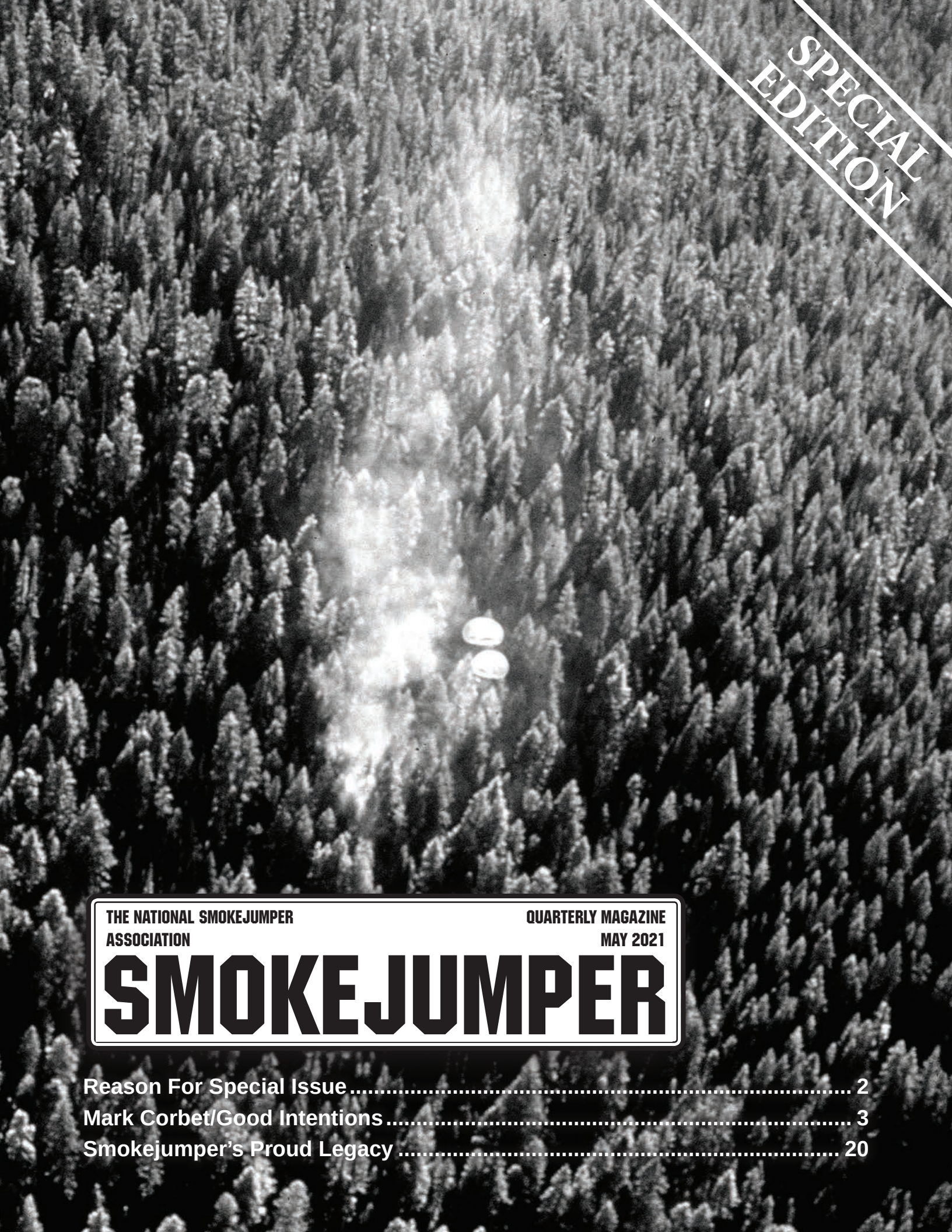
May 2021

Smokejumper Magazine, May 2021

National Smokejumper Association



SPECIAL EDITION

THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
MAY 2021

SMOKEJUMPER

CONTENTS

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Front cover: R-6 Fire Jump (Courtesy Ken Franz)

The Main Reason For A Special Issue

by Chuck Sheley (Cave Junction '59)

The first part of the NSA's Mission Statement reads "The National Smokejumper Association, through a cadre of volunteers and partnerships, **is dedicated to preserving the history and lore of smokejumping,**…"

I've been very convinced that smokejumper history needs to be recorded and preserved as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that the NSA will be in existence 20 years from now. Membership among the jumpers who rookied 2000 to the present is negligible.

Three years ago, with this in mind, **Stan Collins** (MYC-67) and I made a trip to Eastern Washington University to meet with their archivist. **Bob Bartlett** (Associate Life Member) was key in setting up this meeting. It was a very successful meeting, and the EWU staff agreed to help preserve smokejumping history. Stan has been the ramrod and the lead between the NSA and EWU.

If you go to *https://dc.ewu.edu/smokejumpers,* you will find NSA meeting minutes, publications on smokejumping, *Smokejumper* magazine and *Static Line* publications, crew pictures, and Triple Nickle photographs. We have also put together and published four books: *Smokejumpers and the CIA*, *History of the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base*, *History of the North Cascades Smokejumper Base*, and, soon to be released, *History of the La Grande Smokejumper Base*.

Now my main reason for printing this "special" issue: I feel it is very important for future generations to know about the men and women who were/are smokejumpers. A lot of jumpers are passing away each year. Obit information, in many cases, is skimpy or non-existent. Researching a person through websites is very time consuming.

Inserted in this issue is an information sheet listing things we need to know to write a good bio on a person. Since it takes a good deal of time just to write a single bio, I would like you to follow the outline and write your own bio. If you are not comfortable doing this, please fill in the blanks and I will write and format the bio.

If you use a computer and have email, write the bio on a document, attach it to an email and send to me. A great time saver. If you do not know how to attach a document, just write bio or give information in the email.

We have about 2700 jump-

ers in the database split almost evenly between NSA members and non-members. Another 1700 are "lost" with no contact information. I'm guessing that many have passed away.

Please take the time to respond. It would be great to have a personal history of each person who has been a smokejumper. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Good Intentions

by Mark Corbet (La Grande '74)

This feature article is from Mark's book "Between the Dragon and His Wrath." (Ed.) The book is available on the NSA website store.

"… good cheer, there is no harm intended …"
– Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*

Forty miles east of Portland, Oregon, the Columbia River flows through a narrow, deep gorge resplendent with waterfalls.

Because the falls are so remarkable and visited by thousands of visitors every year, the state and federal managers of the watershed try to shield it from any activities that might adversely affect the water quality.

On an unseasonably warm day in early October, I was one of 12 smokejumpers dispatched to a wildfire burning in that watershed. We selected a chain of pristine green openings near the fire as a jump spot, arriving in the late morning.

Our orders made it very clear that we were in a designated wilderness and close to a National Scenic Area. We had been granted permission to use chainsaws only "sparingly." Consequently, we intended to do everything we could to keep our impact on this protected place to a minimum.

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***Smokejumper** base abbreviations:*

Anchorage ..... ANC	Grangeville ..... GAC	Missoula ..... MSO
Boise ..... NIFC	Idaho City ..... IDC	Redding ..... RDD
Cave Junction ..... CJ	La Grande ..... LGD	Redmond ..... RAC
Fairbanks ..... FBX	McCall ..... MYC	West Yellowstone WYS
		Winthrop ..... NCSB

Having Correct Email Addresses Is Very Important

In order to save the NSA time and money, I'm sending renewals and the merchandise flyer via email. The National Reunion has been **postponed until June 24-26, 2022**, in Boise. I will be sending information on that event via email whenever possible. Sending via email is a good cost-efficient move.

To see if we have your correct email address, go to the NSA website at *www.smokejumpers.com.* Click on "**News and Events**" at the top of the page. Click on "**Jump List**" on the pulldown, type in your last name.

Please contact me if we need to update your email. My contact information is on page three of this issue. *(Ed.)*

No one else was on the fire, so as squad leader I assumed the position of Incident Commander (IC).

We estimated the fire to be about two acres in size and growing. The ground sloped off to the southeast and south into a large drainage, and the fire was slowly advancing in that direction. Because the morning sun was heating up and drying out the ground fuels on the southeast-facing slope, we began digging line around that side first.

The soils were deep and good for digging fireline, but the volume of large sized logs, roots, and dead wood lying in our path slowed our progress. By midday, the sun was beating down on the south-facing slope at the very time we were working our way across it. As the air temperature increased, so did the fire activity, making it even more difficult to construct and hold our line.

We talked it over and decided to request some air support in the form of a helicopter and bucket, or a retardant plane to help us through the heat of the day.

When I called the forest dispatch office to make our request, I was told to check with the IC to see if he would approve. I looked around at the 12 of us, struggling to keep this fire from getting the upper hand and wondered if I had understood them correctly. There was no one else on this fire but the 12 of us and I was the IC.

I called them back and informed them of that fact and repeated my request for air support. They said they knew we were the only ones on the fire but had a person parked on a point about three miles to the south, whom they had designated as IC. It seemed to me that it would be difficult for an IC to make good tactical decisions about a fire from miles away, but if that is what the forest wanted, we intended to do our best to coordinate with them.

I contacted the IC by radio, explained our situation and requested air support. He replied that in order to assure minimal impact on the water quality in this watershed, neither retardant nor buckets of water from outside sources would be used. He also informed me that a 10-person crew was on its way to lend a helping hand with the completion of a line around the fire, which was now about three acres in size.

At the speed 12 of us were building line, we were unsure if we were going to catch this fire unless it slowed down significantly in the evening, so all were happy to learn we were getting some backup.

Throughout the afternoon we continued to cut our way through large downed trees and dig fireline. Every hour or two the IC called to inform us that the crew should be arriving soon. This went on until just before sunset when the 10 finally arrived.

I met with them and talked to their crew boss. He told me they would need a little time to rest up after the long uphill hike, but would soon be giving us a much-needed hand. My crew was plenty tired themselves, having been digging hot line since mid-morning. As the sun dropped lower in the western sky, the temperature began to cool a little and the humidity increased slightly, causing the fire to burn a little more slowly.

With the help of the 10 additional line diggers, we might get a line all the way around this fire by nightfall. Once they had their break, they joined us digging fireline for about 15 minutes. Then the crew boss came over and notified me that they had been told to be on their way back to their vehicles by dark and would need to get on their way very soon.

They wanted to help stop the fire, but they had their orders. I informed my crew we would have to finish up on our own. They groaned a little, then went right back to work.

At about the same time the 10-person crew had arrived, two representatives from the Forest Service also showed up. I briefed them on the fire situation and our plan of action as we took a walk around the fire. They also walked over to the meadow into which we had parachuted.

As the 10-person crew prepared to depart, the forest representatives – who would be spending the night on the fire – rejoined us. They had been told to pass along from the forest that for our own safety, under no circumstances would we be allowed to do any kind of work on the fire after dark.

I looked over at how much additional fireline would be necessary to completely contain the fire. My best guess was it would take my crew no more than half an hour to have the fire completely corralled. When the rest of the crew heard we would be required to stop building fireline at

dark, they were far from happy.

They had worked extremely hard for an entire day building fireline under hot, smoky conditions and now with their final goal within reach, were being told to give it all up. There was less than a hundred yards of line left to build as darkness fell, so we tried to explain the situation to the managers, but they wouldn't be swayed.

Once I accepted that we wouldn't be working that night, it crossed my mind to wait a few hours and sneak over in the dark with part of my crew and dig that last little piece of line. I really didn't want our entire day's work to have been for nothing. I knew we would never actually go against their wishes, but it certainly was tempting.

All of us could see that the small edge of the fire not yet lined would probably advance far down the slope during the night.

Resigned to our new situation, we walked away from the fire and smoke a safe distance and set up a comfortable camp area, eventually bedding down for the night.

At daybreak, we all hiked over to see how the fire had progressed during the night. What we saw was about what we expected. All of the line we had built the previous day had held through the night. However, that short section of line we were prevented from digging in the dark had expanded far down the slope to the west and the further it went, the steeper the ground had become.

Our fire was now at least five acres in size. We heard promises of additional help, but for now there were still only 12 of us working the fire on the morning of the second day.

We immediately started building line down one side of the fire, but due to its steepness, every time we tried to swing the line across slope and below the flames, burning material from above would roll down across our line and ignite the abundant dry fuels below. We would again dig downhill and try to swing the line across slope below the fire, and once again burning material would roll over our line.

After multiple attempts to stop the fire's progress in this way, we decided to try digging line much farther down the hill and well past the lowest flames before cutting across slope with a really deep trench – a trench so big and deep that it would catch almost any size of hot rolling material, short of a full-sized log that might come its way.

When we had a trench dug three-quarters of the way across the bottom of the fire, we could see that this was already working very well. It might have looked a little odd placing the trench so far below the lower edge of the fire, but our other methods had repeatedly failed, so a little success was welcome.

Our impact to the site may have been harsher than we would have preferred but far less than the effects of allowing the fire to burn all the way to the bottom of the drainage.

It was a little before noon and the fire was hot but not spreading too rapidly. As we closed in on that last dozen yards of trench across the bottom of the fire, we started to harbor the hope of catching this fire. Once we got the deep furrow completed, the 12 of us would spread out along its length and deal with any hot material that should tumble in.

A short time later, we got word that a 20-person crew had just arrived on the fire via helicopter and would be heading down the line to where we were working. We were told to pull back up onto the top of the fire and work there.

When the crew arrived, we passed along what we had learned about building line on these steep slopes, then showed them the big – and nearly completed – cup trench and how well it was working. They indicated that they understood, so we made our way up to the top of the fire where we spread out and began putting out smokes along the fireline we had dug the previous day.

Later that afternoon, I decided to take a hike down the fireline to see how it was going for the crew completing the trench and holding the bottom of the fire. When I arrived the fire was now burning far down the hill below it.

I asked one of the crew working nearby what had happened. He told me his crew boss was convinced that digging a line further up the hill and more closely to the fire's edge was a preferable method to what we had recommended, so that is what they had done.

With no deep trench completely across the steep slope to stop it, burning material kept rolling across their line. Each time they would pull back and try to line the newly burning area, but time after time it got past them. They were now

far down the hill trying to stop the fire's progress into the bottom of the 2,000-foot-deep drainage.

Once again there was not going to be any corralling of this fire by dark, as we had hoped.

By the next day the fire was rapidly spreading across and downslope. All day long we could hear helicopters landing and taking off in the string of meadows where we had landed our parachutes. Personnel and equipment were arriving nearly nonstop.

Wanting to assure that our jump gear was still secure, a few of us at a time hiked back to the jump spot. What we saw was a bit of a shock. The once-pristine opening was awash in people, equipment, and activity. Worse yet, sawyers were busy expanding the size of the openings, falling trees so the helicopters would have ever-safer approach and departure routes.

Over the next couple of days, the cutting continued unabated. The next time we visited the spot, it looked like a timber sale was taking place. So many fallen trees were lying about it was now difficult to get through to the meadow. In their effort to make things safer for the helicopters, they had tossed all environmental concerns for the watershed to the four winds and totally given up on any directive to use power saws only sparingly.

By the third day we had become quite comfortable in our little camp spot. After a couple of nights sacked out on the ground, sleeping comes easily. As an added bonus, every evening a helicopter delivered hot dinners and a couple of sack lunches right next to our camp. Once darkness arrived and the workday was over, we could kick back, get some quality rest, and forget about the fire for a few hours.

On day four, someone down at the fire camp, located in a state park next to Interstate 84, decided to do us what they saw as a favor and allow us to come down to the fire camp so we could get hot showers.

Now, a hot shower after four days on a fire didn't sound all that bad but, as we were repeatedly observing, having good intentions doesn't always result in a positive outcome. In this instance, a three-minute shower was going to require considerable time and effort.

In order to have that shower, we weren't going to simply ride to the fire camp and back in a helicopter. No, our shower would necessitate a five-mile hike down a trail, a ride on a school bus down a twisting, turning gravel road for a half an hour, time standing in line for the same meals we were having delivered to our doorstep up on the fire, then again standing in line for the showers.

Once we were clean we would attempt to sleep in a busy camp with constant noise from people, generators, cars, trucks, and all the support activities a large fire camp produces.

Awakened at 5 in the morning, we would then attend a two-hour long fire briefing about what was going to be done on the fire that day, hear weather and fire behavior predictions, wait in another line to eat breakfast, take another bus ride back up the mountainside and, finally, make that five-mile, uphill hike back to the fire that had taken the 10-person crew on the first day more than four hours to complete.

The most surprising thing to me about the trip to the camp was the fire camp itself. It consisted of hundreds of vehicles and even more people. There were sleeping tents everywhere and dozens of larger tents for fire support and administrative purposes.

Also on hand were food service trucks, shower trucks, and trucks for generators and lighting systems, and much more. Seeing all of this, I asked the bus driver what other large fires this big camp must be supporting. He said, "Just yours."

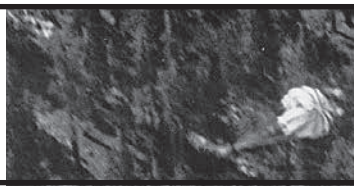
I thought he had to be joking. When we walked away from the fire that morning, there couldn't have been more than 40 people anywhere near the fire and many of those were stationed at the helispot, not actually working on the fireline.

I had never seen anything like it. There must have been 20 people in the fire camp for every person actually working on the fireline. One of our crew pointed out that if we could put half of them to work building line, we could have this fire out in no time.

A few days later a wet weather front arrived stopping the fire in its tracks. After eight days on site, we hiked off the mountain for the last time.

In the beginning, firefighters and managers had intended to keep their impact on the watershed to a minimum and everyone safe, but good intentions can come at a price. The fire burned 250 acres and cost $851,900 to suppress.

THE JUMP LIST
MEN OF THE '40s



This column is part of the NSA History Preservation Project. All information will be kept in the Smokejumper Archives at Eastern Washington University. (Ed.)

KENNETH W. PUPHAL
(Missoula '45)

Ken was born October 3, 1926, in Syracuse, New York, and grew up in Minnesota. He graduated from high school in Jamestown, North Dakota, in 1944 and rookied at Missoula in 1945 just a year out of high school. He jumped the 1945 season with eight practice and seven fire jumps.

Ken graduated from Idaho State University in 1953 and spent his working career with the Idaho National Laboratory as a research chemist until his retirement in 1985. INL is the nation's leading center for nuclear energy research and development. Somewhere during that time period, he spent four years in the Air Force. He is currently living in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

WALT JOHNSON
(MISSOULA '48)

Walt was born March 3, 1929, in Lynchburg, Virginia. When he was in high school in Montvale, Virginia, he got over 300 hours fighting wildfire in two of the eastern forests due to lack of manpower created by WWII. Walt went to BYU in Provo, Utah, in 1946 and worked for the USFS in Blister Rust Control during the '47 summer. He rookied at Missoula in '48, went to Grangeville and on to Castle Creek R.S. where he spent the summer doing trail maintenance—no fire jumps.

Walt enlisted in the USAF in 1951 and retired in 1971 as a Major. He served as a flight instructor and fighter examiner for T-39 (Sabreliner) and C-131 (Convairs) at Andrews AFB. He graduated from the University of Maryland that year and went on to become a flight instructor at two different airports.

Walt related on an unscheduled parachute jump while being stationed at Langley AFB, VA, in 1961. "I was in the back seat of a T-33 trainer shooting takeoffs and landings when the engine came unglued at about 1,000 feet. I squeezed the triggers on my seat. The chute deployed, and I swung about three times before landing in about four feet of water." Walt is living in Rocky Mount, Virginia.

LLOYD J. BROWN
(Missoula '49)

Lloyd, 91, born January 16, 1929, is living in Council, Idaho. He jumped at Missoula six seasons from 1949 through 1954 and got 18 practice and 28 fire jumps. Lloyd lived in Salmon, Idaho, in 1955 and worked for McGregor Logging Company. McGregor moved to Council and became Boise Cascade where Lloyd worked until 1987. He then worked for Adams County Bridge Dept. and retired in 2004.

Lloyd says that in 1970, "I drove to Caldwell to pick up a horse trailer and came home with an airplane. Guess what? I had to learn to fly." From there he was instrumental in upgrading the Caldwell runway from 1,800 feet of dirt to a paved 3,500-foot runway with lights.

ROBERT DEZUR
(Bob) (MSO-49)

Bob jumped at Missoula 1949-52 and at Grangeville in 1954. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics from the University of Montana in 1953, and a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Oregon in 1957. Bob was a Professor of Mathematics at San Diego State, Washington State, and the Univ. of Wyoming before working as a research scientist for Marietta Corp.

Prior to becoming a smokejumper, he was in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, stationed in Japan 1946-1948. His career work involved being a Data Analyst of Satellite and Weapons Systems, US Defense Contractors, and Software Engineer/Tester, Apple Computer. He retired from State University of New York at Delhi in 2010

at age 82, where he was an Adjunct Mathematics Professor. Bob is currently living in Oneonta, N.Y.

THOMAS HARRY GRAVES (NCSB-49)

Tom jumped at NCSB 1949-50 and 1953. He is 90 and, at last information, is living in Winthrop, WA. Tom was born on the family ranch August 6, 1929, in an area his grandfather homesteaded in the late 1890s. He graduated from Winthrop H.S. in 1947 and over the years worked as a horse packer and smokejumper, built trails and logged for the USFS. He ran Pasayten Pack Trips until 1981 and also operated Chewack Enterprises, building fences, running snowplow trucks, and fought wildfires.

Tom was in the US Army 1951-52 during the Korean War. He was active in the American Legion and the annual '49er Days celebration where he and his wife, Fae, served as Grand Marshall and Grand Lady of the event in 2013.

ARNOLD MORELLI (NCSB-49)

Arnold died October 19, 2020, in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was born June 28, 1928, in Cincinnati. Arnold jumped at NSCB during the 1949 season. He was a graduate of the Univ. of Cincinnati in 1950 and the Harvard Law School in 1955. In 1964, he was named first assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio.

EDWIN DEL MAR JAQUISH (Cave Junction '49)

Del was born May 18, 1929, in Fresno, California. In the late 1950s, he moved to Idaho and was a smokejumper at Cave Junction, Oregon, in 1949 and 1951. He graduated from the University of Idaho in Forestry in 1953.

Del's career was with the USFS, serving primarily as a Public Information Officer. After serving as the District Ranger on the Palouse District, St. Joe NF, in the early 1960s, he transferred to Missoula, Montana, as a Public Information Specialist in 1964. In 1969, he was assigned as the Public Information Officer for the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin. In 1972, he moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and was assigned as the Assistant Regional Forester responsible for Information Services for the 17 national forests in the Eastern Region of the Forest Service. In 1985 Del retired and moved to Coeur d' Alene, Idaho.

GEORGE ALBERT PYNN (MSO-49)

George jumped at Missoula during the 1949 season. He is a dentist by career, lived in Colorado, and his last known place of residence was Arlington, WA.

CLARENCE J. "JIM" RADIBEAU (NCSB-49)

Jim was born February 21, 1926, in Portland, Oregon, and grew up in Mason City, WA. He was in the Navy 1944-47 and worked on the Coulee Dam after his discharge. Jim graduated from Eastern Washington University in 1949 and was called back into the Navy 1949-52 during the Korean War.

After his discharge, he went to the University of Washington Law School and graduated in 1955. He jumped at NCSB 1949, 1953 and 1954. Jim started his law practice in Pasco, Washington, and was County Prosecutor from 1962-86. He retired from the Navy and law in 1986 and is an NSA Life Member currently living in Pasco.

WILLIS BERCHARD "BILL" RUDE (MSO-49)

Bill was born August 7, 1925, in East Jordan, Michigan. He attended the University of Michigan and graduated in 1948 with a BS degree in Forestry. He was a smokejumper in Missoula, Montana, 1949-50. In 1949, he had seven training jumps and five fire jumps. In 1950, he had two practice jumps and one fire jump.

Bill is a lifelong resident of Muskegon, Michigan. He worked for the S. D. Warren Company, a pulp and paper company in Muskegon. Bill was an active member of the Michigan Forest Association and is currently living in Muskegon, Michigan.

JOHN D. ROSSHEIM (MSO-49)

Even though he was from New Jersey, John, as a high school student, worked the summer of 1943 on blister rust control in Montana before going into the Navy in WWII. He served in the Navy 1944-46 and 1951-52. John graduated with his bachelor's degree in For-

estry in 1951 and his master's degree in 1956 from Oregon State University. He was in the printing business and retired in 1981.

"Regarding 1949 and jumping, I was with a group of students from Colorado A&M that was talked into jumping by Dick Wilson (MSO-48). I rode up in a car with **Chuck Dickie** (NCSB-51) who hadn't signed up in advance but hoped to be hired. He didn't get hired but later signed on at Winthrop and jumped two seasons.

"I had seven training and four fire jumps. Got my arm caught in the static line on a training jump, used the emergency chute, and came down under two chutes.

"In later life living in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, I got to know a few of the CPS jumpers, mainly **Jim Brunk** (MSO-45)."

JACK ROSE (MSO-49)

Jack was born in 1928 and "am now (6/20) a 91-year old trying to keep my body going." He was in the army from 1946-1948, 11th airborne. "I was with the occupation army of Japan. After that, I started my education using the G.I. Bill." He jumped at Missoula in 1949 and NCSB in 1950. Jack received his BA from Cal Berkeley School of Forestry in 1953, Masters in Forest Administration from Yale in 1956, and LLD from UCLA Law School in 1961.

As an attorney in the LA District Attorney's Office, he spent two years getting trial experience before going into private practice in Anaheim, CA. Jack became known for his case against the American Motorcycle Association. He retired in 1988 and purchased a second home in Sun Valley, Idaho, and had a wonderful life of skiing, fishing, and hiking until 2008 when medical issues sent him back to his Fullerton, CA home.

PHILIP A. RABIDEAU (NCSB-49)

Phil was born in Portland, Oregon, and grew up in Mason City, WA. He jumped the 1949 season at NCSB and is currently living in Vancouver, WA.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Chuck,

Over the weekend, my daughter Stacie and I moved some furniture into my son's new home in the Flathead Valley. I find a lot of solace in seeing the next generation of the Rath family move into a permanent position in fire management with the USFS.

When I arrived home yesterday, I had a message from Larraine Jensen. When I returned the call, Larraine asked that, even though she enjoyed seeing her husband's stories in print (April 2021 *Smokejumper*), that we refrain from printing any more of his stories.

We talked for quite some time and she explained her plan is to put Lee's stories into a book, but I could tell that she was not quite sure of her next step in editing or marketing.

As I spent the afternoon thinking about Lee's ability to spin a great tale, I would like to propose something to you. Our Association is one of lending a hand to those that need it. Why don't we reach out to her and provide someone who could edit her husband's stories and provide an avenue to get the stories printed? For our services, we could keep some copies to sell on our website and give her the rest to market herself? It would be a win-win for all of us.

Larraine went on the say how much she appreciated having her home painted last summer through the NSA Good Samaritan Program. She related that before her husband's passing, they were inundated with medical bills.

I hope that you and the board might find a way of helping her make the stories of Lee Jensen become a reality. Lee had a great way of telling a story and I would like to see these preserved.

By the way, brother **Tom** (MSO-71) and I sure enjoyed the story in the last edition of the SJ magazine about Air America and its connection to our organization.

Best regards,

Dick Rath (MSO-73)

ODDS AND ENDS

by Chuck Sheley

Congratulations and thanks to **John Crues** (MSO-70), **Larry Boggs** (RDD-63), **Don Bestwick** (MSO-80), **Jim Wilson** (MSO-62), and **Claire Olson** (MSO-68) who just became our latest Life Members.

I've been doing a lot of research on bios and obits and have come up with what I think is the answer to the question: Who is the youngest smokejumper? As mentioned by other authors, it looks to be **Jerry Daniels** (MSO-58) at 17 years plus a week.

Eldo "Mick" Swift (CJ-56) was 17 years and a month his rookie year. After the 1956 season, Mick then went back to finish his senior year in high school. **John Lewis** (MYC-53) rookied at 17 years, two months and six days.

Bob Derry (MSO-43) checks in at 17 years and nine months. Interesting side note is that all three, with the exception of Bob Derry, went on to work for Air America in Southeast Asia.

Lee Gossett (RDD-57): In response to Air America article by **Johnny Kirkley** (CJ-64) in *Smokejumper* (April 2021)—"Great job, you did a massive amount of research. The 'Ranch' brings back memories. I was there during my year as a 'Kicker' in 1964 and flew many covert missions deep into Laos from the 'Ranch.' You mentioned the great chow we had there and the air conditioned rooms. What a treat from the Vientiane base we came from. I remember being there with the other kickers as in the legendary Rocky Nesem, former Special Forces and later CASI pilot. Also did a hitch with **Tom Greiner** (MSO-55), and we all remember Tom's obsession with food and fresh milk."

Stan Cohen (Associate): "A tidbit on your latest issue of 1940s jumpers. **Bill Musgrove** (MSO-41) was part of a rescue team in 1941 that went into the wilderness area to bring out a young woman who was injured in an accident. The doctor, who was part of the party, was **Dr. Amos Little** (MSO-43) from Helena. He made 52 jumps and held the record for the highest recorded intentional parachute landing in the world when he jumped on Crown Peak in the Roosevelt National Forest. Little was also a ski racer and became very important in the international ski racing organization for many years.

"**Bill Yaggy's** (MSO-41) son went on to become a well-known author and magazine writer on military history."

Bill Mader (BOI-75): "The recent article in *Smokejumper* (**Johnny Kirkley**/CJ-64) entitled 'Air America, The Ranch and the Veil of Secrecy' was excellent, well written, and highly researched."

Have received numerous emails concerning this feature article with plenty of kudos to Johnny for his work. (Ed.)

Jim Cherry (MSO-57) concerning the NSA History Preservation Project: "I'm so grateful that you are publishing the obits and histories of those smokejumpers on whose shoulders we stand. The hurdles so many of them had to overcome prior to becoming jumpers and the accomplishments they made after their jump years leave me with a profound sense of appreciation that I, too, have had the privilege and honor of being counted among the few to be chosen. That time as a jumper and the friendships and values that came through it has shaped my life always to the better."

Jim is a key person in helping research information on our early smokejumpers (Ed.)

Hal Ward (Cave Junction '62) in response to Johnny Kirkley's article on Air America: "Just

read your historical piece in the Smokejumper Magazine. Great work, well researched, nicely done."

Ken Hessel (MYC-58): "Johnny, I just wanted to compliment you on a fine job putting the Takhli/Air America story together. TJ and his wife, Margaret, were here in Tucson last week for a visit, and TJ expressed the same thought about the article. The pictures of the KIA/MIA, and of the various types of aircraft were an added bonus. Good job!"

The NSA **Good Samaritan Fund** just made significant donations to two jumpers who are undergoing cancer treatments. Thank you, members for your support of this effort.

The cover photo for each issue is always described and credited at the bottom of page two of each issue.

Kevin Norton—Naomi Mills
2020 Dunton Award Winners

The Al Dunton Smokejumper Leadership Award is presented annually to one BLM and one USFS smokejumper who goes beyond the requirements of the job and demonstrates excellence in leadership in one or more of the Wildland Leadership Principles.

Kevin Norton (NIFC-15), Boise Smokejumpers EMS Coordinator, has been selected as the 2020 BLM recipient of this award. Kevin is recognized for exemplary leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to achieve a superior, sustained performance as a smokejumper.

Kevin contributed to Departmental, Bureau, and National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) guidance for response actions to the pandemic. Some of these contributions include:

Providing national level input and expertise to the Fire Management Board's Wildland Fire Medical and Public Health Advisory Team, resulting in Department of Interior guidance for the field that was both realistic and achievable.

Managing efforts by the Boise Smokejumpers to both produce and deliver more than six thousand face covers to the community, NIFC, and BLM state offices during a time when these products were not available.

Providing continuous efforts to interpret and apply guidance from the CDC (and other sources) to the Fire and Aviation Directorate and the Boise Smokejumpers Leadership Team.

Serving as a leader on the NIFC Occupational Safety and Health team.

Kevin led by example and took ownership in the ongoing efforts to maintain a safe and healthful work environment. He provided essential safety and health information to employees and leaders. This action significantly contributed to the effective practices employed by all BLM wildland firefighters during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this same period, Kevin managed first responder training courses at NIFC, leading to numerous CPR/AED and First Aid qualifications, ranging from basic skills to advanced, and greatly improving BLM-FAD readiness. He also worked with Fire Management to procure personal first aid kits for all BLM fire personnel. His contribution to Safety and Health, positive attitude, and contributions to the greater good make Kevin a leader of the highest caliber in the Smokejumper organization and reflects the dedication to professionalism that is in keeping with highest traditions of the national Smokejumper organization.

Naomi Mills (MSO-15) has been selected to receive the 2020 Al Dunton award for US Forest Service Smokejumpers. Naomi was part of the first Forest Service Ram Air Rookie Class out of Region 1 as a Missoula rookie in 2015. She exemplifies the role of a smokejumper in many ways from her work in training, hiring, Women in Fire Program, International Program, fuels work and jumping fires. She is highly respected among her peers inside and outside of the smokejumper program. Naomi has dedicated a vast amount of energy into pre-hiring guidance, hiring and mentoring new smokejumpers, and shows a great degree of professionalism dealing with questions and needs from applicants. She is an adept trainer, providing excellent instruction to Ram Air Transition and to rookie students. Naomi is a leader, not only in her presentations, but also in example. Her humble, competent approach brings a calming influence and a desire to excel to her peers.

Naomi has been involved in the International Program for several years. Most recently she was a part of various Women in Fire trainings as an instructor and a mentor. She is asked to portray the face of the Forest Service and the smokejumpers on an International scale, and does so with grace and fierceness that all smokejumpers would be proud of. Development of relationships in these programs is quintessential to carrying our smokejumper program forward. Naomi has developed a career path that will benefit her and the program greatly.

Naomi Mills is a woman in a male-dominated workforce. She faces these challenges daily in a manner that impresses her peers and co-workers.

Naomi Mills (Courtesy N. Mills)

Kevin Norton (Courtesy K. Norton)

She is an inclusive force in an exclusive group and is deserving of this acknowledgement. Her work in the fire community provides an excellent example of what smokejumpers should aspire to be.

Mooned

by "Swede" Troedsson (Missoula '59)

On May 22nd, 2020, on the morning TV news on KXLF (Butte), a photo was displayed of three pelicans tipped forward and looking underwater for food. Their hind ends were facing the camera. The photo was titled "Pelican Moon." This reminded me of when I was "mooned."

In 1976 **Bill Werhane** (MSO-66) requested that I present a lecture on backcountry rescue to returning smokejumpers. The presentation was in the conference room in the Missoula Smokejumper Base dormitory.

There was a small coffee room behind the conference room. The door to the coffee room was open. As I was delivering my lecture in front of the group, **Jim Scofield** (MSO-66), the Regional Helicopter Specialist, entered the coffee room behind the class. He'd been out running and was still in his sweatsuit. After giving me a big evil grin, he turned, dropped his sweatpants, and mooned me. The group, their backs to him, was unaware of what was going on. I smiled and continued my lecture.

Later that day, I was relating this incident to **Nels Jensen** (MSO-62), the Regional Aviation Officer. Nels laughed and related the following mooning story to me. On final approach to the Silver City Airport, NM, he was piloting a Beech Baron, having returned from a lead plane mission. As he was taxiing to the smokejumper parachute loft, a Southwest Airlines Boeing 737 passenger jet was taxiing to the terminal. At the same time, a DC-3 jump plane was roaring down the runway on its way to a fire. As it passed by the loft, a "pair of hams" was pressed against each window. In front of the loft, a group of jumpers mooned back at them. Boys will be boys!

Two Fools Jump Into Three Fools Pass

by Bill Moody (North Cascades '57)

During my smokejumper career (1957-89), NCSB jumpers made more than 30 search and rescue jumps to aid fellow jumpers, Forest Service employees, aircraft crash victims, and backcountry recreationists.

Missions included an assortment of broken bones and dislocations, heart attacks, a severe shock/collapsed lung, gunshot hunters, aircraft crashes, backcountry searches and body recoveries—including a "freeze-dried" glacier explorer—and more.

Thanks to the leadership and training we received from Dr. Bill Henry, founder of Aero Methow Rescue, NCSB jumpers received advanced First Aid/EMT training to prepare us for rescuing not only our jumpers, but others needing expedient emergency care and transport to a medical facility.

Most of the search and rescue jumps were "supervised" by Doc Henry from his Twisp Medical Center office—communicating directly or via the jump plane with the jumper in charge of the rescue.

Perhaps due to the urgency of the response, we often "pushed the envelope" with regard to wind, terrain and visibility conditions. Many of the rescue jumps were among the most difficult jumps of my career, due to the adverse jump conditions. I'd like to share a couple of those with you.

In both cases, my jump partner was fellow EMT and past base manager **John Button** (NCSB-75).

The Three Fools Pass Rescue

We arrived over the Three Fools Pass area in the Pasayten Wilderness Area about 9:20 p.m. July 28, 1980. It was just about dark. Our mission was to find and give emergency aid to a seriously injured horseman.

Three Fools Pass was appropriately named—One Fool was the horseman who tried, unsuccessfully, to pull his stubborn horse across a foot bridge and in the process fell down to the streambed below, shattering his ankle. The Two Fools were jumpers about to jump in the near dark to rescue Fool Number One. I was somewhat familiar with Three Fools Pass, as I had carried an injured hiker on a litter through the pass a few years earlier.

As Dale Deardon, pilot of the Beech 99, circled the area, we picked up a campfire about 300-400 yards north of the pass—good enough for us. It had to be the injured horseman's.

With barely a silhouette on the horizon, spotter **Bob Kinyon** (NCSB-73) threw a set of streamers that we could occasionally almost see. We made a half-assed guess that we had about 100-200 yards of drift. We hooked up and got in the door.

The jump was going to be a timber jump. At 9:25 p.m., John and I exited and had a quick descent using the campfire as reference. The trees were almost indistinguishable.

As I made my approach for landing, I tried extra hard to be relaxed, knowing the ground had lots of rock. I bombed into a bushy 40-foot tree alongside the trail and stepped out of my harness. John landed about a hundred yards away in the short timber.

Due to the conditions, we decided not to drop **Steve Pontarolo** (LGD-76) and **Tom King** (NCSB-79). We would be bringing in a helicopter to the pass area for the medevac in the morning and would not have to transport the injured horseman via litter to the trailhead.

Kinyon dropped the para-rescue gear, and we retrieved the cargo and headed down the trail to find a grateful and hurting horseman. He had fallen about five feet into a dry, rocky creek bed.

After a quick assessment, we relayed our findings via the jump plane to Doc Henry—"seriously injured, probably shattered ankle." Doc instructed us to straighten the ankle as best we could, then administer a plaster cast—a skill we had recently learned. The procedure went well and much of the pain was relieved. We also administered a shot of Demerol.

Bill Moody (Courtesy B. Moody)

At about midnight, I returned to the pass area and scouted for a helicopter landing spot. A suitable landing area requiring little improvement was located and an early morning medevac with a military helicopter was planned.

By 6:50 a.m. we had the injured man at the helispot. The helicopter arrived at 9 a.m. and transported the injured man to Twisp Medical Center and the tender loving care of Doc Henry. John and I packed up our gear and hiked to the Eight Mile Trailhead.

After receiving an initial followup from Doc, the injured man was sent to an orthopedic surgeon where the ankle was reconstructed with several screws and a plate. We received word that the cast was done perfectly and the ankle was in perfect alignment.

All in all, a tough jump but a good feeling about being able to provide our services. Little did we know that a few years later we would be called upon to make another "fools jump"—this time to an injured Missoula jumper with a broken back.

The Two Fools Jump Again

I guess the confidence gained from the Three Fools escapade gave John and me the confidence to make another "almost-night rescue jump" to Bulldog Mountain, Colville National Forest.

The call came in to NCSB at 10:15 p.m. in mid-July 1985. We were in the middle of staffing fires recently started from a lightning storm that swept through central and northeastern Washington.

The Missoula base had made an initial attack on the Bulldog Mountain Fire on the Colville National Forest. One of their jumpers had landed in a 60-foot snag and, while attempting a let-down, fell 30-40 feet to the ground. Initial reports indicated a broken back with lots of pain.

Shortly after receiving the call, we took off and headed east. Aboard were spotter **Steve Reynaud** (NCSB-65) and jumpers **Brent Smith** (RAC-78), **Jeff Cockerill** (NCSB-82), **Mark Corbet** (LGD-74), and EMTs Button and Moody.

We arrived over the fire area about 10:05 p.m. and confirmed the approximate location of the injured jumper, **Jack Deeds** (MSO-65). Reynaud threw steamers and determined there was about 200 yards drift.

It was getting pretty dark, but we could make out a stand of lodgepole pine about 60-80 feet tall and decided to go for the trees. Reynaud guided the plane to the exit point. The descent was quick and we guided our chutes in to the trees and hung up.

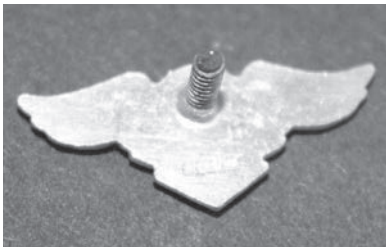
The para-rescue gear was dropped. John headed for the injured jumper, finding him at the base of the snag. Some of the Missoula jumpers and I gathered the cargo and moved it to Deeds. We made a preliminary diagnosis that he probably had broken his back, although he suffered no loss of limb function or paralysis.

Jack was put in our modified Stokes litter and transported to the helispot that the Missoula jumpers were preparing. By this time, it was midnight and not safe for a helicopter medevac. Distance precluded a night litter carry to a road.

We kept Jack comfortable overnight with a dose of Demerol. The Chelan rappel helicopter landed on the helispot at 4:51 a.m. We had Jack en route to Colville Airport just four minutes later. He was transferred to a Lifebird helicopter at 5:15 and taken to Spokane for treatment.

Once again the team of pilot, spotter, and Doc Henry's EMT-trained jumpers played a vital role in conducting an efficient and safe rescue. We were proud to be a part of that team.

Can't find your rookie pin? Talk to us



ABOVE: Single-post anchor has screw-on fastener (not shown).

LEFT: Rich detail is key with the smokejumpers rookie pin.

Several of our members have contacted us in the past few years, asking if we can replace their rookie jump pins they've lost. Until now, we've had to tell them we couldn't help. We've located the design, and arranged for a special supply of these pins. With handsomely crafted detail, these pins will bring back pleasant memories of the "greatest job in the world."

Comes with a single-post anchor with screw-on fastener, and in a plastic display case that will protect it while in storage.

Measures 5/16 inches high by 11/16 inches long.

These pins are not available to the general public. In order to get one, **you must be listed in the NSA smokejumpers database.**

$20

After 20 years away, the smokejumpers belt buckle returns

Front

Back

We've returned a belt buckle to our lineup of goods, following a 20-year absence, thanks to the efforts of former jumper **Doug Beck** (CJ-70).

Measuring 3½ inches long by 2½ inches high, this high-quality buckle will stand up to a lifetime of use. Front of buckle features an image of a smokejumper in full jumping gear, carrying a shovel in one hand and a Pulaski in the other. Parachute is fully opened and an airplane is above and behind. The back side offers space for a smokejumper to have name, rookie base and years jumped, if desired. *Please note that we do not offer engraving services.*

$35

80th anniversary cap remains a popular choice with NSA members

After more than 80 years, the "Greatest Job in the World" is still going strong ... and this anniversary cap proves it with its sharp "80" logo with superimposed tree and wings. Flanking the attractive design are "1940" and "2020" with arched "SMOKEJUMPERS" at the top.

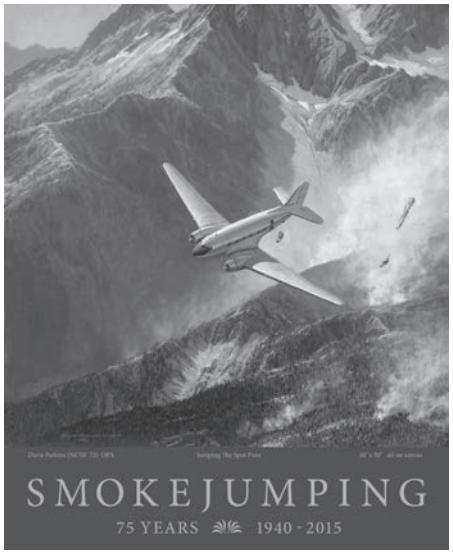
Cap is made of durable khaki twill with dark green embroidery and "sandwich"-style bill. Adjustable band with brass buckle allows it to fit just about any adult head. Looks fantastic in the yard or around town.

Ready to wear a true conversation piece? This cap is another classic in our long list of winners!

NEW lower price: $10

Use order form on magazine insert, or visit www.jumpergoods.com

Painting preserves the **beauty of smokejumping**



Former jumper **Davis Perkins** (NCSB-72), now a nationally known artist, created a painting called "Jumping the Spot Fires," oil on canvas.

In the opinion of many, this is the finest piece of smokejumping art ever created.

We now offer an 18-by-24-inch print exactly as shown at right, printed on 13-mil art paper and excellent for framing. We'll ship yours in a special protective tube so it arrives to you in good shape.

This is a special item that reflects the pride in the job smokejumpers have done. A great gift idea! $25

Three solid styles lead the lineup in our outstanding collection of caps!

You know the feeling when you have so many excellent options that it's hard to decide. This is one of those times!

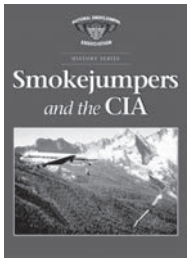
Choose from the smooth nylon of the **navy blue SMOKEJUMPERS cap** (top), the dignified **khaki twill U.S. Forest Service Smokejumpers cap** (right) and the **NEW National Smokejumper Association cap** (left). All three combine stylish looks with superior comfort!

The SMOKEJUMPERS cap offers gold embroidery and trim with a Velcro strap, while the U.S. Forest Service cap has a brass buckle and green-and-white "sandwich"-style bill. The new NSA logo cap is a much-lighter khaki and features green bill, as well as Velcro adjustment strap.

They'll look fantastic in the yard or around town. *Why not get one of each?*

SMOKEJUMPERS cap $20 • USFS Smokejumpers cap $18 • New NSA logo cap $20

Declassified! Smokejumpers had tight connection with CIA



Jumpers had the abilities and skills to do whatever "the Agency" needed in the 1950s and 60s – and this book tells the story of jumpers and their critical contibutions in Southeast Asia. $20

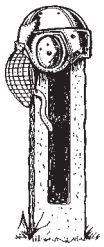
Frames back by popular demand

We eliminated these license plate frames from our stock, disappointing many of you ... **but now they're back!** White letters on sturdy black plastic. Get one for each vehicle! $4, or two for $7

Historical bases coin makes an outstanding gift

This challenge coin features images of the "round" and "square" parachutes to signify the types of canopies jumpers have used over the decades. The 1¾-inch coin also features the names of all permanent bases around edge. "The greatest job in the world" inscribed on back. $5

Use order form on magazine insert, or visit www.jumpergoods.com



Off The List

Remember and honor fellow jumpers with a gift to the NSA Good Samaritan Fund in their name. Hard times can fall on many of us at any time. The NSA is here to support our fellow jumpers and their families through the Good Samaritan Fund. Mail your contribution to:

Chuck Sheley
10 Judy Lane
Chico, CA 95926

Our research team has recently added over 200 obits to the NSA website as part of our History Preservation Project. None of these have been published before. Check our website obits for this new information. (Ed.)

Robert Garrett Lewis (Cave Junction '54)

Bob, 89, died May 26, 2020, in Beaverton, Oregon. He was born May 7, 1931. Bob first rookied at Missoula in 1952 but broke his leg on his third training jump and worked as an aerial observer for the rest of that summer. He graduated with his master's in Forestry from Oregon State in 1954 and completed his rookie training at Cave Junction where he jumped the 1954 season before going into the Marine Corps 1954-58.

After leaving the Marine Corps, Bob had a long career with the USFS working on the Siskiyou NF, Rogue River NF, Okanogan NF, Wenatchee NF, and ending in the Regional Office in Portland where he retired in 1993.

Jon S. Strange (McCall '63)

Jon died September 5, 2019, in Gila, NM, after a long battle with cancer. He was born October 23, 1938, in Hawkinsville, Georgia. After high school, Jon started working with Bell Telephone Company and then rookied at McCall in 1963 and jumped that season.

Jon was a heavy-equipment operator for most of his life retiring in 2003.

Harold J. Lund (Fairbanks '71)

Harry died August 5, 2019, in Great Falls, Montana. He and his brother, Ron (FBX-64), grew up in various towns in Montana: Cutbank, Billings, Circle, and finally Great Falls. The family moved there in 1957, and Harry graduated from Great Falls High School. Harry first came to Alaska with Ron in the spring of 1970 and began working for BLM in helitack. He rookied in 1971, jumped in Fairbanks until 1975, and went to Missoula for the 1976 season.

Ron remembers that he took Harry to a reunion in McCall and that it was a good time for Harry. Harry had had health problems during the past years which contributed to his death.

Gerald Boyd "Jerry" Taggart (McCall '53)

Jerry, 84, died on July 30, 2019, in Eden, Utah. He was born March 25, 1935, raised in Ogden, and graduated from Ogden High School in 1953. Following high school, he spent the summer as a smokejumper in the McCall, Idaho, area increasing his love for the outdoors.

Jerry got his engineering degree at the University of Utah. He worked as a professional engineer for 52 years with many accolades for projects he designed. He received his pilot's license in August of 1965 and enjoyed flying the company Cessna around the country for business as well as taking his family on fun vacations across the country.

Robert W. Welborn (La Grande '76)

Bob, 67, died July 14, 2019. He was born August 8, 1951, in Brewster, Washington. Bob graduated from Wilson High School in Tacoma, Washington, then attended college in Washington and Iowa. He entered the Army in 1972 and was discharged in 1975. After his discharge, Bob worked as a smokejumper for the U.S. Forest Service based out of La Grande, Oregon, 1976-78. Bob later returned to college and graduated from Life Chiropractic College, Marietta, Georgia, in 1982. He worked in several clinics in Western Washington before opening his clinic in Tonasket.

Alan E. Dieffenbach (Grangeville '57)

Alan died February 5, 2019, in Brattleboro, Vermont. He was born on August 29, 1937, in Englewood, NJ, and graduated from Tenafly High

School in Tenafly, NJ, in 1955. He went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree (with honors in History) from Wesleyan University in 1959 and a Master of Arts in Teaching (History) from Oberlin College in 1961.

Alan had a varied career which took him for extended stays on overseas assignments in Nepal and the Yemen Arab Republic. In 1964, he accepted an assignment as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Nepal. After he returned to the U.S., he joined the staff of the dean of men's office at Oberlin College. After two and a half years at Oberlin, he returned to Nepal as part of New ERA, a joint Nepali/American research and training organization.

Returning to the U.S., he worked with a human services planning agency and became particularly involved with the Southeast Asian refugee communities. Alan then took a year off to work in the Yemen Arab Republic as executive officer with a USAID-funded water project.

A few years after returning to Providence, Alan and his wife relocated to Brattleboro where they purchased the Upper Crust Bakery, a business they operated until retirement.

Harry Lee Cummings (Missoula '46)

Harry Lee Cummings, Jr., 94, distinguished architect in the Greater Seattle Area, died at home in Kirkland on January 29, 2019. Harry was born in Conway, Arkansas, and grew up in Oskaloosa, Iowa, He attended Iowa State University for one year before enlisting in the Army Air Corps, serving from 1943 to 1945.

Harry graduated with a BA in Architecture at Iowa State, then completed an MA in Urban Design at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, in June 1950. He was one of ten graduate students accepted at Cranbrook to study under the renowned Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen

Harry worked briefly for several of Seattle's larger architectural firms before opening his own office in 1956 in the old East Side Journal Building in Kirkland. This was the beginning of a remarkable career spanning over 50 years on the Eastside and in the Greater Seattle Area.

Sometimes in partnership but more often on his own, Cummings Associates Architects designed and supervised the construction of hundreds of projects, large and small, throughout the region, including the following: health care clinics, recreational facilities, government projects, office buildings, and especially public schools. Cummings Associates designed 40 schools for the Lake Washington School District alone, and well over 1,000 projects in the course of his career. The firm grew in size and prestige to become the 22nd largest architectural firm in the Puget Sound region with some 27 employees.

Harry jumped at Missoula during the 1946 season and had seven training and five fire jumps.

Smokejumpers' Proud Legacy Helping Those Who Come After Them—including Thousands of Blind Children

by Mike Bina (Missoula '68)

Regrettably, I never met **Francis Lufkin** (NCSB-40). As smokejumpers, we all benefited by the legacy he left us. A former first lady explained we owe a debt of gratitude to others that have positively impacted our lives. She wrote, *"We've got a responsibility to live up to the legacy of those who came before us by doing all that we can to help those who come after us."*

The day before my first rookie training jump in 1968, I feared I was a Peter Principle victim having advanced to my level of incompetence. Two years previously, I had found my comfort zone with a chainsaw clear-cutting in the Lolo National Forest and then with a Pulaski as a Nine Mile Hotshot. I was shocked when my supervisor, George Bissonnette, recommended me to be a smokejumper. When doing project work on the Nine Mile base near Missoula, I marveled as smokejumpers exited the big "white bird" DC-3s, and their bright orange parachutes opened in the blue Montana skies. And on the ground as a Hotshot, I was awestruck seeing these elite larger-than-life firefighters carrying large packs coming off fires we were "ground pounding" our way in to fight.

Even though I didn't see myself measuring up, I blindly followed my Hotshot supervisor's belief in me. I was young, naive and eager for new adventure. I owe him a debt of gratitude for seeing something in me I didn't know existed.

I suffered from three pre-existing conditions—self-doubt, fear of failure, and dread of heights. As a rookie smokejumper-in-training, I had to ultimately confront these demons. My fear of heights first whispered to me as I climbed the tall mockup-exit tower. How in the hell was I going to exit an airplane at 1000 feet?

My apprehension grew the morning of the first training jump. I suited up. On "high alert," I boarded the DC-3. The Doug's twin engines started with a "put-put" settling into a slow idle as the aircraft taxied. Ready for takeoff, the pilot revved the engine to full throttle. The aircraft vibrated before the brakes were released. My fear-of-heights demon shouted to me over the roar of the twin engines. I knew the Doug would return to Missoula without me on board. Only one option existed—once airborne, as I was well trained to do, I would exit out the doorless DC-3.

Over the jump spot, the spotter, **Larry Eisenman** (MSO-58), lay on his stomach looking out the door. He threw the streamers. The plane banked and circled. My moment of reckoning was minutes away. Seeing the spotter's cheeks distorted and misshaped by the prop blast brought the reality home. Eyeball to eyeball, I confronted my fear.

This is precisely when I relied on the legacy other smokejumpers had left me. As I was summoned to hookup and then stand in the door, I did what so many other smokejumpers had done before me to safely succeed. Francis Lufkin making his first jump in 1939, **Earl Cooley** (MSO-40) and **Rufus Robinson** (MSO-40), making their first fire jumps, pioneered this path for me. Many jumpers after them further blazed a wider trail growing the smokejumper culture of camaraderie, work ethic, and "I've got your back" teamwork. What did I have to worry about? I trusted my training and my state-of-the-art equipment. Suck it up, Bina, and as the Nike Commercial encourages, "Just Do It." After executing a "nothing-to-write-home-about" exit and later PLF, I was psyched to do the second jump. My confidence emerged, prevailing over my fear of heights.

Smokejumping brought out my best, improving me in my family and career life. It opened my eyes that there is more in us than we know. I learned that through calculating risks and taking

Francis Lufkin (NCSB-40), father of current NSA board member, Larry Lufkin (CJ-63), standing in front of Stinson aircraft in his famous red jumpsuit. The jumpsuit was donated to the USFS Museum in Missoula. (Courtesy L. Lufkin)

adventurous journeys, we discover our hidden potential. Ships go nowhere if they stay in safe harbors.

After smokejumping, ironically, my jumping career continued. I enlisted in the U.S. Army and got orders for an Airborne-qualified Special Forces Green Beret unit. The army recruiting motto, "Be all that you can be," is the door smokejumping initially opened for me. And, in talking to many of you, it opened opportunities for you as well.

Before retiring, I passed the smokejumper legacy on to totally blind students who I taught for 46 years. They benefited from the lessons smokejumping taught me. When teaching my blind students to cross, without the benefit of any sight, the busiest of complex traffic light-controlled intersections with heavy fast-moving vehicles, I realized my young students justifiably had more fear in them than I ever had before my first jump. My smokejumper-influenced teaching and coaching encouraged them. "Yes, it is normal to feel fear as you are about to 'step off' the curb into the crosswalk in heavy traffic. Focus on your many abilities. Trust your training. Use your cane. You can do this. I know you can. I will be right behind you. You are ready for this next step."

"The Keep the Flame" Legacy Jump List is an opportunity to give back to smokejumping for all that it has given us. My family well knows how very frugal and "tight as hell" I am with a dollar. I stand guilty as charged. But when the opportunity presented itself to leave NSA a legacy gift, even during these uncertain COVID and economic times, I didn't think twice—like I didn't have to ponder when the spotter hit the back of my calf and said, "Go!"

I worked hard for my money and saved. I put my family first in providing for their future security—but right behind was my smokejumper family. As I wanted my own family to thrive in the future, I also wanted my smokejumper family to have its future securely ensured as well. As Andy Warhol explained, "The idea is not to live forever, but create something that will."

Larry Lufkin (CJ-63) is one of many who recently made a commitment to the **Legacy Jump List Fund**. Larry wrote, "I included the NSA in my will. The simple reason is that I am an integral part of smokejumping and the NSA, serving on the Board since 1998. My future bequeath will help ensure that it will continue long past my time on earth.

"Smokejumping is very personal to me. My father, Francis Lufkin, was part of the original 1939 experiment and, through what amounted to a dare, became the first U.S Forest Service employee to make a parachute jump. His jump included minimal training, 'maybe 30 minutes, if that,' he told me. They suited him up, stood him in front of the Stinson plane, took the now famous picture of him in the red jumpsuit, and off he went for that first historic jump. And he did so against direct orders from my mother that he was not to go up in a plane and jump out of it.

"As a kid, I always knew I wanted to be a smokejumper and follow my Dad and my brother **Ron** (CJ-60). When I applied for the job, Dad told me that I better think very hard about being a smokejumper because it was a very hard job. I never considered withdrawing my application for one second. Eventually, two of my good friends, **John Gordon** (NCSB-63) and **Ash Court** (NCSB-63), and I became smokejumpers. I jumped out of Cave Junction because the feds wouldn't let me work for my Dad. I ended up working for **Jim Allen** (NCSB-46), and that alone was worth every minute of experience I got while there. Ultimately, Jim and I had other connections beyond smokejumping. He and I both trained at the same Army Airborne training center at Ft. Benning, he in 1944 and me in 1968, and both of us were assigned to the 101st Airborne. Few know that Jim was badly wounded at Bastogne.

"To laugh often, to win respect of others and the affection of children, to appreciate beauty and find it in others, to leave the world a better place and knowing that one life has breathed easier because you lived there, this is to (leave your legacy) and succeed."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

"When I look around my home office today, I can see pictures and mementos of my smokejumping days all around me. And as I get older, these items become more and more valuable and remind me of the days that were, back in the 60s and early 70s. I have high hopes that the Smokejumper Program and the National Smokejumper Association will continue for a very long time."

For more information on the **"Keep the Flame" Legacy Jump List** *by* making a "living gift" of monetary, property, or stock donation; naming the NSA as a life insurance beneficiary; or placing the NSA in your will, *contact Chuck Sheley or Mike Bina, (704) 905-3390 or* beanuh1@yahoo.com.

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Cameron Peak Fire—Largest In Colorado History—Stopped At Old Burn

by Carol Dollard

Rist Canyon is in the foothills of the northern Colorado mountains. The terrain is mixed forest and meadows ranging from 5,000 to 8,000 feet in elevation. The community is protected by the Rist Canyon Volunteer Fire Department, an all-volunteer, all donation-based department. RCVFD service territory covers over 100 square miles.

In the summer of 2012, the Rist Canyon community (and some other surrounding communities) suffered a devastating wildfire known as High Park Fire. High Park burned over 85,000 acres and destroyed more than 250 homes (nearly 1 in 4 homes in the RCVFD response territory) and killed one resident. We lost two outbuildings and about an acre of trees while I was on the fireline, but our house survived through a combination of mitigation and luck.

Fast forward to August 13, 2020. A wildfire was sparked at a campground near the Continental Divide in the Poudre Canyon, about 30 miles west of the Rist Canyon community. Over the next 3 and a half months that fire, known as Cameron Peak Fire, would burn almost 210,000 acres and over 450 structures (220 of them homes) and go down as the largest fire in Colorado history.

However, early on, the Cameron Peak Fire did not feel like a threat to our community. It was burning far away, but it burned in very rough high-altitude terrain with stands of 80% beetle-killed trees. Despite multiple attempts to establish lines, set backburns and other tactics, this fire would not die. Winds and dry conditions created havoc for the teams trying to contain this fire. Then on Labor Day weekend, the winds came up (gusts over 50 mph were reported) and the fire made a hard run, covering miles in just a few hours and growing by 78,000 acres in just three days. The entire Rist Canyon community was evacuated, and many feared the worst.

However, as the fire raged toward the east, it ran up against the old High Park Fire scar from 2012. While this did not stop the fire completely, the lighter fuel loading dramatically reduced the fire's intensity, and crews were able to harden lines and stop the fires advancement—at least for a time.

Unfortunately, the Cameron Peak Fire was not done. On October 14, strong winds came up again (some over 70 mph), but since the fire was thwarted to the east by the old fire scar, it turned SE and tore through areas that were not burned in High Park—Buckhorn Canyon and Crystal Mountain—devastating those neighborhoods. Over the next several days, it burned toward Drake, Glen Haven and Masonville, even threatening Estes Park at one point (a community of over 10,000 people). The fire was not officially 100% contained until December 2, 2020.

As the largest fire in Colorado history, Cameron Peak will be studied for years to come, but for many of the residents in Rist Canyon who had lived through another devastating wildfire eight years ago, we dodged the bullet on the Cameron Peak Fire thanks to the previous burn. Our thoughts are with our friends and neighbors that did not escape the impact of this fire. While rebuilding and recovery are painful stages, hopefully they can find some solace in knowing that the fire scar that now so starkly defines their landscape may help prevent future wildfires from reaching their homes.

*Carol Dollard has served on the RCVFD for 37 years, four years as Chief and 10 as Captain. She is the daughter of **Jimmie Dollard** (CJ-52).*

Pioneers From The Sky

George B. Harpole (Missoula '49)

Now, more than 70 years later, there seems to be more to be said about the Mann Gulch Fire of 1949 that killed 12, mostly rookie, smokejumpers. I was one of 1949 rookie smokejumpers who qualified by having some experience at fighting forest fires and was willing to jump out of an airplane to go to work. In any case, smokejumpers of the 1940s belonged to a newly formed community of firefighters who got paid a little more because they were willing to jump out of an airplane. The idea was to get firefighters to the small fires quickly enough to put them out before they could flame up and become a firestorm.

This system of attack and suppression worked well during the 1940s and 50s using modified WWII paratrooper parachutes that gave us some forward speed and directional control to improve our chances for missing rockslides and trees, and to land in a given grassy meadow. Using this kind of a parachute took some classroom training and use. So, every rookie had to complete two weeks of classroom and mockup training along with seven training jumps.

Our 6th training jump was a timber jump. Unfortunately, I came in sidewise to a log. I put one foot out to leverage away from the log. Bam! I sprained my ankle. I had been told to always keep my feet together, no matter what, and now I knew why. So, I'm off the jump list for a week before I can do my 7th and final training jump. Dang! My buddies Piper and Benson were moved on to work assignments leaving me behind at the Ninemile training camp to make my 7th jump. Bowman was another rookie who was still at Ninemile to make his 7th jump.

We both reported to **Wag Dodge** (MSO-41) for work details around the Ninemile camp until we could make that final jump. We made that 7th jump on the afternoon of August 3rd and then were transported to the Hale Field barracks in Missoula. That evening we watched a gathering of thunderstorms light the skies up over the surrounding mountains.

We knew it was showtime by watching those thunderstorms close in. It had been a dry year and those lightning flashes were sure to set some fires. **Earl Cooley** (MSO-40), a couple of squadleaders and foremen, parachute loft personnel and Johnson's Flying Service pilots were hanging close to the smokejumper's dispatch office waiting to go. **Al Bowman** (MSO-49) and I were sleeping in the resident smokejumper barracks next to Hale Field and were ready to make our first fire jump. It was a little after 6 a.m. when we were rousted and told to suit up for a fire jump. There was a smoke on Squaw Peak near Missoula on a slope covered with lodgepole pine that could flame up and become a major forest fire. This was the kind of fire we were trained to drop on. We left Hale Field in a Travelaire single engine aircraft at about 7 a.m. **Bill Hellman** (MSO-46) was our spotter. We then hooked our static line onto a cable above the jump door and sat perched on the edge of the doorway until Hellman would slap us on the back. With the slap on the back, we would push off into space.

Now over the northeast slope of Squaw Peak we could see a wisp of smoke rising vertically. Great! This meant no wind, and our forward movement for a landing would only be from the air jettisoning from the two slots in the back of our canopies. I jumped first. There were lots of Lodgepole trees down there I'd like to miss. I came down into a small clearing between trees that caught the outstretched skirt of my canopy. I swung forward and up, like on a schoolyard swing. Then, the trees let loose on the upside of the swing, and I came down flat on my back. I was okay, thanks to the protective gear I was wearing and packing board on my back. It was my first fire jump and kind of fun. I got my football helmet with face protector and gear off, and then moved out into the middle of the clearing to wave an okay to Hellman as the plane did a flyby.

On the next flyby Bowman jumped. He

pushed off from the Travelaire but his parachute packing board came fluttering down behind him like a wounded bird. Bowman had his static line under the strap that secured his parachute pack to his back when he jumped. The parachute packing board should have stayed strapped to Bowman. In any case, Bowman landed okay. We found the packing board and found out the buckle on the strap had broken. I wondered about what could have happened if the buckle hadn't broken?

The smoke was officially recorded as the McCormick Creek Fire that was reported at 4:22 a.m. on the 4th of August 1949. According to the record, we attacked the fire at 7:05 a.m. and officially had the fire dead out at 9:00 a.m. Bowman and I then assembled our parachute gear to be packed out by a Forest Service mule, and we headed down the mountain to the Ninemile District Ranger Station. We expected to get an instant ride back to Missoula to be dispatched to another fire, but that didn't happen. It was late afternoon, and we stayed the night at the Ranger Station. The next day (August 5th) the Ranger asked us to chop firewood until he could arrange for transportation for us back to Missoula. We thought we should be getting back to Hale Field instead of splitting firewood for the ranger station because we knew there were more fires for us to jump. There had been a lot of thunderstorm activity. So, we're thinking this Ranger was going to get his money's worth out of us by having us chop firewood. So, we chopped firewood for the Ranger all day on August 5th, 1949, piling up enough firewood to keep the Ranger warm for at least one long, hard winter.

We stayed a second night (Aug. 5th) at the Ninemile Ranger Station and then got our ride back to Hale field (August 6th), arriving at the dispatch office at about noon. We were immediately told about the fate of our comrades at Mann Gulch. We were told the ridgetop fire they were sent to suppress had blown up, jumped down into the gulch and overran them. Twelve of the fifteen smokejumpers and one fireguard had been fatally burned.

They were almost all rookie smokejumpers, including my two good friends **Leonard Piper** and **Bob Bennett**. Of the three surviving smokejumpers, two (**Bob Sallee** and **Walt Rumsey**) had by sheer luck been on a rockslide when the fire overtook them. The third survivor, Wag Dodge, had made a backfire he retreated into as the fire overtook him. Wag was the squadleader and oldest of the team with a wide background of firefighting experiences. When he tried to get his crew into his backfire area, they ran for the ridge top instead, not having any idea as to what he was doing.

The Mann Gulch Fire was officially reported to the Hale Field Dispatch Center at 1:55 p.m. on August 5th while Bowman and I were chopping wood at the Ninemile Ranger Station. I was remembering our last training session at our training camp. I had asked about using backfires and was told, "We don't use backfires. They're only used on big fires." I asked because my Texas cowhand Uncle Charlie had told me about using backfires to stop prairie fires started by lightning. He knew. He had spent 15 years riding horseback to help take Texas cattle to the Kansas City cattle markets. But those were Texas prairie fires and not forest fires.

The lesson? I think the lesson points a finger to the importance of training. Back in 1940s and '50s, we jumped modified WWII 28-ft flat canopies. We had to learn how to use them to land away from rockslides and out of the trees. We also learned to do an Allen Roll, and to do so automatically. The 28-ft canopy was initially designed to drop WWII combat troops onto open fields at close to sea level elevations. To compensate for the harder landings at higher elevations, we learned to do the Allen Roll without thinking. But we didn't ever discuss the possible use of a backfire in our training. Why should we? We were just going to be putting smoking trees and little fires out before they got big.

Now we are ever more mindful that our forest can be a dangerous place to be during times of high fire danger, and that even today, approximately 16-percent of all wildfire deaths are the result of entrapments. Our current records demonstrate firefighting fatalities are now relatively rare, and that we need to pay tribute to all of those who are responsible for managing today's firefighting and fire safety programs. Today, fire training includes topics about the use of backfires and safety zones, and those 28-ft canopies have all been replaced by highly efficient ram-air designed

parachutes. Two years ago, I watched four BLM smokejumpers land lightly at an altitude close to 11,000 ft, on the SE slope of the La Sal's South Mountain.

The Allen Roll isn't so important anymore, but the avoidance of entrapments and other safety considerations are at the top of the list. Yes, our safety statistics of today are impressive. Here, I think it's fair to say, it's always the pioneers who pay the price for laying the pavement down for the future travelers, as I think the smokejumpers of the 1940s did for today's firefighters.

Omar Mountain—My Tenth Jump

by Bill Breyfogle (Missoula '55)**)**

The chute opened, I made a half turn and landed. **Frank Drake** (MSO-55) landed within talking distance. I called, "I had a streamer, Frank." Frank who jumped first answered, "I wondered how you got down before me." We were the last stick to jump on the second sixteen-man crew that jumped the Omar Mountain Fire.

Frank and I packed our gear and carried it up to the jump spot where the other jumpers were still packing their gear and had witnessed my malfunction. **Doyle Musselman** (MSO-55) said to me, "Do you know where you were when your chute opened?" I replied, "No." His arm horizontal, he pointed across the valley and said, "Right there."

After the jump gear was retrieved, we got our fire tools and put the fire out. When we got back to Missoula, **Leonard Krout** (MSO-46), who had spotted us, told me, "Your malfunction was caused by poor body position and that apparently Frank had seen what happened and followed you down to see if you were OK."

That was the only conversation I had with management about the malfunction. Nobody asked any questions about the incident and, until now, I have not told the story.

The first question someone should have asked: "Why didn't you use your reserve chute?" My answer would have been, "There was no opening shock," and I said to myself, "I have a streamer and I better open my reserve chute, but I had better find out where my main chute is before tossing out my reserve."

I began looking around for the main chute and found it over my left shoulder, and it was pear-shaped and opening. The chute opened, I made a half turn and landed. I was lucky or had a guardian angel, but I did not panic.

The second question someone should have asked: "From your experience, are there any changes that you think should be made in jump training?" If I had the time to think about the answer, I would have answered, "Yes."

Having had a long time to think about this incident, I would answer: (1) Training for opening the reserve chute should be demonstrated, and each jumper should practice opening a reserve chute standing on the ground. (2) It should be understood that if you think you need to use your reserve chute that is the time to open it—jumping at 1000 feet does not give you time to think or look around. (3) It should be emphasized that poor body position may give you a painful opening shock, but it may also cause a chute malfunction, which could be deadly. (4) In training when jumping from the tower, part of the time should be spent in jumping from the position of the second or third person in the stick. We always jumped from the position of the first person.

I did make two more fire jumps that season and jumped for two more summers.

In reflecting about this incident, my feeling is that I had no more than three seconds before I would have hit the ground had my main chute not opened. I have been glad that I missed the jump spot that day. Since then, every day has been a gift—and I have had sixty-five years of great days since then. Life is good.

First Smokejumpers On The Olympic National Forest

by Al Nickelson (USFS Fire Guard 1956)

It was August 17, 1956, and Mt Zion lookout Dave Lewis reported a smoke back behind Blyn, not far from Sequim, WA. Dave's lookout building was typical for the times—large windows on all sides shaded by extended shutters, which folded down in the off-season. The building housed the usual stuff one would find in a lookout. Access to the lookout was an easy 1.8 mile hike from the trailhead. The lookout building was built in 1926 and "decommissioned"—read destroyed—in 1975.

It was Lewis' first summer on the mountain, and although he had participated in the two-week guard school learning the ins and outs of fire finding, FS District Assistant Les Larson was a little uncomfortable with his new employee. After all, he was a "city boy"—a student at the University of Washington. Les had a favorite way to test the alertness and accuracy of lookouts in spotting smokes. Larson would throw a 55-gallon drum in the back of his pickup and head out into the woods. Once parked in the line of sight of a lookout, he would start a fire in the drum and pile on fresh fir boughs. Too far away for the image of a truck to be resolved, the lookout should be able to see the smudge of smoke. In this case, what Larson hadn't counted on was that Lewis owned a pair of powerful binoculars. Almost as soon as the fir boughs went into the burning barrel a call came on radio from Mt Zion. "There is some bird down there with a burning barrel."

The smoke that the Mt Zion lookout reported that Friday in August was lightning-induced and was burning in Douglas Fir several miles from the nearest forest road. August had been dry and fuel moisture readings were considered low. To make matters worse, the past week had recorded higher than average temperatures.

It was with considerable concern that District Ranger Harold Nyberg decided to attack the fire as soon as possible. By noon the district suppression crew had been brought in and was briefed on what little was known about this fire. The crew was small—only four members. I was in Quilcene, some 21 miles from my assigned guard station, and was dragooned as an additional member of this crew that was ordered to find and start suppression of Zion's wildfire.

The jumping-off point nearest to the smoke was along the Snow Creek Road, and our cross-country journey was approximately seven miles. We got a late start, and our backpacks were filled with sleeping bags, C-rations and water. Each of us carried a single firefighting tool. We were, compared to today's Hotshots, a pretty motley looking crew.

By the time we left the road, it was late afternoon and, considering the distance we would have to travel, it was clear we would not reach the fire before dark. As we bushwacked through the Douglas Fir, we could periodically see a plume of smoke which helped us determine our direction of travel. With several miles to go, we spotted a small, white airplane at low altitude. As we paused, two small discs appeared below the plane—white against the blue of the sky. Smokejumpers! This was the topic of conversation as we made camp at dusk. Amazing, smokejumping had not been done before on the Olympic and we were witnesses.

In the morning, we continued toward the fire, now ascending the slope of the ridge. Not long after noon, we heard voices and down through the brush came the jumpers encumbered with all the gear they were required to carry out. It appeared they were pushing the 24-hour rule about leaving the site of a fire after the last visible smoke. The jumpers identified themselves as **Danny Dibble** (NCSB-51) and **Jim Eagan** (NSCB-56). Winthrop Base Manager **Daren Belsby** (NCSB-86) has verified that there were three jumpers on the Olympic mission in 1956. The third jumper was

Mike McCormick (NSCB-56), who must have been the spotter.

We distributed some of their gear among ourselves and started the journey out. The jumpers indicated they were unfamiliar with conditions west of the Cascades and that they had been told that some Douglas Fir trees here reached 200 feet. They were concerned they did not have long enough letdown ropes. Jim Eagan made a surprise discovery when he slipped on a steep slope and grabbed the nearest bush, which turned out to be a Devil's Club. He was picking spines out of his hand for the rest of the day.

The rest of the trip out was uneventful. We were picked up by the FS crew truck and arrived in Quilcene in time to have hot beef sandwiches at the Pastime Café. The next morning, the jumpers were on their way to Olympia to catch a flight back to Winthrop.

Researching for this story, I was saddened to learn that Danny and Jim have passed away, and Mike McCormick's daughter tells me her father's memory is so bad he does not remember the jump on the Olympic NF in August 1956. For assistance on this project, I very much appreciate the help of **Bill Moody** (NCSB-57), Daren Belsby, **Louis Fleming** (MSO-06), and Molly McCormick, daughter of Mike McCormick.

A Memory of A Smokejumper Experience

by Don Mathis (Missoula '55)

After completing my two refresher jumps at Missoula on July 1,1959, I elected to accept assignment at Grangeville, Idaho, for the remainder of the season. My thought was that I could make more jumps and overtime there rather than staying in Missoula. The three fire jumps I got there were remarkable.

On August 4 a fairly large fire was spotted at a place called Isaac Lake in the Nez Perce Forest. The fire was large enough that eight jumpers were dispatched. Ten of us boarded a Ford Trimotor along with spotter **Ron Stoleson** (MSO-56), pilot Robert Culver, and Forest Supervisor Alva Blackerby. I was the senior jumper for this fire and was put in charge. The wind was gusting and somewhat higher than desirable for a safe jump, but we should get on the fire before it got any bigger.

Eight of us got on the ground without mishap, leaving the spotter, pilot, Forest Supervisor, and two remaining jumpers on the plane. I put out a signal for a pump to be dropped since we had a good supply of water. We retrieved our tools and went to work on the fire. I anticipated the delivery of the pump once a patrol plane saw my signal. We were working that fire until August 6 and during those days, several aircraft passed overhead, but a pump was never delivered. Needless to say, I was irritated at this.

When we left the fire on August 6, we hiked to a road and were picked up by truck to be transported back to Grangeville. The driver of the pickup truck asked me if I had heard of the jumper airplane crash at Moose Creek. Of course, I knew nothing about this, but could see that all the aircraft activity overhead, while working the fire, was concerned with the crash and not the delivery of my requested pump.

It seems that after dropping my crew and tools on the fire, the airplane had gone into the Moose Creek air strip to wait for the wind to die down.

In addition to pilot Culver, Supervisor Blackerby and spotter Stoleson, jumpers **John Rolf** (MSO-57) and **Gary Williams** (MSO-59) were aboard the aircraft. When landing at Moose Creek, the aircraft crashed into the trees at the end of the dirt runway and burst into flames.

Culver was in the pilot's seat and Blackerby in the right front seat. They both escaped through

small windows in the cockpit but were seriously burned. Williams was seated on cargo in the middle of the fuselage beneath the wing tank that ruptured. He received fatal burns and died on site.

Stoleson was seated next to the open fuselage door and dove out at the explosion. A tree, knocked down by the crash and on fire, interfered with his exit, but though burned and bruised, he made a successful escape.

Rolf was sitting to the right of Stoleson but did not dive out through the burning tree. He received severe burns and died in a Grangeville hospital later that day. Blackerby died a few weeks later from burn complications.

RECORDING SMOKEJUMPER HISTORY

1942 Rookies—The Pioneers NSA History Preservation Project

Terence Dale Adams (MSO-42)

Dale was born February 12, 1922, in Kane, Wyoming, where he lived until enrolling at Montana State University in Missoula, Montana, in the fall of 1941. While a freshman in May 1942, he was accepted into the Army Air Corps reserve cadet training program. Dale spent the summer of 1942 with at least two fire jumps as a smokejumper before enlisting as a private in the Army Air Corps in December 1942.

Dale resigned as a Major from military service in December 1945 and returned to Kane, Wyoming, where he was living in 1959 when his father died. Dale died in Payson, Arizona, on July 13, 1994, at the age of 72 and is buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix.

Murray James Athearn (Missoula '42)

Murray was born September 21, 1923, in Lewistown, Montana. As a University of Montana forestry student, he was a member of the 1941 Forest Service "firefighting" squadron and a smokejumper in 1942 with at least two fire jumps. During college, he was a wrestler, a marksman on the rifle team, and an aviation cadet. He earned his wings as a second lieutenant with the Army Air Force in 1944. After the military, he had a career as an engineer-geologist.

Murray was working as an engineer-geologist with Engineering Consultants, Quezon City, Philippines, when he died on November 9, 1974, at the age of 51. Cause of death was drowning. He is buried in Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

Fred A. Barnowsky (MSO-42)

Fred died July 15, 2008, in Kalispell, Montana, at age 85. He was born February 18, 1923, in Scobey, MT. His mother died when he was two years old and the family eventually settled in the Swan Valley. He finished school in Swan and worked for the Forest Service before becoming a rookie at Missoula in 1942. With WWII underway, he entered the US Navy where he served aboard YMS-333, a Navy Yard Mine Sweeper. After the war Fred returned to jumping at Missoula from 1946-56 where he accumulated more than 45 fire jumps, six experimental jumps, and a rescue jump.

He then went to Redding in 1957 where he was the first Base Manager, jumping there until 1960. In the 1960s, Fred joined the CIA where he participated in covert airdrops in Laos and Tibet. He kept this phase of his life secret until his death. His ashes were spread in his beloved Flathead NF and at a favorite spot near Goat Creek in the Swan Valley.

John J. Beck (Missoula '42)

Missoula jump records for 1942 state that "John J. Beck" was a "parachuter at Nine Mile Camp, Huson" in 1942. There is an additional notation that he became a "construction worker" sometime after 1942.

Definitive records have not been located that connect a John J. Beck as being a smokejumper. However, a WWII Draft Registration record appears to be that of John Beck. The registration document was completed October 16, 1940, stating that a John Jesse Beck was born in Lewistown, Montana, on May 19, 1916. He is employed at the Missoula White Pine and Sash Company in Missoula and his wife is Helen Bertha Beck. His address in Missoula has a line drawn through it with PO Box 711 Gridley, California, written. This is typically done to record updated addresses of registrants. Helen and John were married July 6, 1940.

The only records found for John Beck in Alaska is in reference to a John Beck working for the Arctic Research Laboratory at Point Barrow, Alaska. In September 1963, he was an aerial observer in a plane that crashed. Another article in December 1963 names John as the Arctic Research Lab shop foreman, and another in 1966 states that John Beck and his Eskimo construction crew from Barrow have moved a camp. The last article continues stating that Bill Beck came up to help with camp management, allowing John to spend time with construction. John had a brother, with the name Bill, born in 1924.

Arthur M. Cochran (MSO-42)

Art died October 3, 2008, in Grangeville, Idaho, at the Grangeville Health and Rehabilitation Center at age 93. He was born October 28, 1914, in Johnson, Kansas. In his teens he moved to Kooskia, Idaho. He was a "pioneer" smokejumper jumping at Missoula from 1942-51. During the period from 1951-67, Art worked for the CIA until his retirement in 1967 when he and his wife moved to a small ranch near Hamilton, MT. In 1978, they moved to Stites, Idaho. He is buried at Tahoe Mountain Rest Cemetery at Kooskia, ID.

George Edward "Ike" Eichhorn (Missoula '42)

Ike, 98, was born June 25, 1922, in Ashland, Montana. Before starting school, the family moved to Scobey, Montana, where he graduated from high school in 1940. He entered Montana State University and was a Missoula smokejumper in 1942 with at least two fire jumps.

Ike enlisted in the Army Air Force as a private in November 1942 and was commissioned a lieutenant in June 1944. He flew a fighter plane making many missions over enemy territory in Europe. Ike wrote home in early 1945 saying he had been across eastern and western German lines and observed Russians attacking in the east.

His parents received a telegram in late March 1945 informing them that he was missing in action over Germany on February 21. Ike survived the War and was discharged in November 1945. He is currently living in Loomis, California.

Winsor Fernette (Missoula '42)

Winsor was born in Los Angeles, California, August 24,1920. After graduating from Benjamin Franklin High School in LA in 1939, he developed an interest in forestry while serving as a forest ranger in the Los Angeles area. This led to him entering forestry school at the University of Montana in the fall of 1941 and smokejumping in 1942, 1946, 1949 and 1951. While at the University, Winsor was active on collegiate ski and swim teams.

He served in the Army from January 1943 to October 1945 where PFC Fernette was wounded in action in January of 1945. After release from the military, Winsor attended forestry school during the academic year, and during the summers alternated between smokejumping and serving as an aerial observer on the Couer d'Alene NF until he earned his master's degree in forestry in 1953. In the spring of 1951, he was detailed to the New Mexico smokejumper crew and had over 25 career jumps.

Winsor began a career in forestry with the Bureau of Land Management in Portland, Oregon, in December 1953. He was promoted as their Coos Bay District Forester in 1961 and, in 1963, transferred back to the Portland, Oregon, BLM State Office where he retired. Winsor died June 15, 1989, at the age of 69 in Clackamas, Oregon.

William Thomas Flink (Missoula '42)

Bill was born on March 8, 1921, in Missoula, Montana. He graduated from Missoula County High School and worked in a local laundry until becoming a smokejumper in the summer of 1942.

Bill joined the U.S Army in October 1942,

earned his paratrooper wings in March 1943, and served as a member of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment in the European Theater making combat jumps in Europe.

He was released from the military in November 1945 and went into the laundry business in Warm Springs, Montana. He was active in local organizations, including serving as Montana president of the Fraternal Order of Elks. After retirement in the laundry business, Bill retired in Missoula where he died November 24, 1997, at age of 76.

Harold Chaplin "Pete" Fuller (MSO-42)

Pete was born May 9, 1916, in South Dakota. When he registered for the draft in October 1940, his listed residence was Sedgdwick, KS. Pete served in the Army Air Force until his release in 1945. He re-upped in the Air Force in 1948 and made it a career, retiring as a Senior Master Sergeant in 1965. His date of death is October 17, 1974, age 58, in San Bernadino, CA. He had three fire jumps during the 1942 season.

We can't definitely connect this information to him being a smokejumper but it is the best we can do at this time.

Melvin L. "Smoke" Greene (MSO-42)

Melvin "Smoke" Greene, Colonel, USAF (Ret.), died January 20, 2014, at age 95. He was born April 12, 1918, in Columbia Falls, MT. Smoke graduated from Talbott H.S. in Columbia Falls and worked for the Forest Service as a teenager in Montana. He started college at the School of Mines in Butte before joining the smokejumpers in 1942.

In 1943, he left college early to join the Army Air Corps. He was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant and trained as a flight engineer on the new B-29s flying from Guam in the Pacific. On his sixth mission in April 1945, his plane was hit by a kamikaze pilot over Nagoya, Japan. After parachuting from the plane, he was captured and spent the remainder of the war as a POW in Omori Prison near Tokyo. Smoke continued his military career, retiring as a full colonel in 1972 after 29 years of service.

In 1986, his wife, Martha, died and he relocated from Austin, Texas, to the Air Force Village in San Antonio where he lived for the next 22 years before moving back to Austin in 2008 where he later died of natural causes.

Howard M. Gropp (MSO-42)

Howard died July 19, 1971, in Seattle, Washington. He graduated from high school in Clarkston, Washington, and worked in the Civilian Conservation Corps, Lockheed Aircraft, and was a lookout on the Clearwater NF. He rookied at Missoula in 1942 and reportedly was the first person to use the "slotted Derry" chute on a fire jump. Howard got a single fire jump during the 1942 season and four in the 1946 season.

Howard then went into the Army Air Corps in WWII as a parachute instructor and later took part in the battle of le Shima as part of the Okinawa Campaign. After the war he returned and jumped the 1946 season at Missoula and then attended Farragut College and Technical Institute. Howard then worked as a "body and fender" mechanic and lived in the Seattle area most of his later life.

William Frank Jones (Missoula '42)

Bill was born October 15, 1922, in White Sulphur Springs, Montana, where he attended school in nearby Martinsdale. He graduated from Great Falls High School. After a summer of smokejumping in Missoula in 1942, he served in the Navy during WWII. After serving, he began a career with the Federal Aviation Administration as a safety inspector. Bill was a VFW post commander and enjoyed flying. He died August 26, 1994, in White Sulphur Springs.

Thomas Carson Lepley (Missoula '42)

Tom died June 19, 1992, in Waukesha, Wisconsin, at the age of 77. He was born in Butler, Wisconsin, November 10, 1914. In 1940, he registered for the draft while he was a forestry student at the University in Missoula.

In 1942 he made one fire jump before being called to active duty with the Army. Tom was one of the US Army ski troopers and served eight months in the European Theater before returning to Wisconsin to resume his life. He is buried at Wisconsin Memorial Park in Brookfield, Wisconsin.

Upon his release from the Army, he returned

to MSU where he was on the football team and a member of the Druids, an organization of upper-class forestry majors. Following graduation, he went on to Yale University where he earned a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology. At the time of his death, he was employed as a plant pathologist for the USFS in Spokane, WA.

Charles Donald Leaphart (Missoula '42)

Don died in an auto accident near Aberdeen, Washington, on March 31, 1981, at the age of 58. He was born in Sheridan, Wyoming, on September 19, 1922. At a young age, the family moved to Missoula where he graduated from high school.

Don began studies in forestry at MSU in Bozeman and, at age 19, he was employed as a smokejumper and made one fire jump before registering for the draft on June 30, 1942. He served as an Army infantry lieutenant in the European Theater during WWII.

Richard Ellis McClung (Missoula '42)

Richard was initially listed as MIA on January 10, 1944, in the Helena, MT. *Independent Record* and later listed as KIA on January 12, 1946. He was born August 30, 1917, in Cleveland, N. D., and later moved to Missoula. He was a student at Montana State University when he registered for the draft on October 10, 1940, at the age of 23. During the summer of 1942, he signed on with the smokejumpers and made at least two fire jumps.

His military service combat organization was with the Montana US Navy Reserve at the rank of Ensign. From the *Missoulian* November 1942, "Cadet Richard E. McClung will graduate from the Navy Pre-Flight school this week and will report to the advanced school of navigation at Coral Gables, Florida, for primary flight training. On completion he will be commissioned an ensign in the naval reserve."

He received a posthumous Purple Heart and was added to a monument to the missing KIA at Honolulu, Hawaii.

Robert William Meigs (Missoula '42)

Robert, age 74, died in Spokane, Washington, November 30, 1994. He was born in Spokane, November 14,1920, and received his education in Spokane. He was enrolled at MSU in Missoula at the beginning of WWII and was with the smokejumpers during the summer of 1942 and 1943 when he made at least two fire jumps during the '42 season. He registered for the draft on February 16, 1942, and went on active duty April 10, 1944, serving in the U.S. Army until his discharge on March 17, 1946. Following completion of his education, he returned to Spokane and taught at the Spokane Community College.

Milton "Walt" Millard (Missoula '42)

Walt was born January 21, 1920, in Chicago, Illinois. He graduated from Marshall High School in Chicago and moved to Missoula, Montana, to attend the University of Montana graduating in forestry in 1944. He worked summers for the Forest Service, in 1941 on the Blister Rust program and in 1942 as a smokejumper. Walt served as a sergeant in the U.S. Army after college and was discharged in 1946.

He then started a career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Redwood City, California, retiring in 1979. Upon retirement, he moved to San Diego, California, serving as an officer for numerous organizations, including the National Association of Retired Federal Employees. He died December 28, 1996, in San Diego.

The rest of the 1942 Rookie Class will be in the July issue. (Ed.)

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