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Static Line, July 1999

National Smokejumper Association

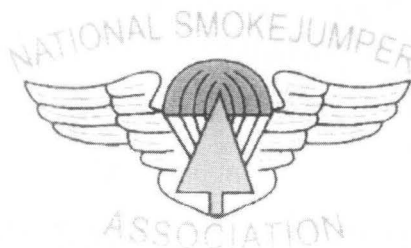
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Static Line



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P.O. Box 4081

Missoula, Montana 59806-4081

Telephone/Fax: 406-549-9938

Email: smokejumpers@smokejumpers.com

Web Site: <http://www.smokejumpers.com>

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Summer 1999

Issue 24



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The Prez's Perambulations



Dear Jumper,

I'm very flattered to have been selected by your Board of Directors as NSA President for the coming year. I'm also pleased to introduce, via this letter, your new and energetic Executive Board. They are Secretary and Membership Coordinator Monroe "Spud" DeJarnette (MSO '49), First Vice President Larry Lufkin (CJ '63), Vice President, Membership Committee Chair and Merchandise Coordinator Chuck Shelley (CJ '59), and Webmaster Dan McComb (MSO '87). Returning for additional service on the Executive Board is Treasurer Jon McBride (MSO '54).

An *ex-officio* board member is our new (and, he says, temporary) newsletter editor, Don Courtney (MSO '56). Don is a book author who was profiled in the last issue of Static Line.

Early this year, then President Laird Robinson asked me to lead an effort to broaden our appeal to those who started their jump careers at bases other than Missoula and to current jumpers. Based upon recommendations from NSA Board members, we've begun.

Outreach – We've established a "Base Liaison Officer" program. Directors who live close to current bases will visit them at least quarterly to gather information of interest to the entire jumper community. They'll either report themselves or recruit current active jumpers to act as reporters.

"Road Show" – In another effort to broaden our base, the Executive Committee will no longer meet monthly in Missoula. Instead, we'll conduct our business at current jump bases, beginning with Fairbanks in August. During the year, we intend to meet at most of the other BLM and Forest Service bases. We'll also hoist a few with current, old and prospective jumpers who live nearby. Redding and the Year 2000 Reunion will be our last stop. Executive Board members will pay for those trips, by the way.

New Office – If you've visited our old headquarters, a hangar shared with the Museum of Mountain Flying on the Missoula County Airport, you've enjoyed the wonderful collection of jumper memorabilia and old flying machines. But if your visit was on other than a perfect day, you froze or you baked. And, if you ever volunteered to work there, you were might cozy with your office mates. Thanks to the generosity of long-time member and businessman, Chuck Fricke (MSO '61) we have new digs, two attractive rent-free offices at 714 Kensington in mid-town Missoula.

And Furniture – And when you pop in to bum a cuppa, you'll be kicking back on a couch donated by another good guy, NSA Director Fred Rohrbach (MSO '65). He's furnished the entire office with brand new desks, chairs, tables and more from his Seattle showrooms.

An Office Manager Too – The recent resignation of our long-time chief factotum (office manager, newsletter compiler, historian, liaison officer) Jack Demmons has left a tremendous void, of course, but we're starting to cope. We intend to hire an office manager and believe our new and comfortable quarters will attract volunteers for pleasant afternoons of licking, stamping, filing and swapping silk stories.

New Friends – You may know that, in 1945, the Forest Service asked the Army to provide airborne fire fighters to knock down blazes ignited by Japanese fire bombs, and to man wildfire lines vacated by smokejumpers-turned-servicemen. The Army sent the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, the first Black airborne unit in the world. Smokey gave them smokejumping training, then dropped them on fires all over the Northwest. One was killed in a letdown, and thus became the first smokejumper fatality. We've formed a relationship with the thousand-member "Triple Nickles", as they call themselves, and are looking for ways to bring our organizations closer. More on that in future issues.

And a New Publisher – Perhaps you've noticed this newsletter is a bit different from past issues. We've incorporated our "new" logo and the newsletter was run on a "new" press, that's owned by International Association of Wildland Fire, another outfit we're tying in with. Dr. Jason Greenlee, who heads up that organizations, is a rookie Redding jumper this year.

Dues Jiggering – During an experiment we conducted several years ago, we found that if we gave all rookie jumpers a year's free NSA membership, a sizeable percentage liked what the Association had to offer and "re-upped". So, we're resuming that activity. We're also looking at our entire dues structure, so watch this space for minor revisions in terms of associate, affiliate, regular and corporate memberships.

Membership Incentives – What would it take to recruit some of your jumper buddies to the NSA? We're looking at potential incentives, including group accident insurance plans, more backcountry work



projects, scholarships for active jumpers' kids, group travel, merchandise discounts, and more. Got any ideas?

But (most of all), We Need YOU! Obviously, the NSA is maturing. We need new, fresh ideas, men and women who are as enthusiastic about smoke-jumping and the outfit as they were when they rookied. Elsewhere in this issue you'll find a "Help Wanted" list. Look it over and let us know if you have skills you can contribute to your Association. If you have talents we haven't thought about but could use, highlight them. If you want to be heard on jumper-related issues, write a letter to our editor. If you have ideas for new or different approaches or activities, give a call, drop a line, send us e-mail./ It's your outfit still.

Keep 'er into the wind, m'friend, and give a holler!

Carl A Gidlund (MSO '58)
President

Cover Photo:

The face and parachute of the handsome gentleman whose picture is on the cover belong to Randy Hurst (MSO '54). The camera and film that took it also belonged to Randy. However the artistic eye and steady hand that produced this really great photo belong to Pat Scheid (MSO '58), who sent it to **STATIC LINE**.

Gift Certificate Membership

"Don't have the money right now. Maybe next month."

If that's the response you've been getting when trying to persuade a buddy to join the NSA, your Executive Board has just come up with an answer for you: Buy him or her a gift certificate.

Association president Carl Gidlund said the board recently decided that current members could buy one-year, \$10 memberships for friends and relatives.

The thought behind the proposal, he explained, is that once the new member is 'hooked' on the association, he or she might renew for the full price. Thus, the purchase is a one-time gift.

It may be given to non-jumpers as well as old jumper buddies, he said.

In addition to the half-price addition, current dues are as follows:

Smokejumpers – one year, \$20; two years, \$35; five years, \$85; 10 years, \$110.

Life membership are \$1,000, and corporate memberships are also available.

Send applications to Membership Director Monroe C. 'Spud' DeJarnette, 2700 Krag Lane, Auburn, CA 95603-9737. His phone number is (503) 823-2364, and his e-mail address is rcm@newworld.net.

Smokejumper History Video: Status Report To the Membership from the Video Committee

The historical script for the documentary was finished by the end of June, and is now being reviewed. The final video will be delayed a bit because Steve Smith has been out of action for almost two months following an accident and then surgery on his arm. He is back in action now, and writing.

A rough-cut version of the video will be done about the end of August, and the final video should be ready the end of November, '99. Steve has put a lot of time and effort into this project, and the final product will be well worth the wait.

Video funds: Currently, we have about \$66,000, about \$4,000 short of our goal of \$70,000. (Ahem) THERE STILL IS TIME TO CONTRIBUTE! (Ahem, again!) All contributors of \$50.00 or more (tax deductible) will receive a free video.

We want to thank once again all of you who have contributed, as we couldn't have funded this video without your support. We especially want to thank Murry Taylor of the BLM Jumpers in Fairbanks. Murry was instrumental in getting a number of Fairbanks jumpers to contribute a total of over \$1,200 to the video fund in June.

We have sold some video footage to a German TV station and are negotiating the sale of footage to a major Japanese station. We also are negotiating with the History and Learning channels. Returns from these transac-

OBITUARIES



JIM V. WAITE (MSO '40)

Jim was born in 1917 in Okanogan, Washington, grew up in Kooskia, Idaho. In 1940, he represented the Clearwater National Forest in the experimental smoke-jumping project, and made the world's second fire jump on July 16, 1940, a two-manner with Rufus Robinson on Robbins Creek, South Fork of the Clearwater River. Jim jumped through the 1951 season, following which he went to work for the US Air Force Research and Development Command. His duties included parachute development and testing for the Air Force and for NASA including testing of parachutes for the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo projects. He retired at the end on 1973. At the time of his death, he was living in Walla Walla, Washington.

ROGER P. WARFORD (MSO '46)

Roger passed away June 13, 1999 at the Montana Veterans' Home in Columbia Falls after an extended illness. He was 77. He grew up on the family homestead near Broadus, Montana. During WW II he served in the US Navy in the South Pacific. He attended the University of Montana between 1946 and 1949, working summers as a smokejumper, and graduating in forestry. In 1950, he went to work for BLM, where he specialized in fire control and range management in Miles City, Malta, Bridger and Lewistown before being transferred to Missoula in 1957. He retired in 1978, and had been living with his wife Esther in the Polson area before his illness.

LEO "KEITH" BROWN (MYC '48)

Leo passed away peacefully at home in Idaho Falls on July 7. He was born in Burns, Oregon, and moved to Nampa, Idaho as a young boy. He graduated from Nampa High in 1947 and became a smokejumper in 1948. During the Korean War, he served in the Navy aboard the aircraft carrier USS Valley Forge. He returned to the McCall Smokejumpers after the war, and jumped there from 1953 through 1956, making over 50 jumps. "Wild Bill" Yensen (MYC '53) calls Leo "one of the nicest guys that ever jumped". He tells about the 8,500 acre Balls Canyon fire in 1954, when he, Wayne Web, Carl Rosselli, Ron Marker, Miles Johnson and Leo Brown first used a chain saw with a six-foot bar on a fire. Brown and Yensen used the big McCulloch to fall an eight-foot diameter sugar pine.

ARTHUR H. JUKKALA (MSO '56)

Arthur passed away Monday, July 12, northwest of Ovando, while working with the Bob Marshall Foundation Volunteer Trail Crew.

Arthur was born on March 30, 1935 in South Range, Michigan. He moved to Lead, South Dakota when he was a sophomore in high school and after graduating attended Dunworthy Industrial Institute. Arthur then moved to Missoula and graduated from the University of Montana with a bachelor of science degree in forestry in 1957, followed by a masters degree with a major in forest fire science in 1966. In 1965, Arthur married Jeanene Griffing. They enjoyed 34 wonderful years of marriage together.

Art had 32 years of federal employment, mostly with the USDA Forest Service Technology and Development Center in Missoula. He was a U.S. Forest Service Smokejumper and was active in the Smokejumper Association. While working for the forest service he was honored with several national awards including the USDA Superior Service Award for work on physical fitness programs (1977), USDA Superior Service Award for promoting the safety and well-being of wild land firefighters (1988), Federal Laboratory Consortium National Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer relating to the safety and health of wild land firefighters.

Arthur retired in 1990 and helped to build his home which was mostly of his design. In recent years he spent much of his time in his sun room/studio, where he worked on clay sculptures while watching the deer outside his window.

He is survived by his wife Jeanene of Missoula; daughter Malia of Seattle; son Clint and his wife Colae of New Haven, Conn.; brothers Kenneth and his wife Wilma of Sacramento and Aaron and his wife Rita of Hillsboro, Ore; two nephews; two nieces and countless good friends.

He will be remembered for his great love of the outdoors and his great love of life. We will miss you, Arthur.

Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association, Heart Memorial Chairman, 420 Blaine, Missoula, MT 59801 or to the Smokejumpers Association, Box 4081, Missoula, MT 59806.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, July 17 at the Garden City Funeral Home.

HELP WANTED:



You weren't drafted into the smokejumper program; you volunteered. And since you're a member of the NSA, you obviously found the experience rewarding. Here's a chance to get involved again with 'our kind of people'.

Your NSA has been managed by a small cadre of dedicated people who have given freely of their time, talents and energy. But if the association is to flourish, it must take advantage of the outfit's talents. Here are some of our current needs:

Corporate Membership Chair: We need an individual who is experienced in soliciting funds from firms and organizations that support our goals. Design and manage the program.

Regional/Local Chapter Manager: Current and former smokejumpers live in most states and in several nations. Local reunions and activities would supplement the once-every-five-years national reunions, maintain esprit de corps and might help ensure the future of the smokejumper program.

Graphic Artists/Cartoonists: Our editors have done their best to illustrate and lighten up our publications. We've also hired folks to redesign our logo. But if you have artistic or graphics talents, you've probably spotted areas in our publications and products that could use a professional touch. Show off your skills.

Historians: You'll find this hard to believe, but the Forest Service and BLM haven't been the most meticulous records-keepers. As the 'keeper of the flame' for the smokejumper program, the NSA needs folks who are willing to dig into base records and interview appropriate people to assemble accurate accounts of what happened where, when and why. At least one person per base could get the job done.

Newsletter Contributors: Tired of seeing the same old bylines and reading the same old

silk stories? You can enliven 'Static Line' by contributing tales (true, if at all possible) of your smokejumping and mountain flying adventures. If you have pictures to illustrate them, Editor Don Courtney will give you \$1.23 million of his own funds for each that appears in print.

Newsletter Editor: Courtney says he's a short-timer. He's taken the temporary position only under duress and because we have the goods on him. If you're reasonably skilled at writing and editing, are computer-equipped and are willing to take on the job for four issues or more, we want/need you.

Tracers of Lost Persons: A lot of jumpers out there are in hiding. Most aren't in prison. Sure would like folks to search phone books in their own and neighboring states to find them.

Photographers: You know you've taken the best shot EVER of smokejumping. Share it by sending a great copy which we'll eventually publish in 'Static Line' and place in the archives. And, yes you'll get a credit line.

Letter Writers: Got some thoughts about the jumper program? Mad about something we'd care about? Share your angst, anger or philosophical mutterings with your fellow jumpers all over the world. Write a letter to the editor and see your name in print. (English is the preferred language, but if we don't have enough copy, we'll take 'em in Urdu.)

Office Volunteers: Hey, we're finally moving out of a drafty hangar into neat new quarters. If you live in the Missoula area and can afford a few hours a month, we can put you to work. That would be filing, answering phones, swapping stories, making coffee, sweeping floors — you know, the kind of stuff you were forced to do while you were jumping. Only this time, you won't get paid.

Drop a line, call or e-mail the NSA if you still have what it takes to take on one of the jobs described above.

Carl Gidlund

Remembering Chuck Clemenson, (CJ '48)



By Starr Jenkins, (CJ '48)

We were sorry to hear of the death of our good friend, Charles (Chuck) Clemenson, of a heart attack recently. We didn't know much about his life, other than the part during the long-ago summer of 1948. In June of that year, Chuck was a fellow U. S. Forest Service smoke-jumper in a nine-man group of rookies at the Redwood Ranger Station in the little town of Cave Junction, Oregon. Chuck was a cheerful, freckle-faced, reddish-blond character, wise, intelligent, humorous, who kept the troops laughing with his: "Har! Har! What the hell. It's all in the game!" whenever we came up against some fearsome obstacle in our training.

As an example, one of the items we had to learn was how to get down out of a 180-foot tall Douglas fir with only a 100-foot letdown rope. The answer was to pull the ripcord on your reserve chute, tie your letdown rope to the top end of the reserve chute, then slide down the chute to the rope, then slide down the rope to somewhere near the ground. The problem was that you had to get out of your nice safe main chute harness – say 150 feet up in the tree – then slide down the bunched shroud lines (which, being nylon, were a slick cable indeed), followed by wrapping your legs around the chute canopy, then slide down that tapering cone of even slicker nylon fabric, to the start of your rope there at the bottom. It was like trying to get a scissors-grip on an icicle that kept getting smaller and smaller as you slid down. You didn't want to hit the rope going too fast or you might never get a firm grip on it and slide zip-smoke-poof! all the way to the ground.

Well, Chuck sweated that all out, and came down beautifully, and I got a color slide of him hanging onto the end of that shimmering white icicle in triumph before making the rest of the slide down the rope in good shape.

There was another wrinkle on that high letdown practice which we used to do from a ca-

ble strung between two poles fifty feet in the air. Before starting down, the jumper was to tie his rope to his chute harness with three half hitches. One half hitch is a single knot, two half hitches a double knot and three a triple knot that definitely would not come loose by itself. Well, Chuck was observed putting in a fourth half hitch just to be on the safe side. After that, he became known around the camp as "Eleven half hitch Clemenson".

After the seven training jumps, we were, like all firemen, champing at the bit to go to the next fire. On weekends we often hung around camp to be sure not to miss that longed-for call. When the phone rang in the dispatcher's office, we all leaned forward expectantly. And before any word came out of the office, Chuck Clemenson sang out with what we all hoped to hear: "Six men on the Umpqua!" (The Umpqua National Forest is the next Forest north of the Siskiyou.) "Six men on the Umpqua!" became a watchword for the rest of the summer.

Though I moved on to the Montana smokejumpers the next summer, I believe Chuck returned for a second season with the 30-man Cave Junction crew in 1949. And that summer, fifty years ago, was a hotter, drier season with more fires and a much greater opportunity for overtime and glory.

Chuck Clemenson was an able, honorable, productive member of that elite fraternity, the smokejumpers. And we will miss him.

This Star Jenkins tribute was read at the Celebration of Chuck Clemenson's Life on February 27, 1999, at Orange, California.

Summer of '42

by James V. Waite



(On the Obituary page of this issue, we report the recent death of pioneer smokejumper Jim Waite. The following is from his memoirs.)

Our parachutes were made of high quality silk. It had to meet certain standards of strength and air permeability. But the War (WWII) stopped the importation of silk from the Orient. Nylon had recently been developed and was being used by the military in the fabrication of parachute canopies. One of our worst problems was grasshoppers. Upon landing on the ground, a jumper couldn't avoid collecting some grasshoppers with his parachute. The used parachute would be taken to a tower in the loft where they would be pulled up by a pulley to full length of the canopy. The canopy would be shaken to dislodge any grasshoppers or other debris and carefully inspected for damage.

While in transit to the loft, grasshoppers frequently trapped in the canopy. The grasshoppers loved to chew on the silk. I have darned as many as 88 holes in one canopy that were caused by grasshoppers.

The main (backpack) parachute we had used up to this time was a silk parachute, 30 feet in diameter. It was asymmetric. When spread out flat, its shape resembled a horse shoe. Our reserve parachute had the same asymmetrical shape but was smaller. It was 27 feet in diameter.

By now, the larger, main canopies were getting worn out. The violent openings were putting such stress on the canopy suspension (shroud) lines that they were now breaking with greater frequency during the canopy opening. We began condemning the larger canopies when they became totally unsafe to use. We replaced the large 30-ft canopies with the smaller 27-ft canopies as the main parachute. They gave a slightly faster rate of descent, but we tried to reserve their use to the lighter weight men.

By 1942, we were getting some rejected military nylon canopies and used them in our chest packs as reserve parachutes (for emergency use). They were 24 feet in diameter and were symmetrical. When spread out flat, they made a perfect circle. They were intended for life saving only. With all of the extra weight that a jumper carried, the rate of descent would be very high. Also they had a very high rate of oscillation. If a jumper should land during a downward swing, he would very likely be seriously injured. We soon found that the grasshoppers had no taste for nylon, and that problem was elimi-

nated.

At the end of the 1942 fire season, each squad leader had to account for, and turn in, all US Forest Service non-expendable items assigned to him. This included parachutes (personnel and cargo – but not drift chutes which were expendable), compasses, map cases, sewing machines, etc. Another item issued which was non-expendable was a small bronze USFS badge. While roofing the parachute loft at Big Prairie during the summer, I had pinned the badge to the watch pocket of my Levi's because of the carpenter's apron I was wearing. One day it came up missing. I did not realize that it was an accountable piece of property.

When I couldn't produce the badge, the 'powers that were' held a conference on the appropriate course of action I was instructed to sit down and prepare a written description of *all* the circumstances surrounding the loss of the badge. Took me the better part of three days to reconstruct all of the events leading up to its loss. When I turned in my report, another conference was held. At the end of the conference, I was called in and told that inasmuch as I had not worn the badge in the approved location (regulations called for it to be pinned to the left shirt pocket), I was responsible for its loss. Therefore I would have to reimburse the US Government the full cost of the item. The cost turned out to be 33 cents. I sat down and cried to keep from laughing! Here I had worked three days (I was on duty) and it cost me 33 pennies. I paid it. My salary for those three days was about \$19.38. I think I came out ahead.

YOU MIGHT BE A SMOKEJUMPER IF.....

.. Your wife or girlfriend asks you to sew things for her.

.. There's a ball of 550 line in your closet, and you haven't bought a shoestring in years.

Mann Gulch Fire: 50th Anniversary Commemoration

On August 5, 1949, a lightning-caused wildfire entrapped a smokejumper crew and a firefighter in the steep and rugged Mann Gulch in the Helena National Forest. Before the fire was controlled, the blaze took the lives of 13 men and burned nearly 5,000 acres. Join the Helena National Forest in commemorating the Mann Gulch Fire and honoring the firefighters whose lives were lost there.

Hosted Hikes

The Helena National Forest will offer a series of hosted hikes into Mann Gulch on August 1, 14 and 28. Reservations are required. Call the Helena Ranger District for information at 449-5490

Thursday, August 5

~**Commemoration Ceremony**, Montana State Capitol, west lawn; 10:30 am to 12 pm. Invited speakers include Bob Saltee, the lone living survivor of the Mann Gulch Fire, Governor Marc Racicot, Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck and Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior Dan Glickman and Bruce Babbitt.

~**Wilbur Rehmann Jazz Quartet**, musical debut of *Mann Gulch Suite*, Montana Historical Society lawn; 12 pm to 1 pm. Admission is free.

~**National Smokejumper Association exhibits** and demonstrations, Montana Historical Society, west lawn; 12 pm to 5pm.

~**Firefight: Stories from the Frontlines**~ A Learning Channel film dedicated to wildland firefighters; Montana Historical Society Haynes Auditorium. Three showings at 1:00, 2:30 and 4:00 pm. Admission is free.

~**Public barbecue and live music** hosted by the National Smokejumper Association at the Kleffner Ranch in East Helena, \$20.00 for tickets; 5:00 pm to midnight.

~**Out of the Ashes** song and dance tribute performed by The Artists Group, 7:30 pm at the Myrna Loy Center. Admission is free.

Friday and Saturday, August 6 & 7

Daytime interpretive programs at Meriwether Picnic Area, Gates of the Mountains. Join interpretive specialists in highlighting the Mann Gulch Fire and firefighting in the last 50 years. Transportation by personal boat or public tour boat is required.

Saturday, August 7

Montana Power Company's Summer Symphony

Concert will feature works honoring the Mann Gulch Fire and Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery, 8:00 pm at Carroll College. Admission is free.

"Site of Deadly Fire to be Listed on Historic Register"
by Grant Sasek

It's official – Mann Gulch, the site of a blaze that killed 13 firefighters 50 years ago, is a historic place. The rugged, dry gulch along the Missouri River north of Helena has been listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. That designation will offer protection to the area and should make more funding available for maintenance and improvement projects.

Mann Gulch is the first location in the Helena National Forest to be listed on the register. The official recognition of its significance comes just two months before that August 5 anniversary of the fatal fire. The site was officially nominated for the register by the Helena Forest, but much of the credit for getting the site listed goes to Helena High School students who took on the challenge as a class project, said Carl Davis, an archeologist for the forest.

'To get formally nominated and become listed is a fairly exacting process that takes a lot of time and energy,' Davis said. 'Students did most of the research and the Forest Service wrote the nomination.'

Work on the project began last September, and the nomination was sent to the Keeper of the National Register this spring. Davis said he received word on the decision to list the site in mid-May. The listing will give the gulch legal protection when foresters plan activities in the area, Davis said. 'It's a red flag that people have to pay attention to during the planning process,' Davis said. The designation also could make it easier to secure money from within the Forest Service and from outside funding sources for projects in the gulch, he added.

A sign marking the gulch as a historic site 'either has gone up or is going up' near where the gulch meets the Missouri river, Davis said. The gulch is just downstream from the Gates of the Mountains. Because of the remote location of Mann Gulch, events planned to mark the anniversary of the tragedy are planned for Aug. 5 at the state Capitol.

Students Finish Multi-media Project for Mann Gulch

From "The Missoulian" of April 22, 1999

by Sheri Devlin

On the first day of school last fall, 21 students at Helena High School set out to tell the story of the Mann Gulch fire and the lives it took and the lives it touched. They did not realize that their lives, too, would change.

Then they saw the photographs of the 13 young men who – on August 5, 1949 – were burned to death in a firestorm above the Missouri River. "They looked like us," said Crystal Warsinski.

On Monday night, the students brought their multi-media presentation on Mann Gulch to the University of Montana. In the dark of the theater, as the photographs of the young firefighters faded to photographs of the students, all who came saw the resemblance.

"Eldon Diettert left his birthday dinner to fight the fire. He was 19," said Greg Dorrington, who with his classmate Stephanie Abraham 'shadowed' the fallen smokejumper for much of the past six months, learning what they could do about his life and his death.

"He begged and begged to get into the smokejumper class," said Abraham. "But he had to wait until he was 18."

"His family never talked about what happened," Dorrington said. "For his mother's sake."

The intent of the X-Cel class project was to preserve the stories, but also the legacy of Mann Gulch – in part by collecting photographs and quotations, in part by nominating the gulch to the National Register of Historic Places.

The nomination has been submitted and U. S. Forest Service officials are optimistic that it will be accepted, said Amy Teagarden, community outreach coordinator for the Helena National Forest. Then, she said, "we can be certain that the memory of Mann Gulch will be held as a significant part of Montana history."

The collection of stories and photographs has become "The Thirteenth Fire", a 90-minute program narrated by the X-Cel students and forester Dave Turner, presented Monday at the invitation of the UM chapter of the Society of American Foresters.

Turner told the history of firefighting on the national forests, then the story – minute by minute – of the seemingly routine lightning strike that became the disaster at Mann Gulch 50 years ago this summer. The students provided quotations from the surviving firefighters, and from the widows and brothers and sisters of the dead.

And from Lois Jansson, whose husband was the Canyon Ferry district ranger and one of the first to reach the dead and injured men.

Many in the audience, including dozens of Forest Service retirees and former firefighters, cried quietly

when X-Cel student Heather Paulson read from Jansson's autobiography. Near the back of the room, Jansson's daughter, Ruth, closed her eyes, remembering the night he father returned from Mann Gulch.

His feet were so blistered that he had to soak his socks to get them off. He asked his wife to burn his clothes. "They smell of death." Then he asked her to wash his hair, for he was too weak. Then to burn his wristwatch band. It, too, smelled of the burned flesh of the smokejumper whom he cradled against the cold while waiting the doctors.

Joseph Sylvia died shortly after reaching the hospital in Helena.

Ruth Jansson Cain was five years old, but she recalls the night distinctly. "I was really worried about my dad, and finally my mom sent me outside and told me to pray. My dad was a really decent guy, but that night he threw his boots at us kids. We knew something had gone very, very wrong."

Bob Jansson was plagued by what his wife called 'sleeping nightmares' for the rest of his life. He died in 1965 of kidney disease, from which his daughter now suffers.

"Dad never really came back from Mann Gulch," Cain said.

Cain came to Monday night's performance in honor of her father and mother, and to remember the friend she lost to the fire. The only ground firefighter who died at Mann Gulch – James Harrison – gave her a package of chewing gum before leaving for his shift at the Meriwether guard station. "Juicy Fruit," she remembered. "I carried it around for weeks after."

As lightning flickered in the distance, Turner told them the story of the fire. Then they crawled inside sleeping bags and stayed the night on the rocky scree – waiting, as had rescuers, for dawn before walking out of the drainage.

In the months since, the students have read obituaries and historical records to learn more about each of the firefighters and their families. They have talked to Robert Sallee, the only living survivor of Mann Gulch. They have talked to the widow of Bill Hellman, one of the dead smokejumpers.

"All the reading and talking was good, but what really hit us was going up on the hill and seeing the crosses," said Martin Kuhl, who researched Hellman and hopes to fight fires himself this summer.

Hellman survived the fire, but died of burns the following day – after spending a night begging for drinks of water. "We poured water on his cross," said Karolina Topolski. "For his thirst."

"They really weren't much older than us," Topolski said.

How to start a local NSA Chapter:

Helpful Hints from James R. ("Flips") Phillips (MSO '67)

When NSA president-elect Carl Gidlund asked me to write an article on how to begin a local chapter of our Association, I had to chuckle. The Helena Chapter started because my fishing buddy was out of town, and I wanted to go fishing and spit in a campfire with someone with whom I had something in common.

In thirty years in Helena, I'd met only three former jumpers, and was generally aware of a few other folks who might have been at one time. I began calling a few guys, and making a list from their referrals. With the help of NSA's data base, I located still other names from the local area. I ended up with a list of fifteen names, and sent a typed copy of the list to each of the guys on the list along with an invitation to a jumper party at my house. I invited Dave Turner, Mann Gulch Memorial Celebration Incident Commander, as our guest speaker.

Dave is a good speaker, and he did a fine job. But his message was that there would be no memorial jump in Mann Gulch. This didn't sit well. I thought those old smoke-eaters were going to kill the messenger.

So now we've covered the first three hints about how to form a local chapter:

- 1) Have a desire to fish;
- 2) Get a bunch of folks together for fun;

- 3) Find a common enemy.

Actually, we couldn't figure out who the enemy was, but we felt very strongly that the Mann Gulch Memorial Celebration needed a 13-man parachute jump. We set out to see if we could make such a thing happen.

In any organization, you have to have somebody who is willing to work. If they happen to be as fired up as Ray Beasley (MYC '52) was about the lack of a memorial jump, you will be even further ahead of the game. I had to run to keep up with Ray's initiatives. We contacted city, county and Congressional delegations looking for help in memorializing the 13 jumpers who died at Mann Gulch. It became our mission. And now we have two more hints:

- 4) Get a hard worker;
- 5) Give that person a mission.

Finally, there was authorization for one parachute jump at the Mann Gulch Celebration, but we kept working for a 13-manner, in conjunc-

tion with the NSA Board of Directors. Hints:

- 6) Celebrate small gains;
- 7) Don't lose sight of your goal;
- 8) Use the National Organization;
- 9) Keep them informed.

There are a couple of concepts around which you can form your local chapter. One is social and the other is historical. Your locale may not have a piece of hallowed ground to protect as we do here at Helena, but you'll think of something. You might consider establishing a scholarship; you might adopt a stretch of highway for cleanup; you might put together a slide show for the local schools. Whatever you choose to do, you will be in the company of some very fine people. Hints:

10) Choose what works for you where you are;

11) Don't hold and improve existing line; dig new line.

At this writing, the fifteen Helena area smokejumpers are busy planning barbecues, motel rooms, music, displays, merchandise, shows, transportation and day hikes for the August 4 and 5 Memorial of the Mann Gulch fire.

When you organize, get everyone involved in some manner. Some have the time and resources for big tasks; others fit smaller jobs. Each person needs to have a sense of belonging, a mission and the opportunity to contribute. Hints:

- 12) Use people's strengths;
- 13) Get all of them involved;

Don't worry about protocols, charters and Robert's Rules of Order. Worry instead about how to have your membership gain a feeling of accomplishment. Hints:

- 14) Celebrate your victories;
- 15) Say "Thank you".

And thank you, Flips. Watch the Static Line for more news of the Helena Chapter of NSA.



Gone Ranchin' - Phil Davis (MSO '48)

By Art Jukkala (MSO '56)

The Association has lost another of its valuable workhorses. Phil Davis, has gone ranching. He says that he needs to spend more time during the good weather months maintaining fences and other facilities on the family ranch on the Flathead River north of Kalispell, Montana.

Phil has served as the NSA Secretary and a key computer operator for the past five years. One of his major duties has been to take notes and type up the meeting minutes for the regular monthly Executive Committee Meetings and the Annual Directors Meeting, copy them and send them out to directors and committee members. He also has managed the computerized data base for all association members and prints out newsletter mailing labels quarterly. Phil has devoted countless hours updating the member data base, as well as the data base for "Everyone Who Ever Jumped".



Phil Davis 1948 6 mile jump -in front-

With typical Phil Davis modesty, when we told him that we wanted to profile him in the July issue of the Static Line, he said, "Why me? I was no one, I only jumped during two quiet fire seasons. Do a story on my brother Berle: he jumped four seasons, two of them in New Mexico." (For those of you who know Berle, /also MSO '48/ we learned from Phil that he lives in Clancy, Montana, and is in very poor health after a series of strokes.)

Sorry, Phil, we might do Berle some other day. Right now, we want to honor you for all your hard work for the Association.

You can see Phil's enthusiasm in everything he does, and nowhere is it more evident than when he talks about smokejumping. "When I was jumping, I thought Nine Mile was the center of the universe." He got to the center of the universe by starting to drive to Alaska after he and another Judith Gap boy, John Brook, got out of the Army in 1947. Their car was a clunker. They got as far as Kalispell and found Forest Service work at Coram. They worked for

Jim Hellman (father of Bill Hellman, who died at Mann Gulch two years later), and Jim told them about the great job his son had with the smoke-

jumpers. Meanwhile, brother Berle was picking up a season of experience somewhere else in the Forest Service, so that all three Judith Gap boys got into the jumpers the next year.



L to R Mil Davis "Fritz", Fred Schilling, Berle Davis, 1949 Gallatin County

Phil received a BS degree in electrical

engineering from Montana State College (now University) in Bozeman in 1951. He went to work immediately for IBM and stayed until retirement in 1982 as a field engineer in Missoula. Now, at age 74, Phil remains very active physically. He is an avid alpine skier, and skis three or four days a week during the season. In the spring, he works many high school and college track meets, running stop watches instead of races. He does a lot of hiking and backpacking during the summer and fall, and some of his trips seem as hard and hairy as many jumper packouts. Along with ranch work each summer, Phil and his wife of 43 years, Helen, attend several jazz festivals.

We are glad to know that the Davis family, including a son and a daughter and three grandkids, will continue to live in Missoula where perhaps the Association will be able to continue to get some work out of him now and then. But we won't



There I Was, See..... by Rich Halligan (MYC '76)



We had jumped a sweet little six-manner up north of Fairbanks on Beaver Creek. Lynn Flock and I shared your basic Alaska jumper hootch consisting of a cargo strap tied between two black spruces, with a cargo chute hung from the strap to make a skeeter-proof shelter and a piece of visqueen draped over the top to keep everything dry.

I was awakened at about 0530 by a snuffling sound outside of the hootch. Suddenly, I saw the wall of the hootch above Lynn's feet pushed inward a few inches and a set of huge claws poke through the nylon. (At the time, I estimated their length at between three and four feet, although in retrospect, they may have been somewhat shorter.) The claws raked down, tearing a large hole. I prodded Lynn awake and told him, with considerably more aplomb that I was actually experiencing, that we had a bear problem. I pointed toward the foot of the hootch, just as the bear doubled the size of the hole and stuck his head inside.

I was scared shitless. A debate raged in my mind as to whether I should shout and make a racket and hope to scare the bear off, or remain silent and motionless and hope he would ignore me. As it turned out, I remained motionless, either as a conscious decision or fear of moving, I don't know which. Lynn apparently came to the same decision, because he remained motionless as well. During this time, I had occasion to notice the size of the bear's teeth as well as his claws. I used my medical training as an EMT to contemplate the pathophysiology of death by mauling, which did not help my peace of mind.

The bear stepped in through the hole and stood on Lynn's sleeping bag with his front legs. He then began pawing at the bag, which, of course, still contained Lynn. After trying three or four times to hook it with his paw, the bear reached down, grabbed the bag with his teeth and dragged it out of the hootch. I briefly had a vision of Lynn remaining in the bag and departing with it, but he lifted himself up on his elbows, and the bag slipped out from under him. I could see the bear through the hole. He chewed on the bag for a couple of minutes, and then lost interest and ambled off in the general direction of the rest of the camp. Lynn and I yelled "Bear in camp!" a couple of times to warn the others.

I considered whether to get up and get dressed or stay in the false security of my sleeping bag. Lynn, quite sensibly, got up and got dressed,

as neither his sleeping bag nor the option to remain it were available to him.

The bear walked over to check out the next closest hootch which was occupied by Brian Fitzsimons. We could hear the visqueen crinkle and tear as the bear pawed at it. Brian hollered, annoyed: "Knock it off!" and "Hey, you guys quit it!" He had heard our warning shout but thought we were joking. A moment later, Fitz let out the most blood-curdling scream I've ever heard: "GET HIM OFF OF MEEEE!" The scream stopped abruptly, and there was a short moment of silence. Then the sound of the bear padding through the tundra back toward our hootch. Whatever the hell else may have been happening in the world at that time, I know only the following: a bear had torn up my hootch,, gone next door and killed the my neighbor, and was headed back to my hootch with, I assumed, homicidal intent.

I remember looking up at Lynn, and the expression on his face did nothing to reassure me. And I doubt that he saw much confidence in mine. Lynn was now standing, and was bent over tying his boots. The sounds of the bear's footfalls got closer each second. I finally made up my mind to get dressed and die with my boots (and clothes) on. I reached for my jeans. I could hear the bear breathing. I teetered on the brink of panic. Then I heard two sounds almost simultaneously: a loud slapping noise, and a short, gut-wrenching scream. That pretty much did it for me.

Without looking back to confirm Lynn's decapitation, I shot out of my sleeping bag, under the edge of the hootch, took two rapid strides and ran full speed into one the spruces that held up the hootch., interrupting what was without doubt the fastest, most fluid and complex movements I have ever made. I leaped back onto my feet, dodged the tree and ran into camp. I grabbed a fusee in one hand and a Pulaski in the other. I lit the fusee and began dancing around dripping molten sulfur onto my bare feet and blood from my broken nose onto my tee shirt. Skeeters began feasting upon my scantily-clad body.

There was a lull in the action that gave me an opportunity to reflect on my abrupt abandonment of Lynn while he was being killed by the bear. I rationalized that "at least it had been quick" and he hadn't suffered. I figured that if our positions been reversed, he too would have bravely and quickly departed the scene to seek additional assistance. And here came the bear, moseying through camp quite unconcerned with the carnage he had wrought, and

There I Was, See.....

lighted fuse at the bear, hitting him in the ribs. The bear stopped, whirled around and took a big sniff of the burning fusee. He let out a bawl and took off running. Four minutes later, we saw him crossing a ridge about a mile away, still running at full speed. When the dust settled and the smoke cleared and I had put some pants on, I was able to sort out the death and destruction.:

Fitz had survived unscathed. The bear had pawed at his hootch a couple of times, then reared up, put his front paws on the top of the hootch and began bouncing up and down on the cargo strap. Fitz saw a couple of inches of claws sticking through the nylon, claiming that at one point, they came within an inch or two of his face.

Lynn also survived. Remember that he had been bending over tying his boots? His head and shoulders had been hitting the top of the hootch, so the bear gave him a light swat on the shoulder. Lynn exited the hootch, unhurt and at high velocity, through the hole that the bear had made on his first visit.

On the other hand, I ended up with a fractured nose and several small 2nd degree burns on the top of my feet, plus a whole lot of crap flicked my way by Jim Andersen who had observed the festivities from his own hootch.

Lynn still claims that the scream that followed his getting slapped by the bear came from me. That is a blatant falsehood. You must bear in mind (no pun intended) that Lynn Flock is now a pilot, and we all know what liars pilots are. (You know the routine: he hangs your firepack and two saw packs in the only snag in a 50 acre meadow, and then swears that he "wasn't aiming for the snag.")

Well, I might concede that I may have joined Lynn in a little two-part harmony, but only after he started to scream first.

Thanks to Rich Halligan for writing this gem, and to Leo Cromwell (IDC '66) for forwarding it to the Static Line. We understand that there are many more tales in the McCall collection, and with luck we'll be seeing all of them before we're done.



Civilian Public Service Camp 103: CPS Smokejumpers

By Roy & Lillian Wenger

Throughout history, there have been groups who firmly decided they could not take part in killing during a war. Feeling that the value of a human life is too great to arbitrarily end it, these people say, "I will not take or threaten your life, and I hope you will respect mine." During the intense heat of war, some framework of understanding is needed to work together without clashing. In WW II, this framework was CPS, Civilian Public Service, and some 12,000 men across the USA joined it to perform non-military duties instead of military ones.

The military draft system negotiated with the "Historic peace churches" (Brethren, Friends) and Mennonites), and came up with Civilian Public Service, a plan that partly satisfied both sides. Although some individuals from other denominations also became conscientious objectors, their church hierarchies were not especially supportive. Under the CPS umbrella, the three "Historic peace churches" rotated in establishing new CPS camps around the country as needed. The first camp opened in 1941 and the last closed in 1946. In addition to the regular camps, numerous "special projects" were established.

The idea of conscientious objectors serving as smokejumpers was suggested by a young man named Phil Stanley, a Quaker. At the start of the war, upon reading that the pool of forest fire fighters was drying up, he wrote to the Forest Service suggesting that the men of CPS be given an opportunity to do this work. The idea was accepted by the Forest Service and approved by the National Service Board for Religious Objectors (the peace church organization), and by Selective Service.

In the rotation cycle of establishing new camps, it was the turn of the Mennonite Central Committee to open this new camp in

Montana. Albert Gaeddert, regional director of Mennonite CPS camps, and Roy Wenger (*co-author of this article*) who became the CPS smokejumper camp's first director, worked with the Forest Service in coordinating the staffing and set-up of the camp. Details such as lodging, food, training, supplies and coordination between the Forest Service and the church groups needed to be worked out.

Invitations then went out to all CPS camps around the country asking for volunteers for the new smokejumper project, to be called "Camp 103". Men from other camps who wished to apply, had to complete an application that needed to be approved by their present CPS camp director, the regional director, and the CPS smokejumper camp director. The Forest Service staff then reviewed the applications with the CPS smokejumper camp director, agreeing upon the applications chosen. The men were then informed of their acceptance.

Training began in April 1943 at Camp Paxon and the Seeley Lake Ranger Station in Seeley Lake, Montana. Many of the men were from farms and were in good physical shape, but they still needed to participate in a rigorous training program. The CPS men were trained by the few remaining Forest Service employees working as smokejumpers headed by Earl Cooley. This well-qualified and seasoned staff guided the trainees in the art of jumping out of airplanes. They also learned to pack and repair parachutes, and to fight fire.

By the middle of 1943, the first squads were trained and stationed at strategic points in the region. The initial 60-man group of CPS trainees soon moved from Seeley Lake to Nine Mile, west of Missoula, Montana.

By the end of the project in 1946, about 250 men had been trained as smokejumpers. When the camp closed, in 1946, all CPS smokejumpers were discharged. These men had supplied the manpower to an area critically in need of trained and specialized individuals.

Shearer Memories

by Don Halloran (MSO '53)

Oh the agony of realizing that 41 years have vanished since we sweated together and laughed and dreamed away that summer of 1955. Not to mention some near death experiences floating the Selway on a sub-standard raft, or the day the cabin scaffolding collapsed, sending Hugh Cates and the rest of us crashing to earth. Another fragment surfaces: The day Carter returned from fishing with a tobacco can that he casually tossed onto my chest as I lay reading on my bunk. Opening the can produced a rattler that squirmed on my shirt, bringing forth a stream of words capable of blistering paint! I'm sure he was justified, as earlier that summer we had washed our clothes together in a vintage gasoline washing machine, not realizing that a plug of tobacco resided in my filthy clothes. Thus we enjoyed colored underwear and t-shirts years before they gained national popularity.

The other major invention that summer was the automatic stove lighter fashioned from dry cells, slender copper wire, match heads, and a discarded alarm clock. I remember our cheers of joy when seconds after the alarm sounded there was the crackle of kindling igniting as the dry cells heated the copper wire, exploding the match heads to start the fire. Too bad the invention was a century late to be patented and make us all millionaires. The only really sad note that summer was the demise of our favorite 'pee bush' outside our tent. As I remember, that poor scrub was dying of nitrogen poisoning by late summer. Oh, the irresponsibility of youth.

The previous issue of Static Line had the sad duty of informing members of the death of a fine man, Joe Roemer. Don Halloran contributed a short story about Joe for that issue. Don's picture below is of the jumper crew on project at Shearer Guard Station (Moose Creek District, Nez Perce NF) in 1955. Left to right: Hugh Cates, Station Guard, deceased (See 'Saga of the Heart-shaped Garbage Pit' in this issue of Static Line), Jim Olson, (MSO '54), deceased, Joe Roemer (MSO '52) squad leader, deceased, Hank Broderson (MSO '54), Don Halloran (MSO '53), and Ray Carter (MSO '54). Hank lives in Leonardtown, Maryland, and Don lives in Marshfield, Wisconsin. We're not sure, but think that Ray lives in Colorado. We would appreciate learning his whereabouts.



Shearer GS
August 1955

Saga of the Heart-Shaped Garbage Pit

by The Phantom Ground-Pounder

In the summer of 1958, I was working my first Forest Service summer as a Station Fireman at Shearer Guard Station on the Moose Creek District of the Nez Perce Forest in Idaho. The Headquarters Guard, my boss, was an old coot named Hugh Cates, a very good man, but abrupt and grumpy. The other Station Fireman was Art Cavill, whose older brother, Fred (MSO '54) was a smokejumper.

There was not much fire activity that summer, so we had three smokejumpers assigned to Shearer on project: John Stone (MSO '56), Bob Hewitt (MSO '56) and Herb Fischer (MSO '57). They were supposed to help bale hay off the airstrip and do other jobs that Hugh assigned them. Smokejumpers enjoy life, and seem to have fun everywhere they go. And, no surprise, these three guys were like that. They wanted fires because that was what they did, but they had to settle for what was being done on project. They were fun to be around, and we all seemed to get along with no problem.

Hugh was a gruff sort and was very demanding and hard to please about the way things were done around the station. Over a period of many summers, Shearer had sort of become his place, never mind that the Forest Service held the deed. I don't know what it was, but one day something happened that really seemed to upset Hugh. It was bad enough that he had a serious talk with the three jumpers, during which at some point, he told them that their "heart was not in their work", and he wanted an attitude change. To stress the point, and maybe make them sweat a bit harder, Hugh assigned them to dig a new garbage pit between the bunk houses and the Selway River. They were supposed to build a bear-proof cover for it as well.

This was not an easy job, as the ground was a tangled mix of river boulders and tree roots. The three jumpers worked on the pit until it was about four feet deep, and then they constructed a log top with a door through which to put the garbage. On the day they finished it, one of them came and asked me to come and have a look at the job, and tell them if I thought it would be good enough for Hugh. I went down there and saw the log cover and these three guys standing there with great big grins on their faces. They removed the top and there was the pit in the perfect shape of a heart. One of them said, "Now, do you think Hugh will think our heart is in our work?" They were so proud of their work! I can still see them standing there grinning.

Hugh was not amused, and he ran them off, sent them down the trail to Moose Creek.

Three years later, there had been a lot of changes at Shearer Guard Station. Old Hugh had died in his sleep one winter. My good buddy and fellow fireman, Art Cavill, had moved on into the jumpers (MSO '60), and I replaced poor old Hugh as Station Guard. But one thing that hadn't changed was that heart-shaped garbage pit. It was a great piece of work, and we were still using it the last season I worked there.

(Actually, the Phantom Ground-Pounder is ATE's younger brother David, now retired from the Forest Service and living in Atlanta. The Static Line hopes that Messrs. Stone, Hewitt and Fischer, all NSA members, will send us their own versions of this significant event in Forest Service history.)

Tid-bits: Odds and Ends and Personal Notes



Bob Hewitt (MSO '56) and Jim Anderson (MSO '58) report that in the summer of 1998, they completed a 26-mile back pack trip in Montana's Beartooth Wilderness. They are both from Memphis, but didn't meet until they were both jumping in Missoula in the late '50s. They have remained good friends and often get together to tell silk stories. Both have attended all of the National Reunions and are looking forward to the Redding Reunion in 2000. Bob is a dentist and Jim is a retired school principal. *The Static Line uses Bob's name in vain elsewhere in this issue. See: Saga of the Heart-shaped Garbage Pit.*

Roland Pera (MSO '56) reports himself alive and well and living in Kansas city, where he is a stock broker. Those who remember Roland's fine singing voice will be glad to know that he is still using it, mostly in church.

Static Line is willing run as many Tid-bits as you readers are willing to send. Let's have 'em, folks.



*Old-timers on the trail.
Jim Anderson (l) and Bob
Hewitt tackle the Beartooth.*

The Base Liaison Program: A New Approach by Chuck Sheley (CJ '59)

Many of the NSA membership has asked if we could come up with information pertaining to the activities and happenings at all of the current bases. A report with no particular guidelines but something that we could read that would be informative. The NSA Directors also want to establish a closer connection with the active jumpers and base managers.

If we are to remain a viable organization, we must constantly be working at the task of recruiting new members. Since Static Line is our main avenue of communication, we need to cover a wide variety of information. The Base Liaisons will be the eyes and ears of the NSA. Hopefully, they will also be the missionary types who will keep the current jumpers informed of the activities and objectives of the NSA and increase interest in the organization among these jumpers and base managers.

As you can see from the articles that follow, we're off to a good start. Now, how about some help from you? Give us some feedback on this project. Some letters to the editor will be appreciated, as well as contributions to future Static Line issues. It's your organization – a very select group with limited membership potential.

We need your ideas and contributions. If you want to be a regular contributor and have ideas for a column, please let us know. Just remember, there are many with ideas but few willing to take the time and effort to put them into operation. If you are a current jumper and NSA member who wants to help with the Base Liaison Program, e-mail or call. NSA needs a few more good men and women! Rifle belts and bayonets/socks and jocks – whatever strikes your fancy. Get involved.

Chuck Sheley
10 Judy Ln.
Chico, CA 95926
(530) 342-0523

Touching All The Bases

Alaska:

It's the last week of May up here in the great northland, and we've finally got enough training done that we can afford to put a few people on fires. The first fire was jumped May 14 just east of Anchorage on Fort Richardson. Only two guys jumped. They served as a falling team for a fire already manned by some state pounders. The other six guys on the load recovered to Palmer to standby. A couple hours later, they were on their way to an Alaska first – a fire on a high ridge right behind the High School in Valdez. When they arrived, the fire was estimated at 20 acres. The fire was burning surprisingly hot on a very steep slope. A few mountain goats were grazing, unconcerned, not far from where the crew landed, and Prince William Sound and the surrounding Wrangel Mountains were unusually breathtaking. Another load of eight jumped the following day. The mayor of Valdez wanted the fire put out quickly, since he thought the burn might increase the chances of avalanches crashing down on his town. By mid-day Sunday, the fire was contained at 40 acres.

Twenty-four jumpers were involved with two major fires in the Matanuska Valley from May 18 through the 23rd. One load jumped. The other two pounded due to high winds. Both fires were fast moving, wind driven, in areas of farms and homes. One burned 227 acres, the other 350. No structures were lost, although several were seriously threatened.

Five minutes ago, as I write, we got another call to “roll a load north” toward Central. Jump 17 is in the air at this time, and we are waiting to hear what they find.

As far as the base goes, we've been busy training. We will have about the same number this year as last; 65, plus a couple visiting Russian jumpers. We started eleven rookies and still have six. Those remaining appear strong and seem to be faring well. Their last week of training begins tomorrow. I suppose they deserve a certain acknowledgement, but since they are stinking, rotten rookies, I'll keep it brief.

Jim Dibert-Midnight Sun Hot Shot, Chena Hot Shots, FSS –All Alaska

Scott Hocklander-Sawtooth Hot Shots

Mike Lambright-North Star Crew Foreman, Mid night Sun Hot Shots, St. Joe Hot Shots, Firefighter on Um pqua N. F.

Gabe Lydic-North Star Crew, Chena Hot Shots

La'ona Lydic-Midnight Sun Hot Shots

Doug Mackey-Tahoe Hot Shots, Deschutes N. F.

Lead Rookie Trainer: John “Iron John” Lyons

Asst. Trainers: Dave Estey & Marty Adell from Boise

Doug Carroll and Robert Yeager of Alaska

Besides the new-blood rookies, we have a number of Old Salt/Dinosaurs that will be wandering into the sunset come September. This will be the last year for Rod

Dow, John Dube, and Mike Hardy. Dow started in McCall in 1968 and has jumped every summer since. He currently holds the all-time fire jump record at: **566** John Dube rookie'd back in 1970 at Redmond, and he, too, has jumped each season since. Mike Hardy rookie'd at Cave Junction in 1975 and has fifteen seasons. Each of these old-timers will be missed greatly in the years to come.

Jim Veitch returned to our ranks last year after a sixteen year layoff. At fifty-one, he ran the Alaska high standard PT test, a mile and a half in an astounding 9:22. He claims (in a rather pitiful effort to reclaim some of his former glory) the dubious distinction of being Australia's only active smokejumper. All that aside, “Killer Veitch” still deserves his name. Check out his website. Lots of good photos and comments. Log on at: www.home.gil.au/~jveitch/

The crew organization is still much the same except for the typical seasonal changes. Dalan Romero is our Base Manager, Bert Mitman, our Ops Supervisor. Our Crew Supervisor is Jim Raudenbush. Gary Baumgartner is our Loft Manager. Bill Cramer heads up training. Mel Tenneson runs para-cargo. Tony Pasto is our Equipment Development man. Chip Houde has been promoted to Lead Spotter, taking over from Leonard Wehking, who is now in the Carson City Nevada area protecting the National Jack Rabbit Herd. Lance Clouser is our Acting Logistics Coordinator, a position he likes to refer to as “The King”.

Several other positions have been filled as follows:

Fred Hernandez —Emergency Medical Sup. GS-8

Dave Whitmer —Squadleader GS-7

Marty “Bull Meat” Meierotto —Squadleader GS-7

Hank Falcon —Loft GS-7

Rob Allen —Operations GS-7

Currently, Rick Thompson and Fred Hernandez are in rookie training. John Gould left us this winter for the Alaska Military FMO position. And John “Johnny Mac” McColgan is now AFS's Lead Fuels Specialist. Todd White went back to his hot shot crew on the Tahoe N. F. as their new Foreman. Frank Domingues has retired from jumping and is now working in the Western Great Basin Dispatch Center in Reno. Al “Seldom Seen” Seiler has transferred to the Boise BLM crew.

Sadly, as some you have already heard, this winter we also lost Gary Dunning and Paul Sulinski. Gary died in a climbing accident near Libby, Montana, and Paul in a car crash on Highway 101 near Liggett, California.

That's all from here, fellas. Talk to you later. Murry Taylor

Oh, by the way, MY BOOK is scheduled to be available in June of 2000. Initial printing of 20,000

Touching All the Bases

hardback copies, minimum. Planned worldwide distribution. Its current title is Brave and Crazy Innocence: The Alaska Smokejumpers. The story is of the 1991 season, jumping fires in Alaska and Idaho, out of McCall. That summer's action provided an ideal framework in which to include some of our favorite jump stories from the past. The title may be changed by printing time. Harcourt-Brace is the publisher.

Many thanks to the Static Line Alaska Base Liaison, the brave, crazy and innocent Murry Taylor, who can be contacted at POBox 42, Greenville, CA 96037

North Cascades:

Base Manager Doug Houston reported that 22 jumpers will man the North Cascades Smokejumper Base (NCSB) during the 1999 fire season. Included will be 16 returnees and 6 rookies. The rookie training class was consolidated with the Redmond rookie class, and training was conducted in Redmond starting June 1. Returning jumpers will have completed their training and are getting ready for a busy fire season. During quiet periods, jumpers will be assigned to project work at local forest districts.

Doug commented that beginning June 7 and continuing through July 14, the NCSB jump plane will be a Forest Service Twin Otter. Around July 14, a contract CASA 212 jump plane will be transferred to NCSB from Alaska. The CASA 212 is being provided via a joint contract between USFS and BLM, under which the plane will be located in Alaska from May 22 to July 14 and at NCSB from July 14 to September 30.

No one can predict how current weather patterns will affect the coming fire season. General weather predictions indicate the possibility of a delayed fire season in the higher elevations of the North Cascades because of the impact of the La Nina weather pattern. Mt. Baker in the North Cascades set a new world record for snowfall during the 1998-99 winter with close to 100 feet of snow. This record snowfall will need to melt off before the higher elevations become susceptible to fires.

Redmond:

Base Manager Dewey Warner reports that Redmond Air Center (RAC) will be staffed by 35 jumpers this summer. RAC hired six rookies, of which three survived the initial part of the training. All Region 6 rookies from North Cascades and Redmond trained at Redmond. The rookie crew made its first jump on June 14, and should be ready for action by July 4.

RAC will be using a Sherpa for their jump ship in 1999, and should have the same airplane all summer. The Sherpa carries 12 jumpers and gear.

Dewey reported that RAC joined in cross-training with the rappellers this spring. Jumper Renee Trip participated in the rappeller training while Eric Bush from

Cont.

the Malheur Forest participated in jump training.

Redmond jumpers have been busy since the first of the year on a number of special projects. Two jumpers are in New Mexico on detail and are not expected to return to RAC until sometime in July. Also, RAC jumpers put in over 500 staff days since January 1 thinning, burning, and climbing for several districts on the Deschutes Forest.

In a somewhat unusual project, staff were detailed to the Francis Marion Forest in South Carolina this spring where they performed about 500 staff days of effort. RAC staff who worked in South Carolina were Mike Brick, Tony Laughton, Ron Rucker, Mark Gibbons, Bill Selby, Tony Sleznick, Ray Rubio, Dirk Stevens, Tiffan Thoele, and Charlie Roos.

Static Line thanks to Larry Lufkin, NSA 1/Vice President and liaison to NCSB and RAC.

Missoula:

The last fire season of the millennium has arrived. The base at Missoula considers itself Y2K compliant, although no one is really quite sure what that means. If all financial records happen to be lost because of this computer bug, this jumper should come out ahead, as my outstanding loan amounts far exceed my current checking account balance.

The base at Silver City, New Mexico has been set up, and Missoula's contingent this year consists of seven jumpers. Fire activity there has been moderate, but most have had two or three fire jumps so far. They should be in place until the Monsoons of July hit. Three Missoula jumpers are presently working in the Chicago area, climbing trees and inspecting for beetle infestations. These three will be in the windy city until either June 28th or until the CPD runs them out of town, whichever comes first. At present (June 15) no fires have yet been jumped out of Missoula.

Fifteen rookies began training on June 1, and that number has now been reduced to twelve (four women, eight men). They currently are experiencing the joys of the training units and are finding out all about "new person's neck". Those who make it through will be divided between MSO, West Yellowstone and Grangeville. After the rookies graduate, Missoula's total number of available jumpers will be 58.

During the week of May 17th, Base Manager Dave Custer (MSO '70), Training Foreman Everett Weniger (MSO '80), and Loft Foreman Jeff Kinderman (MSO '75) traveled to Smithers, British Columbia to assist in the development of the Canadian Smokejumper program. Based in Smithers, the Canadian contingent will consist of twenty jumpers, with a Twin Otter being used as a jumper aircraft. Missoula looks forward to developing a strong relationship with our jumper colleagues to the north.

Touching All the Bases

August 5, 1999 represents the fiftieth anniversary of the Mann Gulch tragedy. In remembrance of this day, Helena National Forest has planned an extensive list of events over the course of three days, August 4-6. The Missoula Smokejumper Welfare fund has donated \$2,000 to this cause, and challenges other base welfare funds and retired jumpers to pony up some dough for this event. For more information on these events, or to make a contribution, call Dave Turner at the Helena National Forest, phone number (406) 449-5490. Jim Phillips

(MSO '67) is helping coordinate NSA activities, and he can be reached at (406) 443-2052.

In July of 1998, Tom Carlsen (MSO '70), Missoula's Assistant Loadmaster Foreman, retired from the jumpers. The base is indebted to "Otto" for his beautiful woodwork on the packing tables, and we wish him the best. John Smith (MSO '82) has assumed Assistant Loadmaster duties. Mitch Kearns (MSO '89) and Willis Curdy (MSO '71) have been promoted to Squad Leaders. Jim Beck (MSO '75) is working in the Coordinator's Center this summer while he rehabs his knee.

The Missoula jumpers are primed and ready for another busy summer, and all anxiously await the opportunity to "hit the silk", wherever that might be. *Static Line gratitude to Missoula liaison, Charlie Palmer (MSO '95) for this report. Chicago? Those three jumpers must have REALLY got on somebody's bad side.*

McCall:

The McCall base will be operating this season with 68 jumpers. This number includes two visiting Russians, two McCall jumpers in Russia, and two squad leaders on detail for the season. One of these squad leaders, John Carothers (MYL '88) will be in Custer, South Dakota, organizing a new Native American crew called the Black Hills Hot Shots.

Russia and McCall are again involved in an exchange of smokejumpers for the 1999 fire season. McCall jumpers, Steve Daigh (MYL '93) and Fred Pavlovic (MYL '89) left for Russia May 31 and will be jumping there through August. Phrol Phrantsuzov and Yergeny Kulicov arrived in McCall on May 15th and will be in McCall until September 15th. Dan Felt (MYL '77) is the coordinator of the program and he will also spend part of the season in Russia.

The last refresher group started on June 14th. Six rookies made their first jump on June 15th. There are four women in the rookie class, including Karin Kaaen (daughter of Wayne Kaaen /MYL '68/) and Melanie Dunton, (daughter of Al Dunton /FBX '67). Training Foreman, John Humphries (MYL '79) and his new assistant, Larry Wilson (MYL '79) are heading up

Cont.

the rookie and refresher training programs.

McCall aircraft for the season will consist of the three Region Four jumpships, one turbo DC-3 and two Twin Otters.

Static Line is treating the McCall liaison guy, Leo Cromwell, with deep respect, because he is sitting on a giant cache of McCall silk stories that Static Line is thirsting to get its hands upon. Thank you for this report, Leo, Your Wonderfulness, Sir.



Jumpers Coming and Going: (l to r) John Carothers, Shawn Denowh (MYL '98) host/interpreter, Steve Daigh, Fred Pavlovic, Phrol Phrantsuzov, Yergeny Kuylocov, and Dan Felt.

Grangeville Air Center (GAC):

Jerry Zumwalt has a personal and professional philosophy that jumpers should be a part of the local community. He does whatever he can to keep in touch with the school system, County Commissioners, and the Chamber of Commerce. Several exciting collaborations are coming in the future. Jerry is a dynamic base manager and running strong at about 51. He started his smokejumping career in 1970 at Redmond, Oregon. In 1994 he took over the GAC base manager's job when Pat Wilson migrated to the Technology and Development Center in Missoula. Jerry has 27 great years in the good ol' USFS organizations. He is upbeat and ready for Y2K or whatever else comes his way.

GAC is a pretty cool place to work. It has a fairly young organization with an average age of 33.7 years in 1998. Total base strength is 32 people. They will have a P2V Neptune bomber with a 2,000 gallon payload of pink stuff. A long range helicopter is also stationed there and something brand new this year - A big single turbo engine ship, that will carry six jumpers and will cost about \$300/hour to operate. I see a lot of them in use by cargo companies such as Fed Ex, etc. It's got a good safety record. *(Cessna Caravan?)*

GAC primarily serves the Nez Perce, Clearwater and Umatilla National Forests, but does the Idaho Panhandle National Forests and the Wallawa-Whitman N.F. as well. Fifteen GAC jumpers are currently working on the Idaho Panhandle N.F. (under Dave Luske) cruising and marking bug-killed trees. They headed over there right after refresher training. They got in a little burning and thinning project stuff as well.

Twelve GAC folks went to Mississippi in February to

Touching All the Bases

do some burns on Mississippi state forest lands. Two GAC folks are coming back from South Carolina where they did some project work on the Francis Marion N. F. Five GAC rookies are in Missoula right now and will arrive in Grangeville after graduation: Reed Costello, Kirstin Pietila, Jennifer Martynuik, Josh Tolbert and Ki Friedrichs

Two Redmonites are joining the GAC lineup looking for the sweet spot: T. Johnson and M. Haydon

We will have a personal profile on the rookies when they get to Grangeville, and the names of all the folks on the jump roster.

Thanks to Static Line's man in Grangeville, Tom Kovalicky (MSO '61), who advises that he doesn't have a typewriter thing. However, he did get off with a yellow pad and a ballpoint pen when he retired as boss of Nez Perce N. F. It's OK, Tom, we could read some of it, sort of. You can reach Tom at POBox 48, Grangeville, ID 83530

Boise:

The Russian exchange program is underway at BLM. Four Russian smokejumpers are visiting Boise and Alaska bases. They arrived in Boise on May 18, and will return to Russia on July 1. Kasey Rose and Tim Caughlin left for Russia on May 25 and will return at the end of June,

There was only one rookie smokejumper this year at Boise, and he was unable to continue after his third jump because of an ankle injury. Boise did pick up five Forest Service transfers this year: Hector Madrid, Tim Schaeffer and Matt Bowers from McCall; Shannon Orr from Redding; and Brad Sauer from West Yellowstone. Jumpers not returning this year were Mike Dark, Mark Stevens, Matt Eldridge, Mike Niccoli, Omid Shirazi, and Phil Gearhardson. Jim Kitchen took a prescribed fire management position in Yellowstone, and Dave Mueller did the same in Miles City.

Boise jumpers were busy this spring on prescribed burns in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, New Mexico, Oregon, Florida, and the Grand Canyon. By way of background, Boise Base has been sending jumpers out on prescribed fire assignments since 1997, to various BLM districts, National Parks and Refuges. The mission is similar to the suppression mission: provide managers extra resources when they are in an overload situation. In this case, the overload is spring and fall prescribed fires, burns lit when many seasonal firefighters are unavailable. As with fire suppression, the Boise jumpers provide simple manpower, if desired, or self-contained management teams with burn bosses and ignition specialists. In three seasons, the crew have become skilled burners, applying their suppression skills to prescribed fire. As an agency, the BLM is trying to catch up on the burning it should have been doing for years. Making the jumpers avail-

Cont



able early and late season is part of the agency strategy to deal with this backlog of burning. For aircraft this season, Boise will be operating three Twin Otters out of Grand Junction CO, Cedar City UT and Battle Mountain NV. The basing of these airplanes will shift, of course, as required by the fire situation.

Static Line thanks to Walt Wasser (MYC '79) and Grant Beebe (NIFC '90), our guys on the site.

Redding:

As the last fire season of the millennium approaches, the forty smokejumpers in Redding are ready. A relatively average winter and a warm dry spring have left California with the kind of conditions that could make this a very busy fire year. In preparation, the Region 5 smokejumpers held their first refresher this year on March 15. After two weeks of working out the cobwebs, 20 smokejumpers were placed on the jump list and ready for the season to begin. The first fires in Region 5 were jumped on May 29, and before the afternoon of May 31 the entire base was jumped out, including the nine rookies who had just barely completed their training.

Redding hired eleven rookies this year and graduated nine of them after six arduous weeks of training. The weather was hot for the units this year and all nine rookies stayed soaked in sweat from head to toe. Their first jump spot was the size of Rhode Island, but the spots got smaller, of course. Several of the spots we used this year were ringed by 150-foot timber, and the final spot was about the size of a parachute canopy and surrounded on all sides by huge timber. The rookies spent a week in the field during the last part of their training, climbing trees and learning other woodcraft skills that they will need as smokejumpers. This year's rookie class included a fifty-year old publisher, a Civil War Expert and three detailed firefighters from various Region 5 forests.

Before the fire jumps of late May, Redding jumpers were involved in a variety of projects, including a great deal of prescribed fire projects. Two jumpers are in New York City climbing trees and assisting efforts to control the Asian Long Horn Beetle, which is threatening Eastern hardwood forests. Several other jumpers worked with wildlife biologists building osprey habitat and fitting Bald Eagles with radio transmitters for tracking and study. And of course, there were many days of good old-fashioned line-building and brush-cutting. The feedback from all these projects was most positive, and many of California's 18 National Forests are realizing the utility of using smokejumpers to meet non-fire management goals.

This could be a big fire season in Region 5. If it is, we will be extremely busy. And we also will look forward to hosting jumpers from all of the other eight bases who come to California to reinforce.

Static Line thanks Josh Mathiesen, Redding squad leader, for this good report. Josh, may the gods of lightning bless you with a busy 1999 season.

The NSA Merchandising Program



by Chuck Sheley (CJ '59)

The money that keeps the NSA in operation comes primarily from your membership dues. Expenses involved with operating our office and producing the newsletter take the majority of our annual budget. Another source of income is our NSA merchandising.

Since last August, I have been developing strategies that are aimed at increasing our income. The first resulted in the color brochure in last October's newsletter actually showing the items we had to offer. Another area of concern to me was getting a better purchasing price for the NSA so that we could keep our costs down and still offer the members items at a reasonable price. One of my biggest hurdles has been to find a supplier that would give us a shorter turnaround time with our orders. I have also gone to Outlet Shopping. A prime example of this is our offering of the Lee Brand denim jackets at \$14 below retail (and that includes the NSA logo!). Everyone should buy one of these – such a deal!

It has taken almost a year of rounding off the corners to get to the point where I am satisfied with our vendors. We now have a supplier who will turn around our orders in a week. Giving me some packing and record-keeping time, I now aim to have your order in the mail in two weeks.

Starting from scratch last August, I knew that we would have problems that would develop as we went. I was NOT satisfied with our ability to handle the Christmas rush and was very frustrated in not being able to get your Christmas orders to you on time. Since that season is our high order time, a concerted effort will be made this year to achieve 100% on-time delivery of your Christmas orders. The glitches have been eliminated.

I hope to produce a color brochure ONCE a year in the October newsletter. Getting the October newsletter to you early in October is key to supplying your orders, and we'll do our best to do that. You can help by:

1. Getting your order in early, and letting me know if you have a due date.
2. List an e-mail address if you have one. This saves me phone expenses if I need to check with you.
3. Check your sizes – many of you were a LARGE jumper and are now an EXTRA-LARGE retiree.

There have been good suggestions for additional merchandise. An important factor in adding merchandise to our brochure is that it takes money to develop an item and many items take a minimum order in order to get a decent price from the manufacturer. This results in inventory and inventory means money held on the shelf that is not available for us to use for daily operations. For example, just to develop a new t-shirt is about a \$600 investment with set-up and a minimum order of 60. We can't afford to

sell items that require high investment and have a limited market.

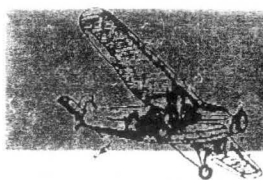
With only 1200 members, we have a limited customer base from which to draw. I'm starting a new marketing plan in which you can become involved. It will be of benefit to you and to NSA. Many of you are involved in ordering garments and caps for groups in your local area, e.g., school teams, civic groups, and other organizations that periodically need t-shirts, jackets, and caps. Give the NSA a chance to match or better your local price. Even if we can just match your price, you will have funneled some much-needed funding toward NSA. This will help us operate our office and man the phones.

Our first project of this nature has been through Larry Lufkin (CJ '63) to supply the jackets and caps for the hunter education instructors in the Olympia, Washington area. NSA will sell 30+ jackets and caps with that group's logo on each garment. We can do the same for your group. I have a 90 page catalog for you to shop. Pick the item(s) that suits your group and let's talk business! Since setup of your logo (artwork/digitizing) is the expensive part and time consuming, we're looking for orders that have the potential for re-order in the future. We must have a minimum startup order of 12 garments. Once we have your logo on the computer, we can put it on almost anything that can be embroidered/silk screened. We offer two weeks turnaround, and postage is included in our quote. Remember: Any profits are plowed back into making NSA better for you.

Other NSA marketing strategies:

1. We're attempting to have the Smokejumper Bases market some NSA items in their caches.
2. We will ask to bid on any of their items that they sell.
3. Any NSA members who have items they want to market can contact me to work out arrangements.

People ask me how I'm spending my retirement. Currently, it is standing in line at the Post Office and talking to vendors. However, I look back on my time as a smokejumper as being a very important part of my lifetime. Keeping NSA healthy and functional is something to which all members can contribute. Give me your ideas. Buy and wear NSA logo. Get your kids into NSA caps. We can even put the logo on the back of the cap so it will be in style. We'll even give you good prices on items without the logo.



NSA Merchandise

Chuck Sheley • 10 Judy Lane • Chico, CA 95926
(530) 893-0436 • e-mail: cnkgshaley@earthlink.net

Caps

Structured Garment Dyed 2-tone Cap: 100% cotton
seamed front, 6-panel construction, contrast visor and button
fabric closure, stitched eyelets.

New
Colors

Colors: (body/visor)

Best Sellers!! Sage/Slate, Lt. Khaki/Maroon

Old Standby's Navy/Forest, Solid Black

New & Sharp!! Lt. Brown/Black, Lt. Brown/Navy

Adjustable

Item No. 101
\$15.00

Cap & T-Shirt

Attention Collectors!!

California Smokejumpers "logo" Cap: Black

Item No. 102
\$15.00

California Smokejumpers T-Shirt: Available Colors -
Large/XL

Item No. 103
\$15.00

Both have unique Condor type wings around parachute
Developed by Redding Smokejumpers

Belt Buckle & Key Chain

Belt Buckle: 2-3/4" X 2-1/4" Solid Bronze.
Super looking NSA logo emblem.
Serially numbered.



Item No. 104
\$25.00

Key Chain: 1/2" X 2"

Solid Bronze, NSA emblem design
(Rookie Pin)

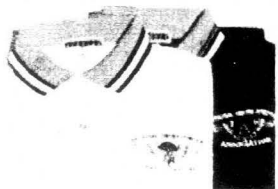


Item No. 105
\$ 8.00

Sport Shirts

Knit Sport Shirt: This shirt has a collar and hemmed
sleeves, 100% combed cotton, welt collar, double needle
sleeve and bottom hem, horn-tone buttons, side vents,
NSA emblem

Adult Sizes: S - XXXL



Item No. 106
\$28.00

Colors:

Body	Collar
Black	Black/White/Red
Maroon	Maroon/Natural/Navy
Navy	Navy/Maroon/Forest
White	White/Maroon/Navy

Coffee Mug

Coffee Mug: 10 oz. durable clear glaze, Ironstone in off-white
color, NSA emblem

Item No. 107
\$ 6.00

Book

Trimoter and Trail, By Earl Cooley: Earl spent 24
years with the Smokejumpers and participated in the 1st
fire jump in 1940

Item No. 108
\$11.00

Decal

Chuck Pickard's multicolor design for vehicle windows.
Smokejumper logo

Item No. 109
\$6.00
S/H included

BBQ Apron & Cookbook

BBQ Apron: NSA emblem on front bib.
Color: Denim.
One size - covers
full front

Item No. 110
\$12.00

USFS Lookout Cookbook 1949 Edition:

57 pages of recipes, 10 page index and table of
contents. Recipes for bread, soups, pastries,
sandwiches, vegetables, meats, salads, etc.

Item No. 111
\$12.00

Tape & Book

New Items: Written & Sung by Joe "Grey Eagle" Wright (MSO-58)

Tape: Twelve new songs Smokejumpers, Native Americans,
Cowboys, all created & sung by Joe.

Item No. 112
\$9.00
S/H included

Book: Poems & songs that share Joe's experiences and love
for Smokejumpers, the natural world & his heritage.

Item No. 113
\$9.00
S/H included

Top of the line Pique Knit Sport Shirt: with nail-
head design and stripe collar and cuffs. This dressy
shirt goes well with your casual or dress slacks.

Full cut, rich in style and detail, 100% combed cotton, yarn
dyed, welt collar and cuffs, pewter and horn-tone buttons
NSA emblem.

Adult Sizes: XS - 4XL

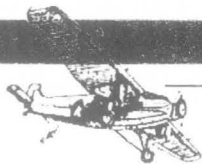
Colors:

Body	Collar
Black/Silver	Black/Silver
Maroon/Silver	Maroon/Silver
Navy/Silver	Navy/Silver



Item No. 114
\$38.00

Sport Shirts - cont.



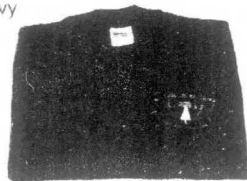
NEW! NSA T-Shirt!!

Silk screen 5 color NSA logo left front; 4 color
Smokey Bear/Parachute/NSA on the back
Color: Ash Item No. 115
Adult Sizes: Medium, Large, XL \$15.00



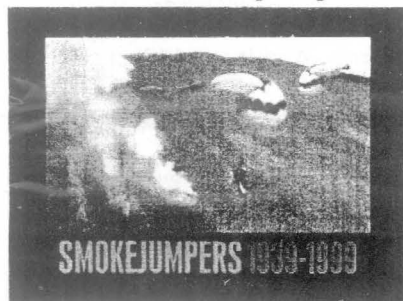
T-Shirt: Hanes Beefy-T, 100% cotton, NSA emblem embroidered on
left front pocket area.

Colors: White, Ash, Maroon, Navy
Adult Sizes: S - XXXL



Item No. 116
\$15.00

Celebrating 60 years of Airborne Excellence: Smokejumper 1939-1999



The Limited-Edition Print:

Seattle photographer Dan
McComb (MSO 87) has
created this digital color
photographic montage.
Each 18" X 24" lithographic
print (fits standard frame) is
numbered by the artist
Edition of 1500.

Item No. 117
\$29.95 plus \$5.00 S/H



"I SHOT THE SHERIFF!! & GOT ALL HIS

Lee® heavy duty Rivited Denim Jackets:

Chest pockets/button down flaps, front slash pockets
Western Wear Store priced at \$62.00
With NSA logo we have for \$48.00

Item No. 118

\$48.00

Sizes: Medium/Large/XL

Might be able to get XXL if I get enough orders to go
after the deputies too! Stock limited

Heavyweight Sweatshirt: NSA emblem

Colors: White, Black, Navy, Red, Royal, Forest
Green

Adult Sizes: S - 4XL

Crew Neck-Item No. 119

\$30.00

Hooded-Item No. 120

\$35.00

Hood/Zipper-Item No. 121

\$38.00

NEW! Denim Shirt:

Midweight Denim Long Sleeved

Best quality denim shirt, generous fit, heavy
garment wash for style, 100% cotton, double needle
stitched, patch pocket, button down collar, horn-tone
buttons, tuck in tails. NSA emblem.

Adult Sizes: S - 4XL

Item No. 122

\$32.00

Heavyweight
"Wrangler Brand"
Denim Shirt
Indicate faded blue
or dark denim

Item No. 123

\$34.00

Please allow 3 weeks for delivery.

NSA ORDER FORM

Ship To: Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____

E-Mail _____

Item No.	Description	Color	Size	Qty.	Price Each	Total
106	Knit Sport Shirt (example)	Black-Black/White/Red	L	2	28.00	56.00

Make all checks payable to: NSA

Send this order form to: NSA - Chuck Sheley
10 Judy Lane
Chico, CA 95926

Shipping & Handling
1 item - \$3.50
Additional items - \$1.25 each

Sub-Total

Shipping

Total Due \$

Letter from the Acting Temporary Editor



If you are reading this, I guess it means that we got this issue of Static Line out. If there is snow on the ground, it means that we got it out late.

There was Jack Demmons for a long time, and then there were Art Jukkala and Roger Savage and me, and the three of us mostly proof-read for typos and drank coffee with Jack every three months. Jack has retired. And Art has flown away, leaving a monstrously big hole in Static Line (and a bigger one in the lives of us who loved him.)

Jack did EVERYTHING. (I don't blame him for retiring.) And when we sat down and tried to divide up his job, with the goal of keeping Static Line afloat, I got the part where you sit down at the computer (when you should be doing honest work) and try to get a bunch of words on paper. Jack was a historian, and so he went out and dug up stories and wrote them down. He worked the telephones, maintained a wide circle of contacts. I'm not a historian; I don't have time to dig up stories; I don't know anybody; I don't use the phone unless I can't stop the bleeding myself. So things will be different around Static Line, and Static Line itself will look different, not because we want to get rid of what Jack was doing, but because I'm not him.

Static Line will be whatever you make it, because it will consist of YOUR letters, YOUR silk stories, YOUR photos, YOUR tid-bits of info, YOUR – you get the idea. We will print your stuff, especially if it is entertaining. We want to hear from all the members. Including pilots. If you are a pilot and want to send stuff, simply have a jumper or other adult help you write it down, and send it on in. If nobody sends us stuff, we won't have anything to put in the newsletter. If you send us something, we will print it, unless it's too far off the subject. By the same token, if you don't want it printed, don't send it. If you send us a letter on a controversial subject we'll print it with a disclaimer, and if somebody else wants to write and say you're full of crap, we'll print *that*, too. Static Line can be your bulletin board, your punching bag or the wood stove you sit around while you swap lies. Don't send IDEAS for articles or stories. Ideas are cheap. Write it up and send it, in whatever form suits you. The editor's job is to make you look good. Editors have corrected my mistakes for years, and I will do that for you, unless I screw up. This is YOUR newsletter. SEND US THINGS. PLEASE. Send us short news items about yourself or other jumpers. If you just got promoted, elected to public office or indicted by a grand jury, or all of the above, send us a notice. We have such a page in this issue, with only two items (alas).

As you'll notice from this issue, we have a shortage of photos. Send us some. And it would be great if somebody would send us a cartoon every two or three months.

Send us obituaries. And if you see an obituary of a friend, send us a follow-up story about him. Honor our friends who leave us by sharing good memories about them.

If what you want to send is on paper, just mail it to NSA headquarters address, and a grown-up will get it to us. If you want to send your stuff by e-mail, send it straight to me at: dacour@montana.com

If you wish to send strong personal criticism to that address, please note that I have a special bitch detector program that will automatically send a strong electric surge back up the line, and fry your circuits. Correspondence concerning dues, missing issues, unpaid bills, etc should be sent to NSA headquarters so that somebody (not me) can figger out who can deal with it (also not me). Send all letters beginning with, "You will shortly be hearing from my attorney" directly to Carl Gidlund or any other NSA overhead whose name you can remember.

To make a bigger deadline target, we'll start calling the issues "summer", "fall", "winter", and "spring" (I think that's all of them) instead of July, October, January and April. We'll continue to assign each issue a sequential number. We also hope, when we get our act a bit more together, to begin bundling, binding and offering collections of past issues.

Thanks for letting me work on Static Line. We'll just have to see how this goes. If anybody would like to take this job over, speak up. I call myself the Acting Temporary Editor with complete seriousness. Remember how on a work crew, somebody would end up doing the cooking? He wasn't a real cook anymore than I am a real editor, and he did it just to keep things going or to get out of doing real work. That's how I look at this job. I promise to do the best I can while I last. I also promise, almost seriously, that there won't be anymore messages from the ATE, although I plan to write some stories. If I can get them past the damned editor.

Don Courtney (MSO '56) ATE