he has lived on Flathead Lake near Polson, Mont., where he continues to be active in photography. He is married and has an adult son and daughter. 🍷

After training at Ninemile in 1944, Pic jumped in the CPS Smokejumper Unit for two years at Missoula. During the 1947–48 seasons, he jumped for Francis Lufkin at Winthrop. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Cornell College of Iowa in 1947, moving on to Columbia University for his graduate work. He received his M.A. and Certificate of the Russian Institute there in 1949 and proceeded overseas into the Foreign Service in which he served until 1985. He was a Soviet and East European specialist. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1985.

At Cornell College, he lettered in football, wrestling and track and was Midwest Conference Champion at 155 lbs. in wrestling. He was also a member of the NCAA and NAAU National Championship Team in 1947. He is a member of the Cornell College Sports Hall of Fame.

MEMBER PROFILE
MIKE
KREIDLER



Mike Kreidler
 (Cave Junction '65)
 Washington State Insurance
 Commissioner

Mike was elected Washington State Insurance Commissioner in November 2000 and took the oath of office in January 2001.

But before his careers in optometry and federal and state government, Mike Kreidler was a

smokejumper. Unfortunately, he made only one fire jump.

NSA President Larry Lufkin reports that he and Mike were jump partners on a fire on the Umpqua National Forest in Oregon. Lufkin recalls, "We jumped in old growth and both our chutes collapsed when we hit tall timber. My chute hung up again while I was falling through the tree."

"Mike didn't hang up. He fell about 100 feet to the ground where he broke his back. He couldn't help much on the fire, but the next day he walked out about two miles uphill to a road carrying his equipment."

Mike earned a doctor of optometry degree from Pacific University in Oregon and a master's in public health from UCLA. He worked for 20 years as an optometrist for Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound.

He has more than 25 years of public service. Serving in the Washington state legislature for 16 years, he worked in matters related to health care and the environment. Through his leadership, major legislation was enacted dealing with generic drugs, respite care, HIV/AIDS, health care cost con-

tainment, foster care, day care and the natural death act.

As a U.S. Congressman, he served on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, involved in matters related to health care, access, affordability and quality.

Washington Gov. Mike Lowry appointed Mike to the Northwest Power Planning Council in 1995, and in 1997 he was re-appointed by Gov. Gary Locke. The Council, an agency of the four northwest states, addresses fish and wildlife impacted by dams while providing the region a reliable electric power supply.

President Clinton appointed Mike regional director of Region 10, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in July 1998. In the state of Washington, he urged the state's participation in the Children's Health Insurance Program that expanded health insurance coverage for youngsters. In 1999, the state applied and was granted participation in the program.

Mike, a Washington native, is a lieutenant colonel with over 25 years of active and reserve Army service. He and his wife Lela, have three children and live in Lacey, Wash. 🇺🇸

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Send us your business card and we will run it in **four** issues of *Smokejumper* magazine for \$100. It will be an excellent opportunity to show the membership what smokejumper owned and operated business services are available. Besides being an inexpensive way to reach 1800 potential clients, you will help us to meet the expenses of publishing this magazine. **Support the NSA with your business advertising!** Send to Chuck Sheley, 10 Judy Ln., Chico CA 95926.

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Touching All Bases

Alaska

Murry Taylor (Redding '65)

April has been a very busy month up here in God's Country. All refresher training will be completed in one more week. Jumps have been going well and everyone seems excited about the coming season. As usual we have a few new faces, 12 transfers (Ramair Rookies) and 10 regular rookie types. Rookie trainers are **John** "JL—The Hammer" **Lyons**, **Rob Yeager**, **Doug Carroll**, **Ty Humphrey**, and **Dave Bloemker**. Our aircraft will consist of two Casa 212s, one Dornier, and—this is the most excited part—a turbine DC-3 from Leading Edge. It flew last year throughout the west dropping jumpers with Capt. **Dave Russell**, old-time veteran jumper pilot at the helm and Co-pilot **Don Bell**, ex-Grangeville smokefly in the right seat.

We're currently in the process of reorganizing the crew. All GS-6s will become GS-7s sometime this season. Several other positions will also be upgraded. All short-terms are being converted to Career-Seasonals—minimum 6 month tours of duty. With this comes the health benefits we've so long pushed and hoped for. A lot of folks were involved in down-south prescribed fire both last fall and this spring. **Mel Tenneson** spent some time in Minnesota,

Mitch Decoteau was spotted in Florida lighting things on fire and being chased by an alligator. **Fred Hernandez**—the same one that fractured his wrist last season in Utah—is back up to full strength again and spent some time at the Fire Use Training Academy (FUTA). **Paul Lenmark** also did some time there plus a stint down in Lakeview, Oregon, prescribe burning and training to write burn plans. We purchased a bunch of new parachutes, all DC-7s, and a number of new drouges. All are on the shelf and in full service.

Dalan Romero and wife Sandy welcomed a new son, Skyler, last August. **Mike Lyne** and wife Cami had a son this winter down in Palmer, Alaska. **Steve Theisen** and wife Tracy have a new daughter, Michele, and she arrived last week. **Matt Allen** and wife Kathleen are expecting any day. It's always good to see smokejumpers reproduce. At the current rate, however, I'm afraid we could wind up on the Endangered Species List someday. Anyway, great job fellas. Keep up the good work.

We have the turbine DC-3 up here already and have been jumping it. It's McCall's Doug and the



Capt. is none other than that famous ex-McCally himself, **John Stright**. His co-pilot is **Dan Jarvis** who has flown for the Forest Service for several years—some of it dropping jumpers.

Amazing geriatric jumper **Jim Veitch** is back from Australia and has us all in shock. The 54 year-old ran the PT Test, the mile and a half, in 9:06. He plans to do the pack test carrying—get ready for this—200 lbs. Jim trained all winter carrying heavy loads and is helping us develop a major respect for

what that kind of training can do to keep a good man/jumper strong as an ox.

The troops are planning a small—jumper and close friends only—memorial on the one year date of **Dave Liston's** fatal accident. A granite stone and plaque will be placed on the site where we lost Dave. Kristin, Dave's wife at the time of his death, is coming to see us and attend. She's currently a student at the University of Alaska in Anchorage.

Tree climbing was big this winter with several jumpers working in Chicago looking for the dreaded Chinese longhorn beetle. As hard as the work was—12 hour days, 7 days a week, the boys all seemed to love it. Apparently there are lots of pretty girls in Chicago and up in a tree is a good place from where to spot them. I heard a couple guys even carried small binoculars.

The only really bleak note of this season, so far as Alaska jumper pride goes, is the enduring memory of **Marty** "Bull Meat" **Meieroto's** disgraceful defeat at the hands of **Ray** "Blow Chow" **Rubio** (Redmond booster) in the moose eating contest up here last summer. This complete and utter defeat was particularly disheartening in light of their first match up "The Great Spam Off of 1998," where Rubio blew Meieroto off the map eating 7.4 cans of Spam in one hour to Marty's pitiful 3.5. There again, we Alaskans slunk away in embarrassed confusion. The only thing Meieroto brags about these days—and he doesn't do it when Ray Rubio is around—is how much crow he can eat. That's about it from our still partly frozen northern paradise. From all of us up here to all of you down there, best wishes for a safe and rewarding 2001 fire season.

Boise

by **Grant Beebe** (NIFC '90)

One of the bigger news items from the Boise BLM base this spring is the departure of Base Manager **Sean Cross**. Sean accepted a job with the BLM's National Office, across the street from the jump base. Operations supervisor **Eric Reynolds** is acting base manager until the job is filled permanently.

Jumpers **Tom Romanello**, **Kent Hamilton**, **Brad Sauer**, **Brady Collins**, **Mimi Scissons**, and **Steve Baker** all called it quits this winter also. Veteran jumpers **Steve Nemore**, **Phil Brollier**, and **Dustin Matsuoka** are all returning to the jump list this season.

The increased budget provided by Congress for fire management has provided us with 20 more smokejumpers this year, bringing our headcount to 82. This number includes 16 rookies, who reported for work May 21. For the first time, BLM Boise rookies are training in the lower 48.

Grangeville

by **Jerry Zumalt** (Redding '70)

Grangeville recently hired five rookies and arranged for two detailers from nearby forests for the upcoming season. We expect to be at 30 smokejumpers. GAC filled two squad leader positions this spring with **Willie Kelly** and **Brett Rogers**. Other personnel moves include **Tim Tevebaugh** to a permanent position with the FS in Minnesota; **Roland Giller** to an engine job in Oregon; and **Mike Frisen** to a squad leader position in Missoula. **Kai Friedrichs** and **Andrew Lane** were promoted to permanent GS-6 positions in April. Leading Edge will supply a contract Twin Otter at Grangeville from 5 June through 27 September with Capt. **Bob Nicol** back at the controls.

Sixteen jumpers completed refresher training in Missoula during early April and are available for fire assignment. Our pre-season project work began in January with commitments to the Chicago climbing project and burn details to Mississippi and South Carolina. The loft completed the FS-14 steering line conversion in March, manufactured 100 new cargo chutes and assisted with the sewing workload in Missoula. Other loft projects included extensive line gear and travel bag construction for various districts. The new warehouse/loadmaster building is nearly completed and will be in use this season.

Currently, GAC has six jumpers working hazardous fuels and timber on the Idaho Panhandle Forest, six working in Chicago for the USDA and five committed to hard target burning projects on the

Clearwater/Nez Perce Fire Zone when they aren't in reckless pursuit of this year's salmon run. The snow-pack is low and coming off. There is an expectation of large, intense fires again this summer in the northern Rockies.

McCall

by **Rick Hudson** (Boise '73)

The jump base in McCall will have its normal 70 jumpers for the 2001 season. The three Forest Service jump aircraft will consist of two DeHavilland Twin Otters and a turbine DC-3. They will be piloted by Forest Service pilots **Marc Anderson**, **Eldon Askelson** (MYC '66), **Matt Harmon**, **Dan Jarvis**, **John Stright** (MYC '83) and **Jay Thomson**.

A rookie class of 11 (called NEDS in McCall) reported May 29th to begin the five and a half weeks of rigorous jump training.

Latest promotions have gone to **Rick Hudson** (BOI '73) as assistant operations supervisor and **Pete Pride** (MYC '83) for the loadmaster position. Squad leader positions have gone to **Carl Seielstad** (MYC '93) and **Mark Koontz** (MYC '91).

Roger Staats (McCall '86) has accepted a two-year appointment as a AFMO trainee for the McCall and Krassel Districts.

Region 4 is considering establishing a McCall spike base in Ogden, Utah, beginning in July. A McCall spike base last summer in Vernal, Utah, took smokejumper action on 26 jump fires and 6 ground pounders. The Forest Service is involved with the organizing and fire protection of the 2002 Winter Olympic sites around Salt Lake City. Maybe smokejumpers could jump in carrying the Olympic torch. ...

Missoula

by **Wayne Williams** (Missoula '77)

This spring, Missoula trained 89 jumpers in early refresher. This included Grangeville, McCall (Silver City contingent), Missoula, and West Yellowstone. Silver City is tentatively scheduled to activate the 20 jumper inter-base crew in mid-May. The foremen will be **Wayne Williams** and **Todd Onken**. As for last winter, Region 1 sent 20 jumpers to Mississippi for dormant season burning. The crew helped Region 8 burn over 90,000 acres. Chicago tree climbing continued with 20 Missoula jumpers throughout the winter and spring. This season rookie class is scheduled for June 4. Missoula will train between 25-30 new jumpers. This May, the Helena National Forest and the Missoula jumpers plan to place **David Narvon's** (Mann Gulch victim) Starr of David in Mann Gulch.

This is in response to David's family and friends requesting the proper religious symbol at his sight. The money for this project was raised from individual donations, the National Smokejumper Association, and the Missoula Welfare Fund. Missoula is also helping the Lolo National Forest (Ninemile District) with donations and labor for the Camp Menard interpretive project and trail. **Joe Chandler** ('71) and **Jim "Dirty" Linville** ('69) will retire this spring. Joe has over 500 total jumps, of which 257 are fire, and Jim has 437 jumps of which 198 are fire. Missoula will host a Type II fire reinforcement crew this summer. The superintendent will be a smokejumper squad leader and the foreman will come from one of the forest fire crews in Region 1.

Redding

by **Josh Mathiesen** (Redding '94)

The Redding smokejumpers congratulate the following 14 who have accepted promotions or career status appointments during "round 2" of the hiring process:

Smokejumper captain promotions to **Steve Franke**, **Josh Mathiesen**, **Steve Murphy** and **Jerry Spence**.

Smokejumper squad leader promotions to **John Casey**, **Rico Gonzalez**, **Dorsey Lightner** and **Hernan Sotela**.

New career appointments to senior smokejumper positions to **Mitch Hokanson**, **Dave Johnson**, **Mark Lane**, **Adam Lauber**, **Rick Rataj** and **Deborah Yoder**.

For 2001, the Redding smokejumpers have increased the number of jumpers from 40 to 50. To achieve this goal, we are training 22 rookies. This is more than double our typical rookie class and is a good challenge for the training cadre. **Tony Loughton** (RAC) and **Tim Lum** (NCSB) are on the base and are currently assisting with the smokejumper units training which began on April 23rd. By day five, the 22 rookies have been whittled down to 17. The rookies that remain endured three days of units in 85-degree temperatures and have not seen a dry spot on their body since the day they arrived.

Our base is getting ready for the season ahead and preparing for an early fire season if the current weather pattern stays the same. Redding will have two aircraft this year: A Forest Service owned Sherpa and a turbo DC-3 from Rhoades Aviation Inc. (Columbus Indiana).

We have a few folks back in New York City climbing the hardwoods and continuing the search for the elusive Asian long-horned beetle. In addition, we

have completed several fuels reduction and prescribed fires projects. Our focus will be on completing another safe and productive fire season.

Steve Vangundy (Redding '98) passed away this spring from melanoma. Steve detailed to Redding for the '98 season and will be sincerely missed by the entire R-5 crew.

Redmond

by **Mark Corbet** (LaGrande '74)

So far in 2001 several personnel changes have taken place. **Tom Fitzpatrick**, our training/operations foreman, accepted a job as AFMO on the Sisters District of the Deschutes N.F. That job has at long last been separated into a training position and an operations position. **Michael Jackson** has taken on the training foreman job and **Ron Rucker** is temporarily appointed as the operations foreman. No official word yet but Loft Foreman **Mike Brick** may be moving to the Atlanta area where his wife recently accepted a job. **Rene Lamoreaux** and **Jeff Robinson** have filled two vacant squad leader positions. An additional temporary squad leader position will be filled soon.

Redmond smokejumper numbers will be up by about 5 to a total of 40 this season. Rookies will fill the increase in numbers. Their training should be well under way by the time you read this.

Visitors to RAC will notice a very large aircraft hanger was built this winter, just to the SE of the loft. It should be ready to use by May 1. It will house Sherpas and lead planes with room to spare.

Winter and spring work consisted of FS-14 steering line replacement, manufacture of jump suits, harnesses and personal gear bags, South Carolina burning, New York tree climbing and helping with a Special Forces winter exercise in NE Oregon.

Precipitation in our corner of the West is well below normal as of mid-April. Concerns over fish survival, reduced energy production and wildfires fills the media.

We will take it as it comes because "only fools and weathermen try to predict what kind of fire season it will be."

West Yellowstone

by **Derrek Hartman** (Redding '98)

We had half of our folks go through early refresher training in Missoula the first part of April. The majority of these folks also worked all winter on details in places like Mississippi and Chicago, as well as doing project work in Missoula and West Yellowstone. Our plane will arrive in West around mid-June and with

folks coming back from late refresher, we should be fully operational by the end of June. We have four rookies slated to go through training in Missoula, which will add to our numbers.

This season will be the start of our new aircraft contract with Bighorn Aviation. We will have a Dornier at the base. **Randy Leypold** will be returning as our pilot.

As mentioned in the last issue, we will be celebrat-

ing our 50th anniversary this season. Anyone who has jumped out of West at one time or another is encouraged to stop by for a visit, (as well as any folks who have never had the opportunity to see our small “family-like” base). We will have our get together on Labor Day weekend (Fri., Sat., Sun., Mon.) in September. Please call the base at (406) 646-7691 if you have any questions. 📞

FEATURED LIFE MEMBER

GREGG PHIFER

by **Jim Budenholzer** (Missoula '73)

The NSA would like to highlight the joining of Dr. Gregg Phifer, Ph.D., into Life Member status. In 1944–45, Dr. Phifer made twenty jumps out of Missoula (10 practice and 10 fire). 65 years later he was going strong at the CPS 103 reunion, when he joined our conscientious objectors (COs) to celebrate their contribution to smokejumper history.

During World War II about 12,000 Americans were classified as IV-E, conscientious objectors. There were Mennonites, Brethren, Quakers and, as with Gregg Phifer, Methodists. They were drafted like everyone else, but assigned to the Civilian Public Service (CPS) work.

While the first fire jump occurred in 1940, by 1942 the experimental smokejumper program only had 30 jumpers, most of whom had been drafted. The CPS volunteers kept the smokejumper unit alive and transformed an experimental unit of 30 men in 1942 into a major force of more than 200 jumpers by 1945.

The smokejumpers were already well known to Gregg and the COs. Gregg had participated in a mountain rescue in 1943 which brought him to the attention of Forest Service Ranger Fred Mackel. Mackel observed Gregg in action and wrote a strong letter of recommendation on his behalf.

There were 300 applicants for 60 smokejumper positions in 1944. In part, thanks to the ranger's strong letter, Gregg was accepted as a smokejumper and ordered to report to CPS 103 at the Ninemile Smokejumper base.

Gregg and his buddies were a major force in the nascent years of smokejumping, as the COs began to cover five states, three regions, and two National Parks (Glacier & Yellowstone) with a few jumpers going into Canada.

In all, Gregg made 20 jumps, 10 practice and 10 fire. He remembers that two of his ten fire jumps combined rescue work with firefighting. “On one jump I sailed over a bed of rocks but the next jumper hit them squarely and broke several bones. We made him comfortable, but the ranger of that district sent in a mule to haul him out to a

hospital. And in the other case, the Forest Service sent us as the rescue unit for a jumper with several wounds including a severe back injury incurred when his parachute broke off the top of a tall snag ... we had six hours sleep out of the first sixty on that fire.”

Gregg was discharged from the smokejumpers under the same point system as the military. The Commission on World Peace of the Methodist

Church sent his name and CPS men who had graduate degrees (Gregg already has a master's from University of Iowa) to Baldwin-Wallace College, where Gregg began a full time academic career. That was followed by more than 50-years in a teaching career, including 45 years at Florida State University.

Gregg, now 83, stays active in the ACLU, the Leon-Wakulla Retarded Educators Association, plus numerous other organizations. Dr. Phifer's proudest accomplishments include participating in debate teams and working for civil rights.

To add to his many accomplishments, Greg was honored by the Athletic Honor Society of Florida State University for officiating track and field meets. He has officiated over 250 meets and can still be found officiating the long and triple jumps.

About smokejumping, Gregg feels, “I never regretted either my stand as a conscientious objector or my two-year service with the CPS 103 smokejumpers. We did an important job during those war years.”

We are grateful to Gregg for his inspirational life story and for his Life Membership commitment to the NSA. 📞



Greg Phifer (Courtesy of Greg Phifer)

You Can Find a Jumper Anywhere!

by Jerry Dixon (McCall '71)

The Tommy Moe Invitational ski meet was held at Alyeska ski resort for Alaska skiers ages 9-12 the weekend of April 7-8. It was a two-day event of slalom and grand slalom races and is named after Alaska's 1994 gold and silver medallist, Tommy Moe.

At the finish line Tommy was mobbed by 120+ Mighty Mite skiers who wanted him to sign their helmets, shirts and skis. Standing back from the crowd in a custom jumpsuit with "Moe" emblazoned on the buttons was Tommy Sr. I introduced myself and asked him if he was once a jumper as I had heard that from news reports. It turned out that he trained in Missoula '61 and jumped in Alaska '62-'66.

While my sons got their crash helmets signed by Tommy the Olympian, I got to talk with Tommy the smokejumper. It amazed me how many jumper friends we had in common and how he had updates on jumpers of whom I had lost track. He said that after his son's Olympic triumph in Lillehammer, he had received many cards and letters from jumpers and appreciated them.

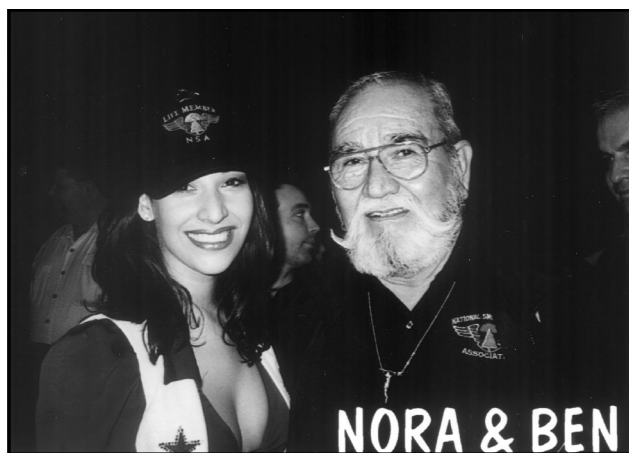
Dave Leiberspach (Fairbanks '70) was soon introduced to Tommy Sr. and when I left to gate keep 10 minutes later they still had not gone through the jump list they had in common. I did get to talk briefly with Tommy Moe Jr. about kayaking, which we both enjoy. Then I asked him if he knew much about his father's jumping.

"Sure, I've been to the smokejumper loft in Fairbanks and seen the old photos with my father in the loft."

Tommy Moe, the Olympian, has been named by Anchorage *Daily News*, "Alaska's Athlete of the Century." It was most interesting talking with his father the smokejumper.



Jerry Dixon skied for Alta, University of Utah and University de Grenoble and is a ski coach in Seward, Alaska.



Life Member Ben Musquez (Missoula '56) visits with Dallas Cowboy cheerleader Nora Cano at a recent Friends and Family Night in Dallas. (Courtesy of Ben Musquez)

SMOKEJUMPER MILESTONES

Smokejumpers often talk about and compare job-related statistics. Most know the exact number of practice jumps and fire jumps they have made and who at their base had the most. Others know the exact number of jumps they need for their next jump pin. Most know who made the most tree landings, rigged the most chutes, or managed to travel the most. It is rare to meet an ex-jumper who cannot tell you how many jumps they made even if it has been 50 years since the last one.

Up until now this information has been spread via word of mouth and for the most part been confined to individual bases. To preserve some of our history and for your enjoyment *Smokejumper* magazine is beginning to accumulate and publish these accomplishments. Below is a list of the initial categories.

Beginning with this issue of *Smokejumper* we will print one or more of the various categories, continuing issue by issue. Please send your nominations/marks to burgon@bendnet.com or mail them to: **Ted Burgon, 55605 Big River Drive Bend, OR 97707 (Fax at 541-593-5887).**

1. Number of states jumped (fire and practice)
2. Fire jumps in a single season
3. Highest elevation landing (fire)
4. Longest letdown
5. Longest packout
6. Generational jumpers (father/son father/daughter)
7. Number of jumpers in one family
8. Husband and wife both jumpers

MILESTONES SUBMITTED SINCE LAST ISSUE

Fire jumps in one season:

27—**Ted Mason** (NIFC '88) 1999

26—**Chuck Sheley** (Cave Junction '59) 1961

Farthest West fire jump (longitude):

Longitude 170 W Little Diomed Island, Alaska, Sept. 4, 1991.

Rod Dow (McCall '68), **Al Biller** (Fairbanks '82), **Robert Collins** (Redmond '69),

Jon Larsen (Fairbanks '89), **Lance Clouser** (Fairbanks '85)

Highest elevation landing:

12,187' Mike Tupper (Fairbanks '85), **Dennis Terry** (Redding '90), **Todd Jenkins** (NIFC '98), **Mel Tenneson** (Fairbanks '86). September 3, 2000, eight miles west of Frisco, Colorado.

12,000' Mike Tupper (Fairbanks '85) and **Dennis Terry** (Redding '90) out of Grand Junction, Colorado 2000

10,700' Tony Peiffer (Missoula '61), **Jim Thompson** (Missoula '63), **Vern Bush** (Missoula '63), **Jerry Lebsack** (Missoula '62) or **Gary Romness** (Missoula '62) in Absaroka Range of the Wapiti District Shoshone N.F in Wyoming.

Longest letdown:

270' **Larry Hyde** (North Cascades '70) Olympic Peninsula 1970.

Most consecutive seasons with a fire jump:

34—**Jerry Ogawa** (McCall '67) 1967 through 2000. ⚡



Items From the Fire Pack



During the years of 1948–51, I worked and jumped out of the base at Intercity Airport, between Twisp and Winthrop, Wash., while I attended classes at Eastern Washington State College—now called Eastern Washington University. I usually would attend the winter and spring quarters and be available for the jump season into the fall.

The first season I was scheduled to report to work (1948), two other rookies and I were driving along the Columbia River from my hometown of Wenatchee, Wash., when we ran into a major obstacle. The weather that year had produced an unusual combination of heavy snowpack in the Cascade Mountains, followed by warm weather and rain. This resulted in a heavy runoff of all streams and rivers feeding the Columbia River.

The Columbia carried all sorts of debris in the flooding current. Later, this 1948 flood of the river was recognized as having produced the greatest amount of runoff water and flood damage in the last hundred years. Many of the bridges on tributary streams and rivers were either washed out or had the approach banks washed away.

In the meantime, I was driving my 1939 Studebaker coupe when stopped by the state patrol, who said no more motor vehicles could pass. I explained that we were reporting for the smokejumper program and had to get through—this even though the roadway was submerged for 100 yards. I had to persuade the patrolmen to let me cross, and if I got stuck, a large wrecker could cable me across. We eventually made it. I could touch

the water with my hand out the window.

After completing the training we found that the season was not a good one from a smokejumper's point of view. There were 21 first-time jumpers and we were only able to make one fire jump apiece that year. However, some of us were selected to make up a special crew to jump into the backcountry to repair bridges that had washed out. One bridge over the Pasayten River was 100 feet long and took nearly three months to fix.

—**Hal Werner**
(North Cascades '48)
Cape Coast, Ghana, W. Africa

Eight smokejumpers were hiking out after extinguishing a fire in Montana when some fellows toting six-shooters came along in search of some thieves, who had stolen horses from the ranger station. Planes were searching for the crooks by air.

The thieves were caught, and the next day **Maynard Shetler** and crew were headed to Missoula by train. The MPs on the train weren't sure what to think when they saw members of the group wearing army clothing but out of uniform. The group convinced them of their status as smokejumpers for the U.S. Forest Service, and was allowed to continue without further incident.

—**Maynard W. Shetler**
(Missoula '45)

We arrived in Missoula early in May of 1944 and were sent to Camp Menard for training. Actually, coming to Montana proved

refreshing in many ways. Everything represented a change. Not having been far from the flat East Coast, the mountains stood in great contrast. The men seemed different in their attitude and outlook, perhaps because everyone there wanted to be there. The training was rigorous and a challenge. Having been doing outside work, I personally felt I was in good shape physically. But after a few days of training, all my muscles took notice of the strenuous activity.

—**Benjamin Case**
(Missoula '44 CPS-103)

Herb Crocker (Missoula '43 CPS-103) spent three years with the smokejumper unit. He really enjoyed the exhilaration of the jumps and the exhausting hours put in firefighting.

—**Catherine Harder Crocker**

Most of Dan's (**Daniel Deal** Missoula '43 CPS-103) time was spent in Montana. The men were trained at Camp Nine Mile and helped pioneer smokejumping which continues today to be an important way to fight forest fires.

—**Frances Taylor Deal**

I spent a year being a guinea pig for atypical pneumonia research in North Carolina and became very sick there. Later I was a smokejumper in Montana making 14 jumps.

—**Ray Funk**
(Missoula '45 CPS-103) 🦉

Jack Ridgway Story

Smokejumper Training Thwarts Hijacking of Pan- Am Clipper 73

by Chuck Sheley (Cave Junction '59)

On September 5, 1986, Pan-Am Clipper 73 was hijacked on the ground in Karachi, Pakistan. Nearly 400 passengers, ground crew and flight attendants spent the next 16 hours as hostages of the gunmen. When the 747's alternate power system failed, the terrorists panicked and opened fire, leaving 21 dead—among them, two Americans.

Among the flight crew was Flight Engineer Jack Ridgway (Cave Junction '60). Even though the hijacking ended with the tragic loss of 21 lives, an even-greater tragedy was averted by the quick and decisive action of the cockpit crew led by Ridgway. The terrorists had eventually planned to destroy the plane, passengers and themselves. Jack says that his smokejumper training 25 years earlier played an important part in his initiating an escape by the flight crew, using an untried escape procedure. The following paragraphs tell this story as recalled by Jack from his home in West Dover, Vt., where he currently is a home builder.

Clipper 73 was scheduled to depart for Frankfurt in the morning hours of September 5. The crew had spent the night in Karachi and was going to the airport to start the pre-flight checks of the aircraft.

On the way to the airport the captain asked Jack if he “heard machine gun fire last night.” Political unrest was commonplace and the airport was secured with uniformed armed guards surrounding the plane when the crew started the pre-flight at 3 A.M. As the crew was finishing pre-flight, a flight attendant came to Jack telling him that there was an armed man downstairs. There are no weapons for the crew other than small crash axes to be used to escape from the cockpit.

Ridgway grabbed the crash ax and proceeded down the spiral staircase, expecting to see a passenger with a handgun. Instead he saw a person in a full security officer uniform and an ID badge, armed with



Jack Ridgway (Courtesy of Jack Ridgway)

an automatic weapon. Due to the unstable political situation in Pakistan, Jack thought that this might be part of a takeover of the country by the military. There were four uniformed and armed men on the plane at this time.

The armed man had not seen Ridgway come down the staircase behind him. Operating under the premise that it was a military coup, Jack retreated quietly up the staircase to the flight deck where he opened one of the cockpit hatches to see if there were any vehicles and activity by the military. There was no activity on the ground outside the 747!

The cockpit of the 747 stood 32 feet off the ground, and could be exited via a small escape hatch which was located just behind and above the captain's seat. There was an escape reel, which was a tension device consisting of a rope attached to a handle. The person exiting the cockpit is supposed to squeeze through the hatch with the handle in hand and leap into space, trusting the escape reel to do its job and prevent a free-fall to the tarmac.

This procedure had been little talked-about and had not been part of any active training by the flight crew. As a matter of fact, it had never been tried at all. There were doubts by the captain and first officer about the advisability of even using this system.

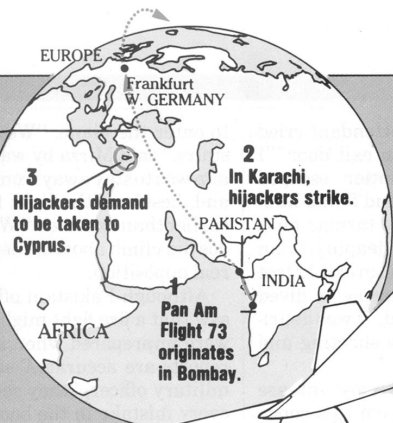
Recalling his smokejumper training some 25 years earlier, Ridgway did not hesitate. He grabbed the handle and exited the cockpit. Jack recalled that the tension device “worked like a charm,” and deposited him on the tarmac some 32 feet below the cockpit. From the tarmac, Jack could see another gunman

Ticket to Trouble

A flight from Bombay to New York is seized by bungling gunmen—who commit mass murder.

1 At dawn, as passengers board Pan Am Flight 73 in Karachi, a van pulls up. Four men leap out and board the plane, spraying gunfire. They select a passenger, shoot him and drop him to the tarmac.

Flight is scheduled for New York via Frankfurt.



2 In Karachi, hijackers strike.

3 Hijackers demand to be taken to Cyprus.

1 Pan Am Flight 73 originates in Bombay.

GENERATOR RUNS OUT OF OIL

MAJORITY OF CAPTIVE PASSENGERS

EMERGENCY CHUTES

PAKISTANI SECURITY FORCES

HIJACKERS ENTER

2 Hearing the commotion, the flight crew locks the cockpit door. They climb out an emergency hatch, winch themselves down and run to safety. The hijackers are stranded. They planned to go to Cyprus, but now they need a pilot.

3 The hijackers herd the passengers together and set a deadline for a new flight crew to arrive: sunset. Before nightfall they grant more time. But the plane's electrical generator dies, and the batteries drain. After the lights fail, the hijackers open fire.

4 In the smoke and noise, passengers and flight attendants make a break for it. They shove open the emergency exits and spill out of the plane. Some slide to the tarmac, and others jump to safety. At least 16 of them are killed.

5 Pakistani commandos have stood by all day, but when the shooting starts, they don't have a ladder. It takes long minutes for the hijackers to run low on bullets. Then the forces enter the plane and capture or kill the four hijackers.

(Courtesy of Newsweek)

holding a stewardess at the door near the first class section. Again, the gunman did not notice or hear Jack.

Ridgway then made his way to the operations office in the terminal. The pilot and copilot had not exited the aircraft at that time. The operations office couldn't contact the plane and had no idea what was going on. At the time, the most-logical possibility was a military takeover of the country by the Pakistani military. The operations people hid Jack in the ceiling as terminal activity increased. Shortly thereafter, the pilot and copilot followed Jack's actions and used the same escape method and made their way to the ops office.

During this time it became evident that there was a hijacking in progress and it was not a Pakistani military takeover. After securing the 747, the hijackers went up to the flight deck to finish securing the plane. They were surprised when the cockpit was completely empty of the flight crew. They immediately contacted the operations office and demanded a flight crew or they would start shooting a passenger every ten

minutes. One person, an American, had already been killed in the early stages of the takeover.

The FBI arrived on the scene and took the flight crew to the American embassy. By this time some details were surfacing, and more were found out later. The hijackers were Palestinian terrorists armed in Libya. Their mission was to hijack the plane, fly to Cyprus and exchange some of the passengers for Palestinian prisoners.

The most-prominent prisoners in Cyprus were three members of a Palestinian group called Force 17, who had been convicted in the murder of three Israelis in 1985. From there, it was to Beirut to drop off the prisoners and then to Tel Aviv, where the aircraft would be blown up in flight. The escape of the flight crew had thrown a big glitch into these plans.

The hijacking had been well planned. The four hijackers approached the 747 dressed in Pakistani security uniforms with ID badges and riding in a vehicle with an emergency light flashing. They passed easily through security and rushed the gangway,



Watermelon break at LaGrande in 1960. L-R: Gary "Tex" Welch, Jan VanWagtendonk, Jack Ridgway, Chuck Sheley, Bill Knight, Owen Riffe. (Courtesy of Jack Ridgway)

shooting an employee.

Once aboard Flight 73, they started securing the aircraft and shot an American passenger, throwing him onto the tarmac. They left the securing of the flight deck until last. That, and Ridgway's immediate action, was the mistake that probably saved the rest of the passengers and crew.

Communications were established with the hijackers when mechanic Meherjee Kharas (who was later killed) opened the line with the cockpit. Negotiations had continued for 16 hours during which time the auxiliary power unit had been running. Officials knew that when the power unit shut down, all lights, air conditioning and radio communication would be lost. It was only a matter of time before this happened.

When it did happen at about 10 P.M. local time, the nervous hijackers started shooting and threw at least two grenades. There were fatalities. More than 100 were injured, either from the shooting or from their escape from the aircraft, which stood high off the ground. All four of the hijackers survived and were taken as prisoners. A fifth terrorist was arrested two days later; all five were convicted and sentenced to hang after a trial in 1988.

Pakistani newspapers called the action a "daring commando action" by the Pakistani military. Later revelations questioned this headline. When the lights

went off in the plane, the runway lights and other airport lights were turned off. The commandos gained control of the aircraft half an hour after the shooting began. They had to wait for a ladder to get into the plane and all the shooting was done by that time. In the 1988 trial of the hijackers, the judge rejected a claim by the defendants that the Pakistani commandos had killed the hostages. Judge Mohammad Babar said the commandos were nowhere near entering the plane when the passengers were killed.

In the words of Pan-Am Vice-Chairman Martin Shugrue, every expert on the subject of hijacking counseled, "Negotiate;

negotiate; negotiate. Buy time; buy time; buy time."

The *Stars and Stripes* reported that a Delta team had been dispatched and was on the way to Karachi at the time "the lights went out."

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India sharply criticized Pakistan's handling of the incident, saying, "I do not believe that fuel for the power unit just ran out. It was a deliberate action to enter the aircraft. Unfortunately, it was bungled and caused the deaths of a number of people."

After reading many newspaper articles and documents provided by Jack, it is evident that the hijackers had planned to end this operation with the destruction of the 747 and all who remained on it. The factor in thwarting this outcome was the escape of the flight crew. The key to their escape was the quick action by Jack Ridgway who didn't hesitate to put into action a technique similar to his smokejumper letdown training 25 years earlier in his life. 🍌

Jack Ridgway completed Navy Flight School in Pensacola, Florida, after three years at Villanova University and one year at San Francisco State University. He flew Sikorsky H-34s for three years in the U.S. Marine Corps including a year in Vietnam. Jack was a pilot/flight engineer/navigator for 14 years with Pam Am. He's currently a builder at Mt. Snow Ski Resort in West Dover, Vermont.

MEMBER PROFILE

DOUG SUTHERLAND

Doug Sutherland (Cave Junction '56, Redding '57)
Washington Commissioner of Public Lands

By Carl Gidlund

Doug, elected Washington Commissioner of Public Lands in November 2000, rookied at Cave Junction and was in the first group that transferred from that base to establish the new one at Redding.

After 45 years, he's finally back in the fire business, for among his department's many duties is protection of some 11 million acres of public and private land.

A Montana native, he moved to Spokane as a youngster. While attending Central Washington University, he heard about the jumpers and, with absolutely no fire fighting experience, he applied for and was accepted into the Cave Junction program.

"That's how it was in those days," he recalls. "I was a strong farm kid and knew some Cave jumpers who recommended me. That could never happen today."

Doug credits much of his success in life to the jumpers and specifically to foreman **Orville Looper** (Cave Junction '49).

"He took me and a lot of other kids and, through patience, kindness and working us hard he made us into men. We really learned teamwork."

Doug's jumping career was limited to two years at the insistence of his first wife. "She wasn't willing to move from Ellensburg to Redding for just a few months every summer. Tell the truth, I believe she also thought the job was a bit dangerous," he says.

After graduating from Central Washington with a BA in history, Doug spent 11 years with the Boeing Co. In 1971, he purchased a tent and awning firm, then built it from four employees to 34 during the next two decades. Seeing government's impact on small businesses and families, he became involved in local politics.

He was elected to the Tacoma City Council in 1980. Two years later he was elected to his first term as mayor of that city.

He's proud that he worked to bring Tacoma's air up to federal standards. And, when Commencement Bay in Tacoma was named a Superfund cleanup site, Doug brought all parties together to craft a solution which avoided lengthy and costly lawsuits and began the cleanup process quickly. He also undertook the nation's first community assessment to determine the quality of the environment in his city.

After two terms as mayor, Doug served as the city of SeaTac's first manager, responsible for the creation, staffing and development of municipal services and develop-

ing a long-term plan for the city.

Returning to office, he was elected Pierce County executive in 1992. In that job he administered the executive branch departments and was responsible for an annual budget in excess of \$650 million.

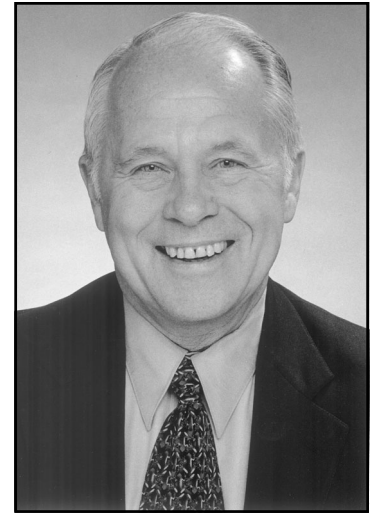
As co-chair of the Tri-County Endangered Species Act Task Force, Doug worked with Republicans and Democrats

to respond to the listing of local salmon on the Endangered Species List.

He and his second wife, Grace, live in University Place, Wash. They have six children and, so far, three grandkids. After nearly half a century, he still thinks of smokejumping as "the second-best job I ever had. The best, of course, is the one I hold down now."

That qualified endorsement of jumping might be somewhat related to pay. He recalls that, as a rookie jumper, he received \$1.87 an hour, "and that was the same for the first hour of the day or the twenty-third hour on a fire.

"But it was an absolutely great summer job, exciting, neat experiences, and some of the best people I've ever associated with." 🦋



Doug Sutherland (Courtesy of Sutherland staff)

NSA Members—Add This Special Video to Your Collection!

At the conclusion of the banquet at Reunion 2000, a 15-minute video produced by **Derrek Hartman** (Redding '98) was shown to the large audience. This production had no dialogue, just some fantastic shots combined with background music that left the attendees spellbound. I was asked many times how this production could be obtained as it is a must for any smoke-jumper collection.

Here is the answer:

Off Season—

Derrek Hartman, PO Box 464, Seal Beach, CA 90740
(562) 594-9553 hartmanfilms@earthlink.net

Fire Season—

Derrek Hartman, West Yellowstone Smokejumpers, PO Box 59771, West Yellowstone, MT 59758

Make checks payable to: West Yellowstone Smoke-jumper Welfare Fund \$15.00

ODDS & ENDS

BY CHUCK SHELEY

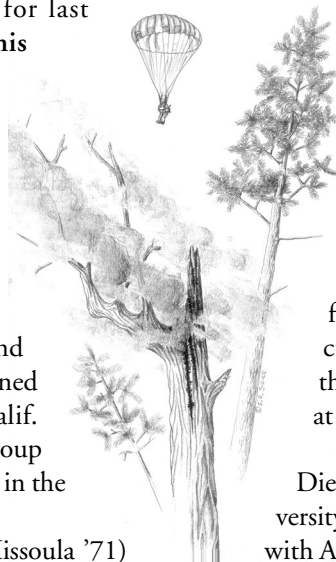
Reading from some of the press releases for last summer's reunion put together by **Dennis Golik** (McCall '74): The 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion (the "Triple Nickles"), America's first all-black paratroop unit, found a special niche of service in 1945. The potentially disastrous wildfires that could have been created by the Japanese fire-balloons led to "Operation Firefly." The Triple Nickles were trained as smoke-jumpers at Pendleton, Oregon, in May and June. During the summer they were stationed for fire duty at Pendleton and Chico, Calif. During the summer and fall of 1945, the group made over 1200 jumps on 36 fires missions in the seven western states and southern Canada.

We received a great picture of **Joe Stutler** (Missoula '71) in a July 2000 article from one of the newspapers in central Oregon. Entering his 31st fire season, Joe is now living in Bend with his wife, Lonna, and their 12-year-old daughter. Two other daughters attend college. Joe is fire safety/operations specialist for 20 national forests and 10 BLM districts in the Northwest.

Shep Johnson (McCall '56) just advised that he was sending a \$250 donation to the NSA in the name of "Paperlegs" Peterson. There's a story behind this donation. It seems that Paperlegs owned a model '97 Winchester shotgun. When Pete passed away, Shep was in charge of selling his guns. **Reid Jackson** (McCall '49) expressed a real interest in obtaining that shotgun. Shep paid the appraisal price and gave it to Reid and said it was a gift from the family. Reid wouldn't stand for that and sent \$250 to the family not knowing that Shep had already done so. Confused yet? Bottom line, the family gave the money back to Shep and Shep remembered the NSA. Many thanks to Martha and Frank Gonzales (daughter and son-in-law), Reid Jackson, Shep Johnson and Ridge Peterson.

"**Wild Bill**" **Yensen** (McCall '53) writes that he was contacted by the History Channel and they wanted to use some of Bill's movies in an episode called "Suicide Missions." As far as the "suicide" goes, he told them that we were not suicidal. "If it was too dangerous to jump, we would go home and let 'er burn!" Bill recently gave an hour-long slide show to the BLM lunch group in St. George which was well received.

It's been about two years since the **Redding Smokejumpers** made a jump way down south on the Los Padres N.F. After a 33-year break, the L.P. called a load of 12 jumpers during the summer of 1999. The fire call came in at 0932. The Sherpa flew 295 miles and the jumpers were



on the fire at 1159 hours. That's what the job is about!

Starr Jenkins (Cave Junction '48) passed along a couple interesting notes from **Bob DeZur** (Missoula '49):

Hi Starr: Saw your name (which I remembered) in the October issue of *Smoke-jumper*. You probably don't remember me. I trained in Missoula in 1949 and jumped for four years there. I was on the Mann Gulch rescue mission in '49. I was a forestry student in those days and earned my Ph.D. in mathematics at the University of Oregon in 1959.

Had a brief stint in academia: Taught at San Diego State, Washington State University, the University of Wyoming and finally to my present position with Apple Computer, Inc. in Cupertino, CA. Just got interested in the jumpers again about a year ago. Was on vacation when the 2000 celebration occurred. Sorry I missed it. ...

I was very lucky concerning the Mann Gulch fire. Walt Rumsey, David Navon, Eldon Diettert and I were on a timber cruising project out of White Sulfur Springs before the fire season started. The evening they flew us back to Missoula [August 4, 1949], I jumped out of the plane and ran into the office and signed on the Jump List first—the others after me, and I was in the second position. About 1:30 PM the next day there was a two man fire call for the Lolo National Forest, so I got to go on it. But we flew around for quite a while and could not find any smoke so we returned to Missoula where the DC-3 for the Mann Gulch fire had taken off about 20 minutes before.

Anyhow, I got to go on the rescue mission the next morning and eventually was able to find Eldon Deittert's body by first spotting his green cigarette lighter and then finally realizing that the burned/burnt log in front of me was not a log at all, but was Eldon's remains. I never told his brother nor his family how badly burned his body was. I was a forestry student in Missoula during those days. [How sad that Eldon did not use that green cigarette lighter to save himself with a "frontfire" as Wag Dodge had done]. ...

Best regards, Bob DeZur, 1575 Tenaka Place, Apt. N-4, Sunnyvale, CA 94087. E-mail address: dezur@apple.com

John Gordon (NCSB '63) was recently named superintendent of the Cave Creek, Arizona School District. The Cave Creek District, located near Phoenix, has 4,500 students. John retired as superintendent of the Wenatchee, Washington School District in June 2000

before moving to Arizona.

He earned a BA in education while at Eastern Washington University where he played varsity basketball for two years. John also earned a masters in administration from Washington State University. In 1988, he was named Washington State Outstanding Principal while at Wenatchee High School.

John jumped at NCSB from 1963 to 1969 and 1973 to 1974 where he made 112 jumps. He noted that those were the years when returning smokejumpers only got two refresher jumps and were lucky to get another practice jump during the summer.

John told us “There are lots of challenges in education but my leadership skills were mostly formed while I was a smokejumper working for Francis Lufkin and Bill Moody and refereeing college basketball and football games. Mostly tho’, I learn from the kids!”

Clayton Berg (Missoula ’52) made an interesting response to an article in the January 2001 issue of *Audubon* magazine entitled “Burning Money” by Ted Williams.

“William’s criticism of the US Forest Service, BLM, and National Park Service is generally good. But he is just as wrong-headed and limited in some ways as they are.

“My high school chemistry book says when you

burn a bunch of valuable wood and other organic matter, you have a less valuable pile of ashes. Should we sit and watch as one half or more of a mountain range burns? When will it dawn on them to save many seed orchards or small groves within vast fires? This could be done when fires lay down at night. There are places in the 1910 fires of Western Montana and Idaho where you can’t see a conifer for three miles. I believe it was in the 1930s near Anaconda, Mont., that a fire burned so hot the soil still doesn’t grow weeds or grass. Is the above described the slow recover they want? If so, there will be more!

“Fire is not the only influence on forest areas. Those who say fire is good are just as screwed up and short sighted as those who want all fires put out. There are many complicated differences in fires to consider from one small area to another and certainly from one large region to another. Many small fires and fewer big fires would be better in most cases. When I used to fight fires, we hated to see them get big because they would bring in overhead and equipment which just got in the way of well-trained crews. These crews and/or the weather is what generally puts out fires—not piles of money and scads of equipment. If burning conditions are bad,



Rocky Landing-Barrie Turner Shovel Creek Fire 1960. (Courtesy of Barrie Turner)

pounce on the fires.”

Bud Macatee (Cave Junction '55) stated in an e-mail that he thoroughly enjoys the quarterly magazine and that he had just spent some time with **Jack Harter** (Cave Junction '51) in Hawaii reminiscing about their days at CJ.

Chris Sorenson (Associate), who serves *Smokejumper* magazine helping edit articles, passed this along from the Web sites of the *Billings Gazette* and air tanker pilots:

AWARD OVERTURNED IN AIR TANKER CRASH

MISSOULA (AP) - The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has overturned the \$3.5 million judgment awarded to families of two pilots of a U.S. Forest Service slurry bomber that crashed near Missoula in 1994.

Pilot Robert Kelly and co-pilot Randy Lynn “were not watching where they were going,” the appeals court ruled.

“If there is one thing that all of us learn from the time that we begin to walk, ride a tricycle, roller skate, drive a car or pilot an airplane, it is to understand an absolute, imperative, simple basic rule - watch where you are going,” wrote Circuit Judge Warren Ferguson. “Here, the pilots did not. The government cannot be faulted.”

Their air tanker crashed while dropping retardant on a forest fire 18 miles northwest of Missoula. Lynn, a Missoula resident, was 44. Kelly was 57 and lived in Alamogordo, N.M.

U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy awarded the families \$3.5 million, saying the government did not provide adequate safety and emergency management training for the pilots, and better training could have saved their lives.

In its own manual, the Forest Service acknowledged its responsibility “to oversee safety measures,” Molloy said. Its mandatory National Accident Prevention Plan prescribed very specific training regimens in crew resource management and human safety factors.

But the appeals court sided with the government, overturning Molloy’s decision and insisting that the Forest Service is not obliged to provide “a specific type and form of training” for firefighter pilots.

“The Forest Service’s flight training is a matter left to the agency’s discretion and is susceptible to policy analysis,” wrote Circuit Judge Margaret McKeown. “The District Court erred by failing to dismiss the case for lack of subject matter jurisdiction.”

In his concurrence, Ferguson focused on errors made by the pilots, and said the government cannot be held accountable for those errors. He said they were “extremely well-qualified and experienced pilots” but also were fatigued, and that fatigue caused them to make mistakes.

“When the crew attempted to activate the tanker’s auxiliary jet engines in preparation for the run (on the Stony Creek drainage), the engines flamed out, probably because the crew had failed to transfer fuel from the plane’s main tanks to the outboard tanks while en route

to the fire,” he wrote.

“The crew then attempted to restart the engines by descending in order to gain airspeed, which would allow them to air start the jets without having to use the mechanical starter. In the process, however, both Kelly and Lynn became focused on trying to restart the engines, and both lost situational awareness—meaning that neither one was paying attention to the surrounding terrain.” Information obtained from the Associated Press.

Heard from **Bob Scofield** (Cave Junction '49) concerning the “Jump in the Sequoias” article from the January issue of *Smokejumper* magazine. “Our trip to the Sequoia in 1949 was indeed the first time jumpers had been used that far south in California. We used a contract ship, the Ford Tri-motor from Mott Field in Mt. Shasta. Bob (Nolan) was right about the trip being incredibly slow. It took all day to reach Porterville! Compare that to the 1950 Sequoia jump. On that day, ‘French’ Brunette and I jumped the Sheep Creek Fire about two hours out of Cave Junction. Of course, our jump ship was the Lockheed Lodestar!”

Manny Haiges (Missoula '58) was in Libby, Montana, in February and was served up a bottle of Tri-motor amber at the Mint Bar. Even though it has been around Montana for a couple years, it was new to Manny. The amber is brewed by the Lang Creek Brewery in Marion, Montana.

The term “NED” has been kicking around Region 4 since the '50s and rookies are normally called NEDs for quite some time. **Leo Cromwell** (IDC '66) relates a **Stan Tate** told story:

Rev. Stan Tate once told a funny story about the term NED. Stan Tate (MYC '53) performed the marriage ceremony of Dallas “Yergy” Yergenson (MYC '54) in 1955. Stan started in 1953 but was not jumping in 1954 when Yergy started, so during the wedding Yergy got impatient with Stan and called him a NED. After the ceremony was over Stan said “Congratulations NED.” And Yergy and Stan proceed to get into an argument as to which one of them was the true NED. Yergy had to admit that he was the NED.

One thing is certain about the term NED, it’s still alive and well in Region 4.

Bill Breyfogle (Missoula '55) tells about his refresher training in 1957 where he and another returnee completed it in one day before being sent out on project work. The interesting part is that both of his refresher jumps were made during the visit of then secretary of agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson.

Katherine Sylvester, wife of **Vernon Sylvester** (Missoula '47) passes along a note that they both enjoy *Smokejumper* magazine which they receive in Stevensville,

Montana. They also sent along an article from the Choteau, Montana, *Acantha* from April 2000 with a story about the retirement from smokejumping of **Larry Wright** (Missoula '71) after 27 years and 450 jumps. The article was written by *Smokejumper* magazine copy editor **Melody Martinsen**.

Fred Ebel (Missoula '57) e-mailed **Carl Gidlund** (Missoula '58) with some good words about Carl's stories in the April edition of *Smokejumper* magazine. "Just a quick note to let you know how much I enjoyed the latest edition of the magazine. The stories about Mouse and the Japanese balloons were both excellent and I really appreciated the update on Gene DeBruin. In fact your story on Gene's capture may just get me off my duff to write a letter on his behalf."

Murry Taylor (Redding '65) is in Alaska now putting the finishing touches on his retirement. He is working with the training and then will be detailed to the warehouse where he will work as loadmaster until the retirement papers are completed. "By the way, I'll be going to D.C. in early June for 10 days to give testimony before congressional subcommittees concern-

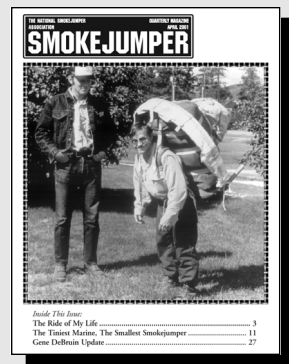
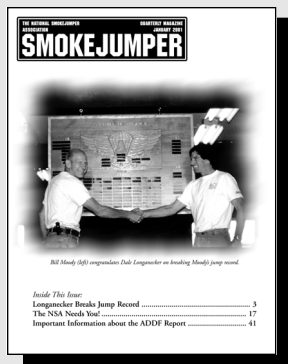
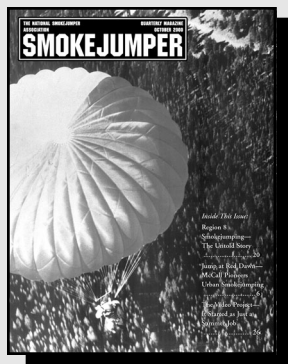
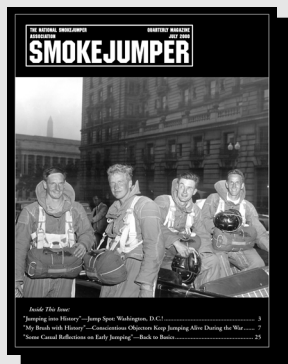
ing the high cost and mismanagement that has come to large fire suppression efforts. I'll be going as part of a group that studied the Megram Complex—a group of fires that burned north of Big Bar and near Denny in '99."

Jerry Dixon (McCall '71) has had Idaho State University do a reprint of his 1979 book, *South Fork of the Salmon River, Wild and Free*. "I was thrilled to be asked by my alma mater if they could do this as an on line book. In the latest edition I added much about jumping in McCall. Jerry would like any of our readers to do a review of his book. It can be viewed at: www.isu.edu/outdoor/sfchpt1.htm

Ben Conner (North Cascades '48) is in the Bayfront Medical Center, St. Petersburg, Florida, recovering from two successive operations for intestinal blockage. His condition is made more complex by a thirteen-year long battle with Parkinson's disease plus a heart condition. He is now out of intensive care and hoping to regain strength and mobility to where he can return home. Ben was profiled in the April edition of *Smokejumper* magazine. You can contact Ben at: 18

SMOKEJUMPER

BACK ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE



There is a limited number of copies available of the July 2000, October 2000, January 2001 and April 2001 editions of *Smokejumper* magazine.

Each copy is \$3.50 S/H included. Use the merchandise order form or write it out.

Dapp Lane, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, tel: 717 766-9244. Best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Jim Veitch (Missoula '67) is off to another season with the Alaska smokejumpers. Jim has developed a heavy pack training system and will be publishing a book down the line. His numbers continue to blow my mind! His training pack weight was 200 pounds prior to leaving for Fairbanks. At age 54, Jim has to be one of the older jumpers in the system but I'm guessing that few current jumpers would be able to keep up with him in the "Packout Olympics."

An update of Jim's pack test that just came in under the deadline for this issue: Jim showed the results of his heavy pack training program as he carried 200 pounds over a three mile course in 40 minutes and 30 seconds.

Bill Moody (North Cascades '57) reports that he had a good visit with **George Honey** (North Cascades '40). "At 95 he's still real sharp. His recall of people and events is good. George sure had lots of good things to say about **Francis (Lufkin)** and **Fred Brauer**. Overall, healthwise, he seems to be doing fairly well in spite of his cancer."

April 12, 2001—Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the selection of **Dale N. Bosworth** as the new chief of the Forest Service. Bosworth succeeds former chief Mike Dombeck who retired from federal service March 31. Bosworth currently serves as regional forester for the Forest Service's Northern Region. As Forest Service chief, Bosworth will oversee an organization of over 30,000 employees.

Bosworth is a native of California and second-generation forester and Forest Service employee. He graduated from the University of Idaho in 1966 with a bachelor of science degree in forestry.

Shirley Braxton, who managed the NSA office in Missoula for twenty months, dropped a nice letter to NSA President Larry Lufkin recently. "I just want you all to know how grateful I am for having had the opportunity of sharing a little of the camaraderie of this worthwhile organization. When thinking back, I often wonder had women been encouraged to become smokejumpers, I might have wanted to jump out of planes along with you".

From **Mike Apicello** (Cave Junction '78): "I had a bad day at work yesterday and when I got home was feeling pretty glum. Then I noticed that my April 2001 issue of *Smokejumper* magazine was sitting on the table. I just about dropped, and almost cried.

Seeing Mouse again lifted my spirits beyond comprehension. My wife knew I would become engrossed with not only the article, but the entire magazine."

"I can not describe what this story does and means to me. Today, another close CJ jumper called me. I told him about the article. Now he's watching for his mail. My day got brighter and my heartstrings got a little retuning. This will be a classic issue for all of us. Keep up the good work"!

Leo Cromwell (Idaho City '66) added some good words about **Jerry Dixon's** new book: "Jerry Dixon (McCall '71) who wrote of his personal near-tragedy *Ten Seconds over Birch Hill* in the April 2000 *Smokejumper*, has written a new personal story that is well worth the effort in finding on the Internet. His new story, *South Fork of the Salmon Wild and Free*, is available on the Internet as an on-line book (www.isu.edu/outdoor/sfstart.htm)".

"For those of who have jumped or floated the South Fork of the Salmon, you will enjoy his history of its people, its plant and animal life and natural history. Jerry tells it like it is and includes past jumpers, pilots and pioneers that were such an important part of the area's history. His stand on environmental issues cost him his job in McCall and he moved north to Alaska. Only Dixon would try to traverse the Salmon River Mountain from McCall to Stanley during the high-water months. (**Rick Hudson** (Boise '73) would probably lead other foolish jumpers with his mountain bike.) It's a great true story of the past, present and future of Idaho's Salmon River country." 🍄

JERRY WILLIAMS TO D.C.

WASHINGTON. **Jerry Williams** (RAC '72) will head the Forest Service's Fire and Aviation Management staff in Washington, D.C. Williams most recently served as director of Aviation, Fire and Air staff in the Northern Region headquartered in Missoula, Mont. He replaces Jose Cruz who retired earlier this year.

Williams began his Forest Service career 32 years ago as a firefighter, serving as a smokejumper for seven years. He has served in fire management positions at district, forest, regional, and national office levels. Additionally, he has broad experience in fire suppression, fire use, and the wilderness fire program. Before becoming regional fire director for the Northern Region, Williams served as assistant national fire director for operations in Washington, D.C.

In 1999, Williams co-lead development of a national strategy designed to protect communities, watersheds, and species at risk in fire-adapted ecosystems. The strategy became a basis for the National Fire Plan. He holds a master's degree in fire science from the University of Washington.

Williams and his wife, Greta have been married for 27 years. Their daughter, Sarah, is a student at the University of Virginia. Their son, David, attends the University of Montana. 🍄

The Legend of Toolbox Springs

or

“Anything for a Jump”

by Charles Mansfield (Cave Junction '59)

On the 22nd of July 1966, a fire broke out at a place called Toolbox Springs in the Fremont National Forest. The Toolbox Springs fire was located between Klamath Falls and Lakeview, Ore. This part of eastern Oregon is heavily roaded and covered primarily by Ponderosa pine. The fire quickly outran the local personnel and expanded into project size.

The first fire call came in to the CJ base shortly after noon, and both Twin Beechcraft jump ships were dispatched with full loads to attack a hotspot at the head of the fire. Due to the distance from the CJ to the fire, it took more than two hours for the jumpers to arrive at the fire. They jumped without incident and began their attack.

The fog of war settled in and the Supervisor's Office of the Fremont National Forest was uncertain whether more jumpers would be required. The CJ base

office maintained communications with the Fremont Forest during the afternoon, but the Fremont forest could not make a decision about sending more jumpers. At nearly 1800, permission was given by the Fremont fire-control officer to send a second wave of jumpers to the fire, with the condition that they could be recalled at any time. The cast of characters was now set.

The Cast:

First Wave

First aircraft

Pilot: Hal Ewing
Spotter: Chuck Sheley
Jumpers: Jerry Howe, Lou Wayers,
Tommy Albert, Gary Peters

Second aircraft

Pilot: John Cowan
Spotter: Dee Dutton
Jumpers: George Straw, Jerry
Brownwood,
Emmett Grijalva,
John Robison

Second Wave

First Aircraft

Pilot: Hal Ewing
Spotter: Dick Wessell
Jumpers: Chuck Sheley, Chuck
Mansfield, Alex Thios,
Dave Ward, Gary Buck

Second Aircraft

Pilot: John Cowan
Spotter: Dee Dutton
Jumpers: LeRoy Cook, Terry
Egan, Joe Niesen,
Keith Lockwood,
Wes Brown



(Courtesy of Bob Noe)

The CJ Base suggested that the second wave of jumpers be sent without firepacks or supplies in order to squeeze in an extra jumper. Since the fire was of project size the required equipment would be available for the jumpers when they got to the fire. The Fremont Forest agreed that they could provide the required equipment. Due to the press of time with approaching sunset, we took off in the second wave without dinner. The cooks were not too pleased with this, but they were accustomed to uneaten meals.

The flight to the fire was uneventful, and we arrived in the area just as the sun was setting. The fireboss was contacted and his response was, “Since they are here, go ahead and drop them.”

By the time the jump spot was selected and the letout point was determined, it was getting dark. I was one of the last to jump, and as I sat in the door of the plane my eyes had dark-adapted enough that I could tell the difference between trees and the ground. It seemed to be fairly level country with clear space between the trees.

I jumped, maneuvered to a large clearing, and prepared to do a landing roll. When I hit the ground, I was surprised by the amount of action that took place. I did some of the most active rolling I had ever done on level ground. As I stood up I was very unsteady on my feet. Only then did I learn that the jump spot was on a steep hillside. Everyone in the second wave made it to the ground without incident.

We made our way to the fireline and were met by a line boss, who didn't have any idea what to do with us. He also remarked that he noticed the bright flashing fire beacons on the tops of the planes. What he had seen were the warning beacons that all aircraft are required to display when the aircraft is in operation. After some confusion, we were taken to the other jumpers at the head of the fire. We were surprised to find that the fire was completely lined.

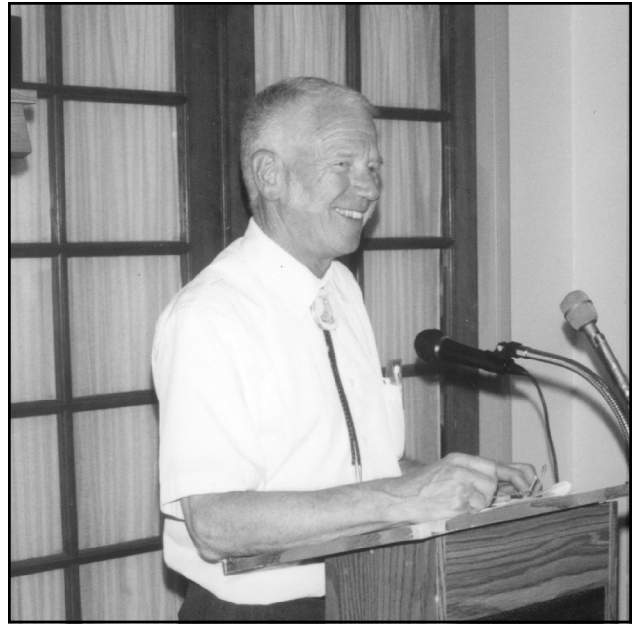
We requested tools, hard hats, flashlights, food, and water from the line boss and he indicated that he would see what he could do, but that he was not certain what he could accomplish. We borrowed tools from wherever we could, and set out to spend the night mopping up.

Somehow the message of our late arrival never got through to the fire boss, and the 18 of us never got sufficient supplies. Breakfast time came and went and we didn't get fed. We finally cornered one of the fire overhead personnel on a road in the middle of the fire and conveyed our displeasure to him. He quickly arranged for a bus to pick us up and take us to a logging camp.

The logging camp was run by a private logging company. It was one of the last such facilities in the history of American logging. There were several buildings in the camp including an office, bunks, washhouses, tool sheds, warehouses, shops, and last but not least, an old-time mess hall that could seat a couple hundred men. The mess hall was of great interest to us because we had not eaten since noon the day before.

We quickly washed up and went to the mess hall. We started through the door to get some food and were met by the cook and his helpers. They were not pleased by having a crew show up in their domain during off-hours (everyone was supposed to be at work in the woods at midday). The cook had not been informed of our arrival. We were rather vocal about not having eaten in 24 hours and that we were going to have some food.

The cook quickly sized up the situation, and realized he had 18 customers for one of his best breakfasts. He asked us to wait on the porch and told



Chuck Mansfield. (Courtesy of Chuck Mansfield)

us breakfast would be right up. In 20 minutes, the bull cook came to the door and took us to a table loaded with one of the best breakfasts that I have ever seen.

The table was loaded with eggs, bacon, ham, steak, potatoes, biscuits, hotcakes, toast, fruit, juice, milk and all the coffee that we could drink. We honored the cook's efforts by clearing the tables of everything he had prepared and thanked him profusely for his efforts. The cook was actually pleased.

We then went to the bunks. These were small buildings each containing four steel cots. The beds were well made, with clean sheets and wool blankets. The accommodations were not up to the standards of a grand hotel, but they were clean and comfortable. After a couple of hours sleep, the bell at the mess hall rang, and it was time for dinner. The cooks had set aside a table for our crew that was again loaded with a hearty meal—this time of steak, roast beef, pork chops, potatoes, salad and, again, all the coffee we could drink. The cook came out and greeted us when we had cleared the table. He was one of the old-time camp cooks who took great pride in the quality and quantity of what he provided. He seemed dumbfounded by the amount of food that a crew of college-boy smokejumpers could put away, and the degree of enjoyment they took in every scrap.

We were loaded on a bus and driven back to the fire. This time, equipment was provided to us. We were given a boss from the fire team, and were asked to mop up in the general fire area. Unfortunately for the boss, who was a pompous ass, he didn't realize what kind of crew he had. A bunch of well-fed and rested

smokejumpers are best left to their own leadership, for the degree of inventiveness that they can provide is beyond what most people would believe. Our boss felt he should direct the efforts of each individual. One point of misunderstanding came from a TV commercial for Nesbit's Orange Drink that claimed: "Take home some of that orange stuff—You'll find it way over there in the corner."

Our boss had not seen the commercials (television was not too common in eastern Oregon at the time). He thought we were referring to his ugly orange hard hats when the cry "Take home some of that orange stuff—You'll find it way over there in the corner" would ring out in the darkness. In actuality the cry had come to mean something akin to "Let's take the fire home so we can get out of here."

The second mistake that the boss made was to spread us out over a fairly large area to mop up the burning material. For this type of work, we generally liked to work without flashlights. The boss began to circulate among us and check to make sure we were working (and not hiding his hard hats). He kept his flashlight on, and you could see him coming through the smoke for some distance. All he could do was to home in on the sound of shovels. As he came close to a couple of guys in the dark they would quietly leave where they were working, circle the boss in the dark and when he went on to the next sound they would return to where they were working.

After the boss had passed someone and was off in the distance, the cry "Take home some of that orange stuff ..." would ring out in the darkness. This game went on throughout the night.

My role was to play straight man for the rest of the crew. I would let him find me and he would want to know where our leaders were. I would point out a sound in the dark and off he would go. I would then move to a different area and begin mopping up again. Eventually the boss would find me, express surprise at finding me in that location, and I would convince him that I had been working at that spot all night. He would wander off in search of his phantom crew again. This game went on all night. By sunrise, we had mopped up a considerable area, but the boss was convinced that only one person was working and he was not too certain who that person was.

We were fed cold meals and told to stand by until a decision was made about what to do with us. We waited for a couple of hours, and then were told to gather our gear and get ready to go home. It was past noon by the time we set out in a bus, and it was dinnertime when we reached Grants Pass, a town

about 30 miles from our base. We persuaded the driver to stop at a Shakey's Pizza.

The locals were not too sure at first about the dirty, smelly crew that had descended upon them, but the party quickly livened up. Tom Albert was persuaded to get up on the fireplace and do his new dance called the "Hairlipped Turkey," to the cries of "Take home some of that orange stuff ..." and the strains of the song of the Hairlipped Turkey "Nobble, Nobble" sung to the tune of "Louie, Louie." Seldom has there been a happier crew than that who piled back into the bus for the final 30 miles to our base, and the customers of Shakey's enjoyed their evening's entertainment.

Thus began the legend of "Toolbox Springs" and the claim that the CJ Smokejumpers would do Anything for a Jump.

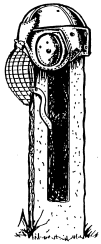
Excerpted from the book *Tales from Sky and Fireline* by Charles R. Mansfield © Coyote Tales Publishing, 2000. 🦋

Chuck Mansfield began his firefighting career early, when his father, a district ranger on the Malheur N.F., took him on a small fire at age seven. He rookied at Cave Junction in 1959 and jumped until 1969 while going to college. Chuck received a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Idaho in 1970. His career included a postdoctoral at the Manned Spacecraft Center and 17 years as a senior scientist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. He retired in 1993 and now operates Coyote Aviation, Coyote Publishing and Coyote Aerospace. He may be contacted at <http://www.CoyoteAAerospace.com>

Future Home of the NSA Exhibit?



The Evergreen Aviation Educational Institute located at McMinnville, Oregon, has built this \$16 million building to house the Spruce Goose and other aviation exhibits. Is the NSA involved? Read "Sounding Off" by the editor on page 8. (Courtesy of Steve Smith)



Off The List

We want to know! If you learn of the serious illness or death of a member of the smokejumper community, whether or not he or she is a member, your Association wants to know about it. We would like to express your Associations's sentiments and

spread the word to others. Please phone, write or e-mail our Missoula headquarters and/or our webmaster (webmaster-@smokejumpers.com) including the name, address and phone number of the subject's next of kin. We'll take it from there.

Arthur S. Hoylman (Cave Junction '45)

Arthur Hoylman, a conscientious objector to World War II who served his nation as a Forest Service smokejumper, died in Biglerville, Pa., on February 5, 2001.

Born December 26, 1922, in Creston, Mont., he was a member of Bethel Mennonite Church in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where he served as a member of the church council and Sunday school superintendent. He was also a member of the Chester County Planning Commission, Lions Club, Tender Care Pregnancy Center Board, and a former member and treasurer of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association and the Adams Rescue Mission Board. He also was a township supervisor.

Arthur operated a dairy farm for 17 years and had served as an agent for the Pennsylvania Farms Association. He started and ran an insurance agency in Gettysburg from 1979 to 1997.

His wife of 54 years, Annabelle, two sons, a daughter, seven grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and a sister survive him.

Memorial contributions may be made to Tender Care Pregnancy Center, 354 York St., Gettysburg, PA 17325 or to Bethel Mennonite Church, 2335 Biglerville Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Arthur Hoylman, P.O. Box 4434, Gettysburg, PA 17325-4434.

Edward Lane Nellist (Missoula '69)

Ed died March 12, 2001, at the age of 54.

A resident of Cutten, Calif., he was a fourth generation native of a pioneering family that settled in the Humboldt County area in the 1850s. Ed graduated from Humboldt State College in 1971. To finance his education, he worked for the California Department of Forestry from 1964 to 1969 when he joined the U.S. Forest Service as a smokejumper during the fire season. Ed fought wildland fires from Alaska to New Mexico until 1975, and had 109 jumps. In the off-season while attending college he worked for Arcata Redwood Co. and Pierson Building Center and traveled worldwide with smokejumper buddies. He became a volunteer fireman with Humboldt Fire District in 1976 and was hired full-time in November 1978. He retired as a captain in April 2000 after a 21-year career.

Ed felt at home fly-fishing in a stream or backpacking the wilds of the coastal ranges pursuing photography. He also enjoyed taking stepdaughter Melissa and her fellow students on field trips. He grew prize-winning roses, participated as a member of the Jed Smith Mountain Men and traveled to see his many friends.

His wife, Linda, stepdaughter Melissa Glass, of Santa Barbara; his mother, Jane, and brother, Charles of Eureka; and numerous relatives in California, Washington and Alaska, survive him.

Ed was a strong believer in education. He supported youth and helped those who suffered as a result of fires.

Contributions in lieu of flowers may be made to the Scholarship Fund, Ladies Auxiliary of Humboldt Fire District #1, 3455 Harris Street, Eureka, CA 95501, or to the American Red Cross, P. O. Box 3402, Eureka, CA 95502.

Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Edward Nellist, P.O. Box 175, Cutten, CA 95534-0175.

Paul F. Garrett Sr. (Pendleton, '45)

Retired Army Sgt. Maj. Paul F. Garrett Sr., 79, a smokejumper member of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion and the Triple Nickle Association, died March 20 in Fayetteville, N.C. He was buried with military honors in Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery in Spring Lake, N.C.

Born in Childersburg, Ala., he graduated as valedictorian of his 1940 high school class. He enlisted in the Army in 1942 and subsequently completed paratroop training and joined the Triple Nickles in 1944. He was assigned to smokejumping duties with his unit the following year. He served with the 7th Infantry Division during the Korean War, and in 1959 was promoted to first sergeant in the 101st Airborne Division.

In 1961, he was assigned to Special Forces and, while with the green berets in Laos that year, he was promoted to sergeant major, the first black soldier to hold that rank. For the next 10 years, his Special Forces assignments included Laos, Thailand, Okinawa and Vietnam. He was discharged in 1971 with decorations that included two Combat Infantry Badges, the Master Parachutist Badge, two Army Commendation Medals and the Vietnam Gallantry Cross.

He taught black soldiers to read and write, survived two free-fall accidents and was a role model for desegregation of the military.

Sgt Maj. Garrett's wife, Rebecca, preceded him in death. They had eight grandchildren, nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

W. Paul Wheeler (North Cascades '62)

The Rev. W. Paul Wheeler, 58, died March 26, 2001 in Libby, Mont., following an extended illness. He was born at Winthrop, Wash., to the Rev. Walter and Genevieve Wheeler and attended grade school in Twisp and Grand Coulee, Wash., where he also attended high school. Following high school, the

U.S. Forest Service employed him as a smokejumper. He received a BA from Northwest College in Kirkland, Wash., where he served as student body president, Missionary Society president, was with the college public relations team, and served a missionary internship in Guyana. While in college, he married Anita Green with whom he ministered for 36 years. He continued his education at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary at Springfield, Mo. He had pastored churches in Pine Bluffs, Wyo., Stoneham, Colo., Superior and Cut Bank, Mont. Gunnison, Colo., and Libby, Mont. He also spent some years in ministry at American Samoa. He was a devoted husband and father, spending time with his sons on the football field, hunting and fishing expeditions and supporting various school events. Surviving him are his wife Anita of Libby; three sons, his parents, three sisters, a brother, and numerous nieces and nephews. Memorials may be made to the Paul Wheeler Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o 1108 Utah Ave., Libby, MT 59923. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Anita Wheeler, 1108 Utah Ave., Libby, MT 59923-2526.

Richard Lukes (Missoula '57)

Dick Lukes, 64, died of Alzheimer's disease on February 22, 2001, at his home in Groveton, Texas.

Born December 19, 1936, in Lisbon, N.D., he was a forestry and ROTC graduate of the University of Montana. Prior to joining the smokejumpers, he was a lookout on the Clearwater National Forest. He jumped for two years, spent two years on active duty in the Army, and worked four years in timber management positions on the Flathead National Forest, Montana. From 1964 to 1970, he was a forester on the Helena National Forest, Montana, then served on the Lolo National Forest, also in Montana, from 1970 to 1984, as timber management assistant, acting ranger, then Plains District ranger.

In 1984, he transferred to the National Forests in Texas as Trinity District ranger, a position he held until his retirement in 1994.

His first wife, Barbara, preceded Dick in death. His widow, Sue Clayton Lukes, two sons, a daughter, stepdaughter and stepson and nine grandchildren survive him.

He was actively involved with the Boy Scouts for many

years, and with his church, the First Assembly of God.

Memorials may be made to the Greater East Texas Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, P.O. Box 630636, Nacogdoches, TX 75963, or to the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, Baylor College of Medicine, 6550 Fannin, Houston, TX 77030.

Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Sue Lukes, P.O. Box 857, Groveton, TX 75845.

Steve Vangundy (Redding '98)

Steve Vangundy died of cancer Tuesday, April 10, 2001, at a Chico, California, hospital. He was employed by the Mendocino N.F. as a fire engine operator at the Stonyford station. Steve was also fire chief of the Stonyford Volunteer Fire Department and an NSA member.

He started his seven-year career with the U.S. Forest Service on the District Cultural Crew and was promoted to the FEO position last December. Steve rookied at Redding in 1998 and jumped that season before returning to the district.

Survivors include his wife, Lindy; two sons, Steven and Lance, and two daughters, Cheyanne and Trishia, all of Stonyford.

Thomas Chiprany (McCall '64)

Tom died in Phoenix, Ariz., on June 3, 1998, of a cerebral hemorrhage. He was 55 at the time of his death.

Born June 23, 1942, in Cleveland Ohio, he was raised in the Wood River Valley of Idaho. Tom graduated from Hailey High School where he participated in many sports but was especially talented in football and basketball. While attending Idaho State University and studying for his geology degree he jumped from McCall, in 1964 and 1965.

Tom joined the Navy as an aviator and served 21 years, attaining the rank of commander. Following his retirement, he flew for Eastern Airlines. At the time of his death he worked for Kitty Hawk Airlines and was on a business trip for his company when he passed away. He received full military rites and burial.

His wife Sonjia, his daughter Lisa and his son David survive him. Condolences may be sent to Sonjia Chiprany, 1475 Mahogany Chase, Acworth, GA 30101. 🕊

Dickenson Named Base Manager at North Cascades

Steve Dickenson (LaGrande '78) was named to the base manager position at North Cascades in April of this year. He has been a Coordinator at NICC for the last two seasons after moving to Boise in 1999 where his wife Sarah also worked as a fire planner for the National Park Service.

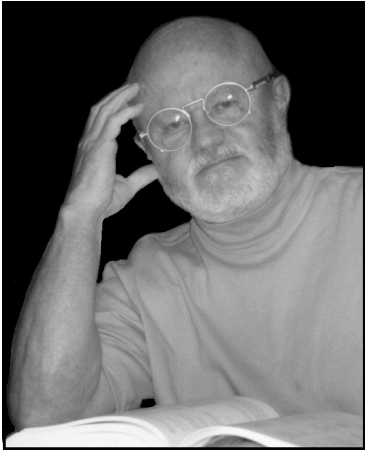
Steve has had a varied career in fire starting as a helitack crewman on the Ochoco National Forest in 1972 and moving into the hotshots and rappelling operations in LaGrande.

In 1978, he was hired by the LaGrande Smokejumper Unit and jumped there until the base was

closed in 1982. From there it was back to the hotshots until 1990 with time off for the 1985 season as a jumper at Missoula.

After working as an aircraft dispatcher in Redmond from 1991-1993, Steve was detailed to the Redmond Hotshot Crew as project leader in 1994. He then was selected as the operations supervisor at the Redmond Smokejumper Unit in 1995 and worked there until 1998.

Steve includes backcountry and cross-country skiing, running, mountain biking and learning to play the guitar as hobbies. 🕊



Jump List—

by **Bill Eastman** (North Cascades '54)

The "Jump List" is a compilation of information the National Smokejumper Association receives from members, associates and friends. It is intended to inform our readers what members are doing and where they reside. You can mail your information to Bill Eastman: PO Box 306, East Greenbush, NY 12061 or e-mail at eastman@earthlink.net

Alaska

John T. McColgan, '89, jumped for nine years. He earned his B.S. degree from Colorado State University in natural resources management and fire science. Since 1999, he has been a fuels management specialist for the BLM in Alaska, and he serves as a fire behavior analyst for the Alaska Type 1 Team. He has taken the most dramatic and beautiful photograph of a wildfire (in the Bitterroot Forest on August 6, 2000) that I have ever seen. Among other publications, it was published as a two-page spread in the year-end special edition of *Time*: "The Year in Pictures." Because he was working when he took the picture, John cannot profit from it, so he should at least be recognized as the photographer of this once in a lifetime shot.

Cave Junction

Ernest C. Carlson, '70, jumped for five years. Rad has been a real estate broker for 21 years. He lives in Fairbanks, Alaska.

McCall

Walter O. Wasser, '79, is still jumping, this being the twenty-second year. He was at McCall through the 1986 fire season and has been at Boise with the BLM since then. Walt is the head parachute trainer.

Herman J. Heikkenen, '51, after earning his Ph.D. in forestry from the University of Michigan, became a professor in the School of Forestry at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, retiring in 1967. He is coauthor of *The Principles of Forest Entomology*. Published by McGraw-Hill, the textbook is in its fifth edition. Jack lives in Blacksburg, Virginia.

Missoula

Tory Kendrick, 2000, is still jumping. In the winter-time he is the director of a cross-country ski touring center at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. Tory is the grandson of Verland (Swede) Ohlson, who jumped at Missoula in 1949 (see below).

Jim Gerber, '77, earned his Ph.D. from the University of California in 1985 and since then has been a professor of economics at San Diego State University.

Robert B. James, '75, jumped for five years. He was a foreman with the Forest Service Helitack fire fighters

of six years. Since 1988, Bob has been an electronic technician for the Forest Service, living in Boise.

James E. Coyle, 71, jumped for six years. Since 1973, he has been the owner of Coyle's Graphics and is self-employed as an artist. Jim lives in Sandy, Vermont.

Robert E. Parcell, '71, jumped for eight years. Since 1982, he has been a deputy sheriff in Missoula County. He is also a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve. Bob lives in Condon, Montana.

Philip D. Difani, '67, jumped for 9 years and then went into cattle ranch management. Since 1981, Phil has been a cattle ranch owner, living in Polson, Montana.

Donald A. Ranstrom, '66, jumped for eight years. Since graduating from the University of Montana School of Law in 1975, he has practiced law in Chinook, Montana. Don was the Blaine County attorney for 16 years.

Charles C. Wildes, '66, retired in 1999 after 30 years with the Forest Service as a district ranger and then the forest supervisor of the Lolo National Forest. Chuck lives in Florence, Montana, and is "playing hard."

Donald A. Baker, '65, earned a degree in forestry at the University of Montana. After serving in the Marine Corps in Vietnam, he went to work for Weyerhaeuser as a forester in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Don then earned a second degree, this time in enology, and is now building a winery in Chile.

Hank J. Carpenter, '65, jumped for nine years. He retired in 1999 after 21 years with the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. Hank is now "playing with the family farm, fishing, and keeping Gene Hobbs out of jail." He lives in Orofino, Idaho.

John A. Hay, '64, graduated from the University of Idaho in forestry, served in the army for three years as a first lieutenant, and then worked for the Idaho Department of Lands in land exchange. Since 1993, John has been a land agent for the Inland Empire Paper Company, living in Hayden, Idaho.

Vernon Bush, '63, jumped for five years, then became an outward-bound instructor. Vernon was an architecture draftsman until 1978, and since then, has been a

self-employed architect, living in American Fork, Utah.

Reggie Jardon, '62, served as a pilot, maintenance officer, and commander in the Navy, retiring in 1991. Since then, Reggie has been a pilot for the Intel Corporation, living in Elk Grove, California.

Tom Butler, '61, jumped for five years, three of those from Fairbanks, then worked for Air America until 1974 (less 20 months in the Army). He earned a masters degree in counseling, is a national certified counselor, and a disaster mental health counselor for the Red Cross. He worked as a school counselor in Oklahoma for 21 years, retiring in 1999. Tom is now a school counselor in Dallas expecting to work another five years before really retiring and spending a lot of time in the Cascade Mountains.

P. Neil Rylander, '61, jumped for five years, two of which were from Fairbanks. Since 1976, Neil has been a self-employed, upscale homebuilder: Neil Reylander Homes, Incorporated, in Vancouver, Washington.

Don Dobberfuhl, '58, jumped for six years while earning his bachelor's degree, then taught physics and chemistry at Custer County High School in Miles City, Montana. After earning his master's degree in 1970, he moved to Lynnwood, Washington, where he also taught physics and chemistry. Don is now retired and living in Woodinville, Washington.

Jeff Davis, '56, was a pilot in the Air Force for eight years and with TWA for 30 years. Jeff has now retired to Manhattan Beach, California.

Henry H. Broderson, '54, retired as a lieutenant commander in 1978 after flying 22 years for the Navy. He then flew for McDonnell Douglas for five years after which he worked as a flight scheduler at the Naval Air Warfare Center in Patuxent River. Henry retired in 1998. He is now living in Leonardtown, Maryland, and traveling with his travel agent wife.

Frank M. Guilfoyle, '54, earned his M.D. degree from New York Medical College, then went into the Army for five years. He has been a pediatrician in private practice since 1966. Frank recently retired as the chief of pediatrics at the Community Hospital of Roanoke Valley. Living in Roanoke, Virginia, he plans to retire from private practice in a couple of years.

Vance F. Warren, '54, jumped for five years then served several years in the Navy flying from the USS *Kittyhawk*. He was a pilot for Pan American Airways for 24 years and then flew for Carnival Airlines, retiring 1996. Living in Reno, Vance hunts, fishes, and skis.

Bill Frame, '53, retired in 1991 after teaching high school mathematics in Minnesota for 30 years. Bill lives in Pine Island, Minnesota.

William H. Demmons, '51, served 23 years as an Air



REDMOND JULY 1998 AT 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF JIM AND EMILY ALLEN.

L-R: Elmer Neufeld, Dick Foy (pilot), David Beals, Jim Allen, Al Boucher, Dick Wessell, Ron Price, Wayne Schrunck, Ron Lufkin, Chuck Sheley, Larry Lufkin and Hal Weinmann. (Courtesy of Jim Allen)

Force aviator, retiring in 1978. Bill has built a new house in Green Valley, Arizona, and is communicating with old friends by e-mail.

Albert R. Bowman, '49, retired from the Marine Corps in 1970 after serving as an officer for 20 years, including duty in Korea and in Vietnam. Retired again after serving another 20 years as vocational rehabilitation counselor for the state of New Mexico, Al is now doing what he wants in Kingman, Arizona.

Robert S. DeZur, '49, jumped for five years and then earned a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Oregon. He has been a professor of mathematics, a research scientist, a systems analyst, an engineering specialist, and a manager of earth research applications. Bob is now a software test engineer for Apple Computers, living in Sunnyvale California.

Verland Ohlson, '49, retired after 30 years with the Forest Service. He was district ranger in the White Mountains National Forest in New Hampshire for 23 of those years. Tory Kendrick, who is still jumping at Missoula (see above), is his grandson. Living in Conway, New Hampshire, Swede is keeping busy.

James L. Murphy, '48, retired as a partner at Grant Thornton, the ninth largest CPA firm in America. In 1987, Jim was the recipient of the Public Service Award given by the Nevada Society of CPAs. He also retired as a full colonel after 30 years in the Air Force Reserve. Now he is full-time golfing, skiing, and duck hunting, except when he is traveling with his great wife.

Laurence W. Armstrong, '47, worked in plywood sales. Larry is now retired living in Bellevue, Washington, and summering in Cable, Wisconsin.

Theodore A. Dethlefs, 47, retired from Oregon State Parks Department as community recreation coordinator. Living in Salem, Oregon, he is now on the board of directors of the Marion County Historical Society. Ted made a parachute jump last May—53 years after his last fire jump.

Nicholas Helburn, '44, earned his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin and retired in 1990 from the University of Colorado as a professor of geography. Nick is now a peace activist living on a small farm in Longmont, Colorado.

Nine Mile

James W. Dawson, '53, served 22 years with the U.S. Agency for International Development, working with rural development programs in Asia and Africa. After retiring, he continued this work as a consultant, and then took final retirement in 1995, after a tour as the director for finance and administration of the International Board for Soil Research and Management in Bangkok, Thailand. Jim lives in Tallahassee.

Conrad J. Downing, '45, after earning a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of New Mexico, has worked for E. I. DuPont, Yale & Towne Manufacturing Company, IT T, and Varian. Since 1986, Conrad has been with C. J. D. Inc. in Salem,

Virginia.

North Cascade

David S. Duncan, '75, earned a master's degree in education from Western Washington University, and has been teaching fourth grade in Okanogan, Washington, since 1982. Jim is also an assistant chief of the Okanogan Volunteer Fire Department.

Redding

Richard Wiest, '70, earned his degree in forestry in 1971 from Utah State. Since 1975, he has been a forester with the Forest Service at Bonners Ferry, Idaho; Ketchikan, Alaska; Springerville, Arizona; and now at St. Paul, Minnesota. Dick lives in North Mankato.

Redmond

Ronald H. Alban, '76, earned an MBA from the University of Puget Sound, and has been a CPA since 1982. Ron lives in Eagle River, Alaska.

Pilot

Penn R. Stohr was a smokejumper pilot for the Johnson Flying Service from 1960 through 1975. Since 1975, Penn has been flying for Evergreen International. He is now vice president for operations, flying DC-9s, and living in Tigard, Oregon.

Associate

Patrick D. Schuler is a postal vehicle mechanic. He was a Hotshot crew leader in 1994. Pat lives in Belcamp, Maryland. 🍄

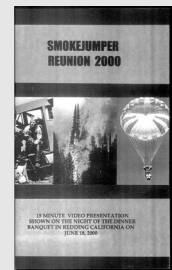
NSA Member Offers You a Chance to See Reunion 2000— All of It!

You probably saw **Bob Webber** (Missoula '62) everywhere at Reunion 2000 with his camera. Well, maybe you didn't since there was a lot of mental firefighting and exercising going on for three days straight. Most of the firefighting was trying to invent the forgotten details and the exercising involved lifting 16 ounces.

Bob has put together a 5-hour plus video which covers all phases of the reunion:

1. Introduction-Friday
2. Registration
3. BBQ & group pictures
4. Base tours
5. Music on the Green
6. Banquet
7. Dance
8. Sun. Memorial Svc.

This video can be an important remembrance of a great reunion. The cost for the video including postage is \$15.00. Order from:
Bob Webber, PO Box 15931, Boise ID 83715



NSA Guestbook

Our Web site www.smokejumpers.com gets about 700 hits per day. One of the many features of our website is the "Guestbook" where individuals log on with their comments.

Here is a recent sampling over the past months:

I was a Smokejumper's kid each summer in McCall, ID until age 12. McCall is still our family's focal point and reunion site, with several members moving there for various durations over the years. Looking through the guestbook I recognized some names and places... it sure was a huge influence to see your dad do practice jumps into huge fragrant sheep fields. We crammed our family into permanently mounted trailer homes each summer for the duration of the season, then packed up and moved home again!

Rick (younger son of "Wild Bill" '53 McCall) Yensen
(richard_yensen@hotmail.com)

My brother, **Wayne R. Webb** was a 30-year employee of the McCall, Idaho Smokejumpers and I was able to meet many over the years. A finer group of men is hard to find.

Kenneth D. Webb (kenerie@msn.com)

Great website, first visit! Nice to be able to see names from the "past." Looking for email addresses to contact friends.

Carl D. Johnson (judicarljohnson@compuserve.com)

Well I was one of the lucky ones that spent a better part of the month in Montana during this year's fire seige. X MSO jumper 77', seeing all the retired and old jump brothers and sisters at the AFD was awesome!... **WW, Whithiker, Cyr, Houska, Nooney, Benividez** (what were you doing there??), **Bloemeike, Kinderman** (thanks!). Saw... **McChesney** at West Fork, **Kirkindol** at the Bitterroot SO, **Miller** at Sula, **Maddog** was playing like night dispatch, Chamberlin at Valley Cmplx, sorry I missed **Cooker** at West Fork. GOOD to be there, Proud, and Love you ALL!

Dave Provencio (pro54chevy@aol.com)

Some month ago I visited several smokejumper bases in the western states of the USA to take pictures for a book about wildland firefighting. I learned that you do a great job - and I met a lot of great people. I wish you all the best, and take care! Greetings from Germany, especially to all I met during my trip.

Wolfgang Jensch-International Lake Constance Fire Association (BFB), Information Officer

Jumped at RAC 70,71,72 then NCSB 77,78,79,80. Hey out there to **John Button, Doug Houston, Dale Lonenecker, and Mark Corbett** & any of you others from the old days still pulling toggels. Just finished **Murry Taylors** book, "Jumping Fire". It's a good read and I recommend it to all, plus it'll make Murry rich and hey-he deserves it.

Mike Wright (mwright02@fs.fed.us)

I worked for the Alaska Smokejumpers and the North Cascades Smokejumpers as a pilot from 1995 through the 1997 season. I have good, albeit hazy memories of the big flips in 96 and 97. Every spring I think of ditching my real job and going back. I miss you guys. Keep up the good work.

Jim Tamminga (flydc3@yahoo.com)

Jumped two years 1954-55. Went through Naval flight school and learned how to fly helicopters and found I could get a ride to the fire both ways.

Frank Pino (fbp35@aol.com)

My father, **JR Davis**, jumped out of AFD from 1957 to 1966. I grew up loving everything about the jumpers, but frustrated that it seemed to be such an obscure topic to anyone outside Montana, Idaho or Washington. I am very glad to have found this page and to know that the jumpers are finally getting the recognition they deserve.

Mark Davis (teljaan@yahoo.com)

I used be a jumper in Alaska during the '90s. Sure am missing it this season. I would love to hear any jump stories from the bro's. Keep it safe.

Chris Silks (csilks@hotmail.com)

Answer to Tracy Slone's question about the post with the inscription "E.H. Aug '53 Smokejumper" found in the Horse Heaven area of the Seven Devils Mts. This fire was jumped by **Leo Keith Brown** (MLY'48,53-56) and **Elmo W Heter** (MYL'53-54). The Carbonate Hill Fire was jumped from a travelaire piloted by former McCall jumper **Kenneth Roth** with **Richard "Paper-legs" Peterson**, as the spotter. The Fire Report says the two had a 14 mile pack-off and the returned to McCall late on the evening of August 5th.

Leo Cromwell (smjleo@micron.net)

I knew **Frank Derry** back in 1937-38 at Mines Field (now LAX), Inglewood, CA. Frank was a genuine character, one of the best Air Show "Bat Wing" jumpers around. At age 82 I'm still not too old for heroes. You people are among them.

L.A. Brumm, Capt. USAF (ret.)

Leo A. (Lee) Brumm (brumm2@home.com)

My Dad (**Swede**, 1959) was a smokejumper and made the Forest Service his career. He remembers his jumping days fondly, and took my brother and me to the depot at Missoula when we were in our teens, and that is an experience that we all shared that I will cherish. I had a pair of his Whites as hand-me-downs, and that is the closest I've come to being a smokejumper. Now I'm a father, and as my son and I watched the video the other night. I had chance to show him the pride, discipline, and rich history of the Smokejumper. Thank you for a great video, website, and (who knows) there may be another **Troedsson** as a smokejumper some day!

Eric Troedsson (ebt1967@hotmail.com)

What a small world we live in. A good friend now living in San Diego (a 1960s smokejumper) ran across the new video that the Smokejumpers Association has published. Not only is he in the film, but half way through it is an interview with **Bob Kersh**,

Redding Loft Foreman talking about a death that occurred on the St. Angles fire in 1970. That was my brother, **Tom Regennitter**. This is the first we (the family) have heard first hand, the actual happenings of the accident. After completely viewing the film, we have for the first time realized the love the Smokejumpers have for their jobs, and that Tom died doing the thing that it loved the best. If anyone else knows about this accident, we would appreciate hearing from you.

Jack Regennitter (reggiejd@spectre.com)

Long descendant of the Mattson/Bestwick family from Missoula/Alberton areas.... I have seen many and have photos of relatives who were early smokejumpers....very proud of their heritage....thanks NSA....

Chris Fish (CfishK@aol.com)

I jumped at Winthrop WA summers of 1964, 65 under Francis Lufkin. Great site you have here, will have to join. Thanks.

Michael Ahern (ahern001@aol.com) ☺

Blast From the Past

A RUNWAY HACKED out of the woods and reached by a winding road from Idaho City is headquarters for the 600-horsepower Noordyn Norseman. This aircraft is just winding up its fifth season flying smokejumpers to fires. Its pilot is **Clare Hartnett**, a lieutenant colonel in the Air Corps during WWII who has spent about 9700 hours in the air. Hartnett's main duties involve piloting smokejumpers and doing routine maintenance work on the plane.

A fully-equipped smoke-jumper looks like a blending of a football player, a space cadet and a jet pilot. He wears a football helmet, boots and a padded jumpsuit.

The interesting thing about jumping over forests is that one doesn't know exactly what one will hit upon landing. **Glenn Curtis**, an Ohio lad, got up-ended by a

sudden wind change near the ground and dumped on his head. He wasn't hurt thanks to the helmet.

The tail wheel on the Norseman didn't used to have a guard over it until a cargo chute caught on it one day and stayed there until the plane was circling the landing strip at Idaho City.

Hartnett has flown jumpers on 393 missions during the past four seasons and has about 60 missions this season. Dean of the Idaho City smokejumpers is **Bob Caldwell** with 84 jumps. Other jumpers include **Roger Tayton**, **Frank Tweedy**, **Charles Higgins**, **Elmer Huston**, **Gene Lewton**, **Jack Wilcock**, **Taylor Cottle**, **Ted Burgon** and foreman **J.B. "Smokey" Stover**. "Will you do us a favor?" asked Burgon. "Don't say we're tough, hardy and intrepid."

—*The Idaho Statesman*
1952

GLEN SMITH, A professional jumper from Los Angeles, made the first pre-meditated jump in a parachute for a landing in timber. This was early in **October 1939** at "Parachute Meadow" near Tiffany Mountain. His leg caught in the shroud lines when the chute opened and strained the ligaments of his leg. He landed in a lodgepole

tree without further injury.

Fifty-seven additional jumps were made, mostly in timber, and all were successful. Analysis and study will determine whether or not the method is practicable from a cost standpoint. *Future records here may indicate that a new and faster method of transporting fire fighters has been developed.*

—Excerpts from *Okanogan National Forest's Historical Record*

Montana Football Game Social Nov. 17th

Harry Klock (Missoula '69) and **John Lammers** (Missoula '71) are planning a smokejumper get-together on the weekend of the Bobcat/Grizzly game which will be held at noon on November 17th, in Bozeman. We are inviting jumpers, wives, children and other assorted interested parties, to join us in Bozeman. Since Harry is a big dog in the state and national tavern owners association, he assures me that he can find us a meeting place in Bozeman. We will keep you posted on further details as they firm up. For further information call Harry Klock at (406) 632-4139 home or (406) 632-4621 Stockman Bar in Harlowton or John Lammers at (406) 586-3988 home in Bozeman.



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