

Happy Birthday Smokey Bear



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“The official newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Forest Service Association, the Rocky Mountaineers.”
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Smokey Bear Everywhere



Does everyone know that Sam Elliot, the voice of Smokey Bear from 2008-2023, has the exact birth date as Smokey Bear - August 9, 1944?



Just guessing that this one is not authorized.



It was the perfect shot. But...!



Smokey Toes.



Smokey's Books are not banned.



Only Who?



I don't think that's "how he got his name."

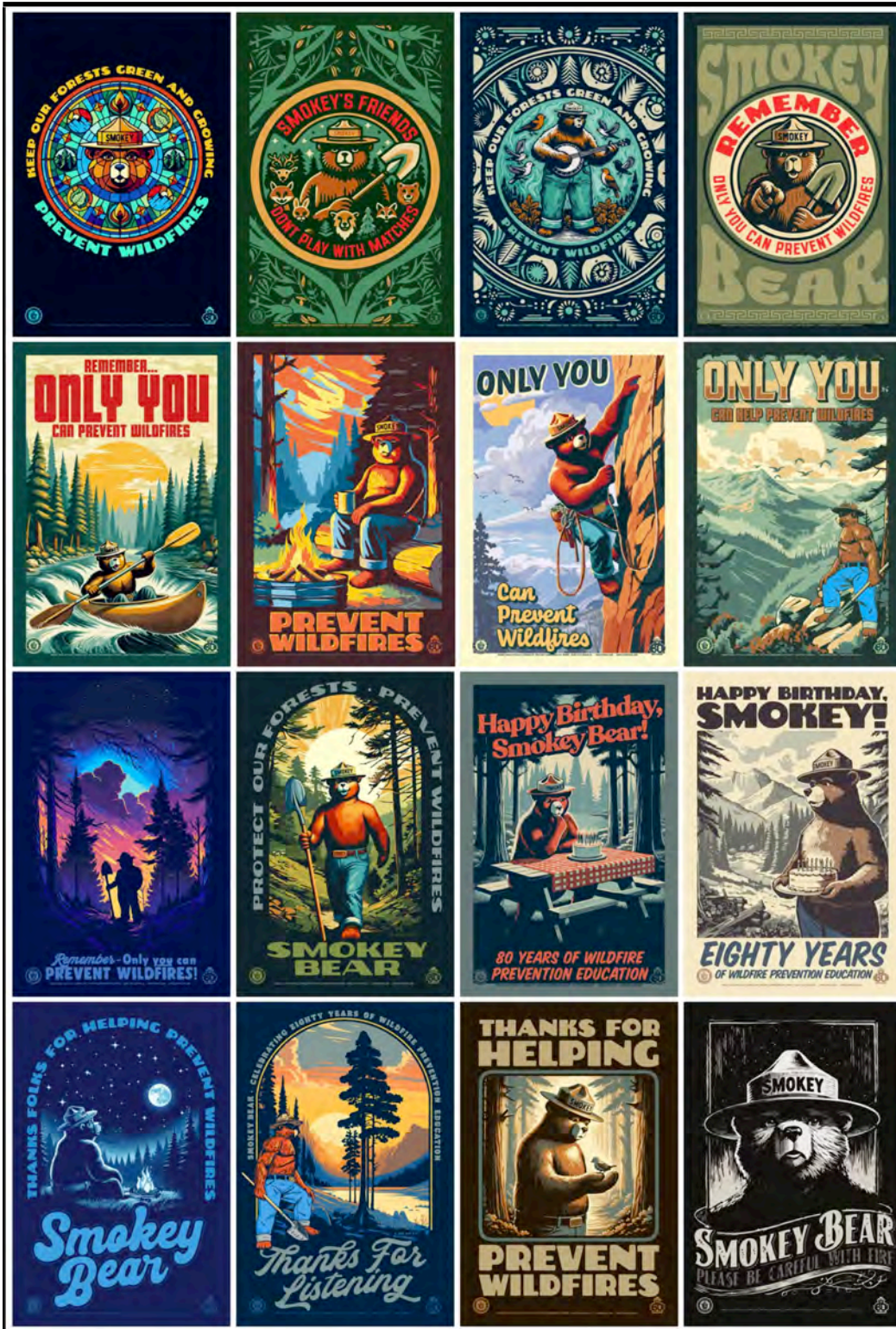


Susan Palan Iverson and her amazing Smokey Bear cake.

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These are Really Nice!



For over a decade, Giant Step Design Co. has been a trusted source for vintage-inspired apparel and commemorative artwork celebrating beloved places and experiences in the great outdoors. Now, we're excited to announce our partnership with the United States Forest Service, bringing our renowned WPA-inspired style to the iconic American symbol, Smokey Bear.

Our goal is to support national wildfire prevention education programs by creating new and unique Smokey Bear apparel and artwork featuring landscapes that resonate with outdoor enthusiasts across the country. Our collection promises to evoke the joy of early 20th-century art and inspire a new generation of adventurers.

Thanks for helping support Smokey and our small design shop. We have now issued all 16 Smokey Bear prints that we created for his 80th Birthday, and you can see them all in one place on our store below (includes six new ones). As always these are all officially licensed, original, approved by the USFS and every sale supports Smokey. Thank y'all!
—Josh

<https://www.amazon.com/stores/page/39A563DE-32E8-4D66-B6AC-DCCE0CEB4968?ingress=0&visitId=59c0657b-e422-4f10-963a-b804bb4dc62a>

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Kirkland Smokey.



The BIG 8-0!



Smokey is Amazing!

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

Southern Front Range and Kansas Area Representative
Barb Timock, Pueblo

Western Colorado Area Representative
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A message from the Chair

By Dan Nolan



Dan Nolan, Chairman of the Board

Hi Everybody,

At this writing, the fall colors are peaking in our small town at 7,700 feet in the Colorado Rockies. The aspens seem especially brilliant this year, although we say that every year.



Last Saturday we celebrated National Public Lands Day. Here, in Grand County, public land (state, national park, national forest and BLM) makes up nearly 70 percent of the land area.

National forests alone account for 40 percent. We celebrate these lands every year at this time with projects such as removing trash from along the Colorado and Fraser Rivers, building buck and rail fences to protect sensitive areas, noxious weed removal, and trail improvements. There were 14 projects across all public land ownerships. Several non-profits, such as our local Colorado Headwaters Land Trust and the Headwaters Trails Alliance, lead many of these projects along with agency partners. In my town, with a group of volunteers, we removed 1,000 feet of barb wire fence in an area of open space to eliminate a hazard to wildlife movement. Events like these remind me of how fortunate we are to have spent a career in the conservation of these lands.

I spent the last two days with 50 of our fellow Rocky Mountaineers at our annual Gathering. This year it was in Ft Collins with a focus on water. Many thanks to Carl Chambers, Steve Johnson, and Johnny and Ellen Hodges for organizing an outstanding Gathering for us. See the story about the Annual Gathering later in the newsletter. And, of course, we had lots of time for socializing and reconnecting with old friends. Floyd Reed commented that he got to see people he hadn't seen in 40 years.



Fence removal project.

Photo credit: Stephen Lee

Finally, I need to mention that our membership is declining. We currently have 450 members, but that reflects a reduction of 36 individuals who dropped out this year. I encourage us all to recruit new people. As a reminder, you don't need to be retired to join. Membership is open to current employees. Our activities this year included granting college scholarships to six high school seniors, honoring, at the annual Memorial Grove ceremony, 37 former R2 colleagues who passed away in 2023, two ski days, (Winter Park and Powderhorn), three excellent newsletters, two international trips (Japan and Morocco) and our Annual Gathering.

So, please spread the word about us.

- Dan

The Annual Gathering

Ft. Collins - October 1-2, 2024

By Johnny Hodges

The 2024 Rocky Mountaineers Annual Gathering was held in Northern Colorado on October 1 and 2 with about 50 members in attendance.

The Gathering kicked off on Tuesday afternoon with a small group of golfers playing at Southridge Golf Course in Ft. Collins.



Kristi Ritter, Northern Water Communications Director, gave us the introduction.

The other attendees headed out on a field trip to the Gateway Natural Area located at the confluence of the North Fork and the main stem of the Poudre River. Carl Chambers, retired hydrologist from the Arapaho Roosevelt N.F. gave a talk on the Forest



Martha Moran, John Heaton, Marv Froistad, Steve Johnson, Karen Roth, Nora Heaton, Mike Clinton, Wayne Shepperd, Marjorie Clinton, Colleen Shepperd, Marilyn Hunter, Dan Nolan.

Service and water history. Most of the group then hiked a mile upstream along the North Fork to the Seaman Reservoir dam. It was a gorgeous Fall afternoon with lots of changing colors along the river.

The group then returned to Southridge for an evening social and barbecue on the deck at Mackenzie's Bar and Grill. We again lucked out with the weather and enjoyed a warm evening outside with a beautiful sunset.



Carl Chambers, retired hydrologist, shows us the way.

On Wednesday morning everyone met at the Northern Water Headquarters in Berthoud. We spent an hour with Kristi Ritter, the communication department manager, as she discussed the history of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project. Based on the questions asked, it appeared our group was a bit more knowledgeable about water issues than her usual audiences.

The diversion of water from the Colorado River through Grand Lake, Lake Granby, Shadow Mountain, Willow Creek, and Windy Gap reservoirs across the Continental Divide is quite an engineering feat.



Interpretation of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project in small scale.

Distributing water on the Front Range is an incredibly complicated process involving reservoirs, canals, tunnels, pipelines, conduits, and dams.

The group then moved outside to tour the Conservation Gardens at Northern Water. They are designed to promote and demonstrate Xeriscaping.

We also viewed a small-scale replica (1/10 acre) of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project that includes a recirculating water feature with 12 reservoirs, the Continental Divide and the Alva B. Adams Tunnel to get a feel for the project and how water is delivered.

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Everyone then hopped in their cars and drove through downtown Berthoud, around the shore of Carter Lake to Flatiron Reservoir where we could view the Chimney Hollow Reservoir which is under construction. The dam is currently about 260 feet tall and has about 100 feet to go. It is the largest new dam built in the U.S. in the last 25 years. Carl Chambers led additional discussion on water issues before we departed to Sylvan Dale Ranch for lunch.



Jason Sieg, Acting Forest Supervisor on the Arapaho Roosevelt N.F. and Pawnee N.G.

the attendees is that the FS terminated all non-fire seasonal employees at the end of September and are not planning to hire any non-fire seasonals next year.

Dan led a short business meeting recapping some of the Rocky Mountaineers accomplishments for this year highlighting the Memorial Grove Ceremony in May and the awarding of four \$1,500 scholarships to high school seniors this past spring, and our international trips to Japan and the upcoming trip to Morocco. He also reminded everyone about the Forest Service Retiree Reunion in Missoula in September 2025.

Thanks to Steve Johnson, N. Colorado/S. Wyoming area representative, for organizing this year's Annual Gathering (along with the help of other volunteers). It was a busy couple of days, but hopefully everyone enjoyed the perfect weather, learned something new, and had a fun time.



Lunch was at the Sylvan Dale Ranch.

The ranch is located west of Loveland at the mouth of the Big Thompson Canyon and was evacuated during the 10,000-acre Alexander Mountain Fire during July. Although 28 homes were lost in the fire, the ranch was spared any major damage.

After a wonderful lunch of pizza and pasta, Dan Nolan, chair of the Rocky Mountaineers, was the host for the after-lunch speakers, Bunni Maceo, Deputy Regional Forester and Jason Sieg, Acting Forest Supervisor on the Arapaho Roosevelt N.F. and Pawnee N.G.



Bunni Maceo, Deputy Regional Forester.

Bunni and Jason talked about priorities in both the Region and the Arapaho Roosevelt. The Forest Service is facing difficult budget and staffing issues in FY25. Probably the biggest surprise for most of



So long until next year.

Membership and Finance

October, 2024

By Ellen and Johnny Hodges

The Rocky Mountaineers picked up only 5 new members since February, our lowest recruiting number ever. After suspending members in June with unpaid dues, our total membership is now 451.

We did gain 8 new Lifetime Memberships giving us a total of 175.

Our Newest Members

Frank and Jan Beum - Littleton, CO
Kevin Forrest - Denver, CO
David Griffin - Castle Rock, CO
Theresa and Steven Savery - Marshville, NC
Thomas and Ann Williams - Granby, CO

New Lifetime Members

Rick and Cindy Cables - Boulder, CO
Robert Clemans and Victoria Baker - Golden, CO
Emmett Foster - Pueblo West, CO
David Griffin - Castle Rock, CO
Veronica and Scott Mitchell - Lakewood, CO
Laura and Kip Stransky - Rimrock, AZ
Thomas and Ann Williams - Granby, CO
DeAnn Zwright and David Eulian - Albuquerque, NM

The Rocky Mountaineers have never conducted a Membership Drive, but we are thinking about one for early next year. Our current members are some of our best recruiters and maybe a Drive would give you a little boost in helping us increase our membership.

We are especially interested in adding current employees to the Rocky Mountaineers. We are not just a group of retirees only, and we have a few current employees as members.

Do you have any ideas on recruiting new members? Send us an email with your thoughts – rmountaineers@gmail.com

Donations

Here is a list of new donors since May. They donated to either our Scholarship, Memorial Grove or General funds.

Mike and Majorie Clinton - Evergreen, CO
Mike Curran - Rico, CO
William and Raenette Johnson - Eagle, CO
Tom and Kitty Thompson - Littleton, CO
Skip and Karen Underwood - Ft. Collins, CO
In Memory of Gary Cargill and Jack Weissling
Cristie Lee - Ft. Collins, CO
In Memory of Gary Heath

Non-Members

Patricia and Adam Livermore
Dawn Appleby - Richland, WA
In Memory of Clarence Joseph Simones
Davina Ryszka - Livingston, MT
In Memory of Jerry Ryszka
Diane Hagihara - Steamboat Springs, CO
In Memory of Linda Austin



National Museum's History Corner

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

By Andy Mason

September 6, 2024, Missoula, Montana



We Broke Ground on the National Conservation Legacy Center!



Missoula County Commissioner Dave Strohmaier and National Museum of Forest Service History executive director Lisa Tate, center, join museum board members in a ground-breaking ceremony Friday for the new National Conservation Legacy Center west of the USFS Fire Laboratory.

As Tom Thompson walked to the front of the crowd gathered on the grounds of the National Museum of Forest Service History on Friday afternoon, he was finding it hard to believe that the day had finally come.

Within a few minutes, he and other museum board members and partners would hoist the 12 golden shovels waiting behind him to break ground on the new National Conservation Legacy Center. As more than 200 supporters braved the afternoon heat, Thompson thanked them for the seven years of support.

"This is such a special day, a day we envisioned many years ago. But it really wasn't ready to happen until today," Thompson said. "It happened because of hard work. Hours upon hours, days upon days, of trying to figure out not only how to do it, and where to do it and how to bring about the funds to do it, but also to keep a focus on why we're doing it. Why we're doing it is not because of us. It's because of tomorrow."



A rendering of the new museum.

The board and people associated with the National Museum of Forest Service History, including executive director Lisa Tate, envisioned the National Conservation Legacy Center as a world-class museum and learning center to highlight the history and conservation efforts of the U.S. Forest Service.

Up until now, the National Museum of Forest Service History - a nonprofit organization founded in 1988 - has had only a small cabin for a visitor's center and a fire lookout mock-up on its 31-acre campus leased from the Forest Service. There's been no central repository for Forest Service artifacts or exhibition halls for those artifacts to be displayed and explained for the public.

But now, after almost a decade of work and fundraising, Dick Anderson Construction will begin building the Conservation Legacy Center, with the opening planned for a year from now, in time for the national gathering of Forest Service retirees, said Kim Pierson, USFS Region 1 director of public and governmental relations.

Montana's Senators Jon Tester and Steve Daines helped allocate \$3.5 million for the project but Tate and her staff have raised the majority of the funding with Forest Service retirees contributing more than half of the cost, Thompson said.

Tate said the nonprofit and the board wanted the museum to be unique inside and out. To highlight the products that come from national forests, the building itself will use mass-timber construction. Architect Tom Chung said his design was inspired

by a Monte Dolack painting commemorating the Forest Service Centennial.

"The iconic image of the forest ranger on a horse on top of a mountain overlooking one of the national forests. Really being a reminder of being a steward of this great gift of a national forest that we have that is to be for all of the people of our county. That image really stuck in our minds," Chung said. "The signature elements of the design are these tree-shaped columns and the folded-roof canopy. That became a way to render that in 14 different species of different woods that are emblematic of the national forests."

Inside, the exhibits will be as striking as the building itself. Australia-based Art Processors were hired in 2021 to design the exhibits and a space to 'create an immersive experience that would put the visitor in the middle of everything,'" said Christine Murray of Art Processors.



The "Rings of Change" exhibit.

For example, one wall will digitally display various forest landscapes. Or visitors can walk up to a tree and move their hand across the tree rings to display stories from throughout time.

"Imagine walking into a forest of stories, and they are everywhere around you, everywhere to explore, and there are all kinds of ways to learn about those stories," Murray said. "The museum itself will be full of this rich, immersive storytelling."

Having worked for the Forest Service in his early years, Missoula County Commissioner Dave Strohmaier agreed that the Forest Service has many stories that need to be told, and he looked forward to seeing what the Center would portray.

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“It’s a complex story. It’s a story of great successes, of colossal failures at times, but of an evolving sense and understanding of what it means to conserve resources in this country for the benefit of the greatest number of people. And of being model land stewards for this nation,” Strohmaier said. “I remember decades ago, sitting in meetings, talking about this vision, and thinking to myself, is this ever really going to be possible? What the hard work of all of you demonstrates is we can dream big, we can accomplish big, bold visions, and that is what is happening here today.”

Although Friday was a day of celebration, Thompson said the work isn’t finished, because more funding is still needed for some of the

exhibits. But enough of the work was done that the museum will soon be a reality.

“Most of us realized if it doesn’t happen now, it likely will never happen. It just had to happen,” Thompson said. “This is so important for the United States Forest Service to have a place to celebrate, to have a place to remember, to have a place to learn, and to have a place to really focus on all the good work that’s been going on for the past 120 years.”

Contact reporter Laura Lundquist at lundquist@missoulacurrent.com



Executive Director Lisa Tate and Museum President Tom Thompson at the groundbreaking.

Watch the Groundbreaking Ceremony on You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elvehRlwhlo&t=2183s>

We sincerely THANK YOU for making this possible! The Museum is forever thankful to our dedicated volunteers, generous donors, and staff. September 6 brought us together for a superb groundbreaking celebration. President Tom Thompson said, “it’s almost surreal” to finally know it will happen. So much work, persistence, and patience were required. Tom also noted that over half the funding for the Center has been donated by USFS retirees.

The USFS “can do” spirit is alive and well at the Museum! THANKS AGAIN for your incredible support!

See You Next Year in Missoula, Montana



US Forest Service Retiree Reunion 2025

Join us for a trip down memory lane in Missoula, Montana
September 22 - 26, 2025

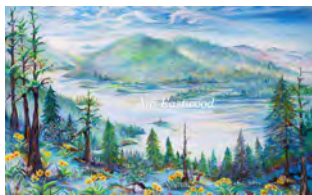
Celebrating Our Legacy Together



<https://2025usfsreunion.org/>

Visit Montana

<https://www.visitmt.com/listings/general/chamber-of-commerce/missoula-area-chamber-of-commerce>



The Artists' Shop



World Class Fishing



Adventure Missoula



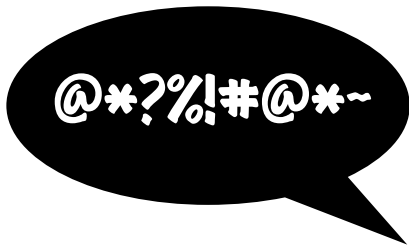
Blue Sky Brewing Company



A Carousel for Missoula



Ghost Towns



Alternative Cuss Words For You!

In this time of rougher political discourse, I offer you this partial list that was sent to me a long time ago and was approved by my mother-in-law and some associates after consumption of malted beverages. For Lord's sake - please send more and better words to me to make this even more hip. dave.steinke@gmail.com

If you are miffed...

1. Bleep	8. Dang	15. Jeepers	22. Shucks
2. Booger	9. Darn	16. Nerts	23. Snot
3. Crapola	10. Darnit	17. Phooey	24. Sufferin' Succotash
4. Crimeny	11. Flippin'	18. Rats	25. Ticked
5. Cripes	12. Geez	19. Sheesh	26. Toot
6. Crud	13. Gosh	20. Shizzle	27. Turd
7. Dag	14. Heck	21. Shoot	28. Wing nut

I can't believe it!

1. Bull Snot	6. Gadzooks
2. Crud in a Bucket	7. Good Gravy
3. Crud Muffin	8. Good Grief
4. Fiddle Faddle	9. I'll be Darned
5. Fiddlesticks	

For...

1. Heaven's sake
2. Pete's sake
3. The Love of Pete

Son of a...

1. Baptist preacher
2. Biscuit
3. Biscuit eater

Horse...

1. Feathers
2. Hockey
3. Puckey

General Daily Use...

1. Bolshevik	15. Fartknocker	29. Land a Goshin'
2. Booger Snot	16. Flippin' Phooey	30. Lord Love a Duck
3. Buckethead	17. Gee Willikers	31. Malarkey
4. Bull Snot	18. Geeze Louise	32. Mother-of-Pearl
5. Bull Twinkies	19. Oh Mother Francis	33. Mylanta
6. Confound it	20. Great Caesar's Ghost	34. Rasa-frasa-rasa-frasa
7. Cotton Pickin'	21. Great Googley Moogley	35. Shucky Darn
8. Dad blame it	22. H-E-double-hockey-sticks	36. Shut the front door
9. Dad blast it	23. Heavens to Betsy	37. Shut Your Pie Hole
10. Dad gummit	24. I'll be a Monkey's Uncle	38. What in Blue Blazes?
11. Dag burnit	25. Jackwagon	39. What the Hey?
12. Dag nabbit	26. Judas priest	40. What the What?
13. Doggonnit	27. Jumpin' Jehoshaphat	41. What the Devil?
14. Fahrvergnugen	28. Kiss my Grits	42. What the Funk?

Denver Rocky Mountaineers Luncheon

On Thursday, September 26, the Denver Chapter of the Rocky Mountaineers met for lunch in west Denver. About thirty folks made the drive to catch up with old friends.



Deb Ryon, Ed Ryberg, Lynn Larsen and Andy Kratz joined in.



The always cantankerous Bob Averill was present.

MAN WAH

Asian Restaurant

文華

DINE IN & TAKE OUT
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<http://manwahlakewood.com>



L-R: Marty Dahl, Pam Laverty, Lyle Laverty and Bjorn Dahl shared a table.



Martha Delporte and Denise Tomlin caught up on the rumors.



Jim Krugman, Cindy Dean and Jim Thinnes were in the house.

If you are in the Denver area or just passing through later this month - our next luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, October 30 at 11:30 at Clancy's Irish Pub, 7000 W 38th Ave, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033.

19th Adobe Cup Results

By Brent Botts

The PSICC 19th Annual Adobe Cup was played October 11 at The Meadows Golf Course in Littleton, Colorado. Four teams participated for the coveted trophy. The South Platte Team birdied the last hole to win by one stroke over the Retired Ranger Team. A great time was had by all who participated.



The Adobe Cup Champion team from the South Platte Ranger District. John Neubert, Scott Dollus, Brian Banks, Colin Waters.



Retired Rangers Team: Brent Botts, Jon Morrissey, Ron Thibedeau and Bill Nelson.



The Adobe Cup Field: James Pilsmaier, Jim Gerleman, Scott Dollus, John Neubert, Colin Waters, Brian Banks, Andrea Rogers, Phil Kriebel, Brent Botts, Ron Thibedeau, Bill Nelson, Cait Woods, Cori Lewenski.

Not pictured - Jon Morrissey, Tiger Woods, Scottie Scheffler, Rory McIlroy, Bryson DeChambeau.

Retirement Task Prioritization Explained as Fruits

Now that we retirees (or still working folks) are freed from the everyday work tasks, those daily jobs and chores can be broken down into categories of fruits. If you know what fruit you will be working on, then you can allocate the correct amount of time and energy - or nap time - to that task.



Grapes

Grapes are multiple, small 5-minute tasks that can be done whenever. They are somewhat easy or repetitive.

Example: Answering emails or walking to the mailbox.



Oranges

Oranges are a large task that can be broken up into segments over time. It can be picked up and put down several times over days or weeks. Oranges are a good task to delegate.

Example: planning an event or watching a series on Netflix.



Apples

Apples are a big task that must be done in one setting. They are time sensitive and must often be completed the same day.

Example: Meeting the guy who aerates the lawn or a trip to Ace Hardware for the third time in one day.



Lemons

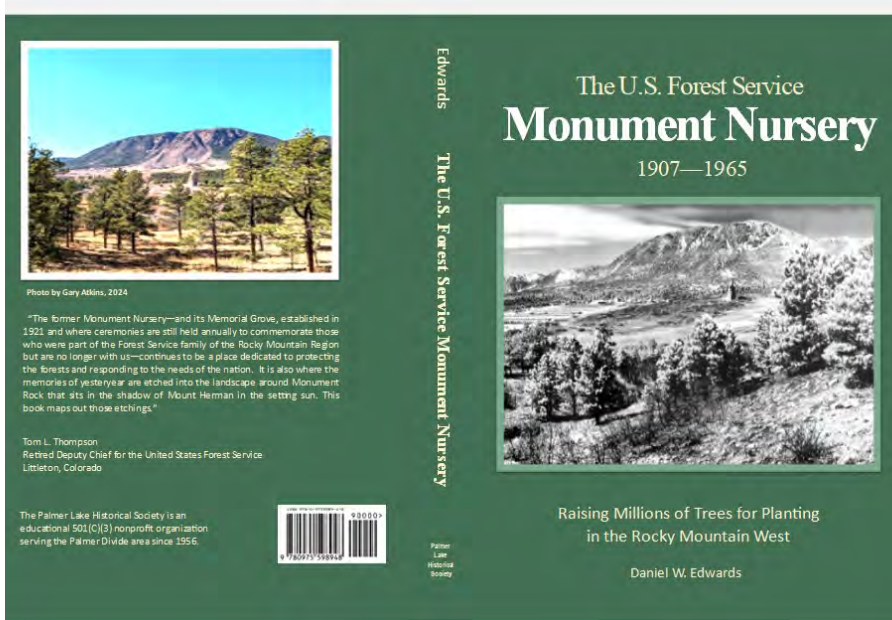
Lemons are unpleasant, big tasks. These can't be done in segments, often are time sensitive, and are at the most risk of being put off.

Example: Going to the High School Reunion, ordering gutter guards or painting the garage.

Oddest town names in each state



Buy This Book!



~ Mail In Order Form ~

**U.S. Forest Service Monument Nursery,
1907-1965**

by Daniel W. Edwards
Foreword by Tom Thompson

Qty ___ **Hard Cover** book(s) **\$40** (plus \$10 shipping)

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The Palmer Lake Historical Society (PLHS) is an educational 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the Palmer Divide area since 1956.

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Mailing Address:
C/O — Doug Lang, Treasurer — PLHS
THE PALMER LAKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 662
Palmer Lake, Colorado 80133



"The former Monument Nursery - and its Memorial Grove, established in 1921 and where ceremonies are still held annually to commemorate those who were part of the Forest Service family of the Rocky Mountain Region but are no longer with us - continues to be a place dedicated to protecting the forests and responding to the needs of the nation. It is also where the memories of yesteryear are etched into the landscape around Monument Rock that sits in the shadow of Mount Herman in the setting sun. This book maps out those etchings."

Tom Thompson, Retired Deputy Chief of the U.S. Forest Service



“That’s the Way I Remember it”

Each newsletter we will be featuring a story about retirees from R-2

The Rendezvous: Where were you born and raised?

Flint Cheney: I was born in Fort Collins and raised on my grandfather's homestead ranch near Estes Park. My grandfather Howard first filed a claim on the 40-acre property in 1911, just before serving in WWI. After he was released from the war, he built a one-room cabin on the property and, with his wife Johanna, raised three kids there. Fifty years later, my father built a house on the same property in 1961, and that's where I was raised. Today, I am 1/3 owner of the homestead ranch. The property has been in our family for 113 years.

TR: Tell us a little about your family.

FC: I was one of four kids. I had two brothers and a sister. We had to help with the work around the ranch, plus an adjacent ranch. My grandfather raised potatoes, had goats for milk, and a donkey. The neighbor's ranch was all black angus cattle. We would feed the cows. That's where I learned how to drive, at the age of five. My dad had an old 1960 GMC pickup truck with a standard transmission. He would put it in first gear, and I would kneel on the seat and steer the truck around the meadow while he was in the back tossing out bales of hay. I couldn't reach the pedals. All I had to do was avoid hitting cows, trees, rocks, and gopher holes. I sure wish I had that old GMC truck back. It was so classy.

My first paid job at the age of twelve was working at the local fairgrounds as a "pilot." After a horse show or rodeo, I would go over to the fairgrounds and shovel horse manure out of the stall and "pile-it" into a big pile. I got paid ten cents per stall. So, as to a play on words, I tell everyone I was a 12-year-old pilot. On a good day, I would make \$8 to \$10. I was living a good life.

*38 years
of
Federal
Service*

*Retired:
2020*



Flint Cheney

TR: Where did you go to school – early school and college - and what did you study?

FC: Grammar and high school were all in Estes Park. I remember in my high school junior year my parents asking, "What are you thinking of doing when you grow up?" I mentioned working in forestry. They both supported me, but my high school guidance counselor thought I was nuts. He thought I should be a civil engineer. After high school I went to Colorado State University School of Forestry. I also got a second degree in Computer Science.



Flint at about 18 months old, on horseback with his father, Bob. At the family ranch near Estes Park.

(Continued on Page 19)

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About age 5, fishing a stream on the White River National Forest.

TR: How did you get interested in a job with the U.S. Forest Service. Give us a little run down on your career.

FC: My grandfather's ranch in Estes Park had a lot of timber on it. As a teenager, I got interested in trees and how to manage the stand, mainly for the health of the trees. Also, I was very active in the local boy scout program. We did a lot of hiking and camping trips on national forest land. And we did a lot of fishing and hunting on forest lands as well. I just loved being out in the woods.

After graduation from high school for the next three summers while I was in college, I got a job working at a 1600-acre recreational property near Estes Park, called Hermit Park. It was owned by Hewlett Packard as a private recreational facility for employees of HP. They had campgrounds and cabins for employees to reserve, at no cost. At the time, HP had over a thousand employees in Loveland, Greeley, and Fort Collins. Most of the property was heavily timbered and the timber stand was in poor condition.

So, I made a proposal to some big HP executives about managing the timber on the property. Trying to explain forest management to a bunch of nerdy computer engineers was quite comical. They bought my story, and I became the first, and only, forester for Hewlett Packard. Today, Hermit Park is owned by Larimer County Parks & Open Space.

TR: And so how do you transition from HP forest management to the U.S. Forest Service and tell us a little about your career.

FC: At the time, there was a Forest Service work center in Estes Park. The guy who ran that center was John Hersh. He and my father were good friends, and John knew I was interested in the forestry field, and attending forestry college at CSU. John offered me an opportunity to work seasonally while I was attending college. Being HP's only forester was a great job, but it didn't have a lot of career ladder opportunities. I really liked the idea of working for the US Forest Service and being part of an organization that had so much recognition and a wide variety of opportunities within the agency.

I jumped at the chance, working seasonally on the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest doing timber management, wildlife habitat improvement, and recreation work. After graduating from CSU forestry school, I worked seasonally on the A/R, then worked for BLM in the Grand Junction Area for 7 years. In 1999, I accepted a job at the R2 Regional Office, State & Private Forestry staff. A few years later, SPF and Fire Management were separated out into two different staff units. I couldn't imagine doing anything else, so I made a 38-year career out of it. I did my entire career in Colorado.



Hiking in Rocky Mountain National Park, below Hallet's Peak.

(Continued from Page 19)

TR: Now...you have this amazing hobby. Tell us about it and how it came about.

FC: Hobby? You mean restoring that old car? It might be a stretch calling it a hobby, as it is the first and probably only car that I will restore. But it did occupy 3 years of my retirement life during the COVID years. Restoring old cars is very expensive and time consuming, so I can't do that for very long.

It's a 1926 Overland Model 93 coupe. It was my grandparents' family car for four decades. The car was mostly used to run errands around the northern Colorado towns of Longmont, Lyons, Boulder, Loveland, Fort Collins, and Estes Park. There is no known story of this car ever taking any long-distance road trips. It has likely never been outside the state of Colorado. It was mostly kept in Estes Park. The car has been in our family all its life.

TR: Let's start from the beginning and go from there.

FC: The story starts back about 100 years ago, when my grandfather, Howard Cheney, was courting a young nurse at the Longmont, CO hospital. It was the spring of 1927, and romance was in the air. The problem was, he only had one horse, and that didn't impress nurse Johanna.

Fortunately, Howard had been saving up his money from working as a machinist at the stone quarries around Lyons, in Boulder County. He decided that it was time to purchase one of those modern automobiles that other well-to-do people were starting to drive around town.

He first rode his horse over to the Ford dealership in Longmont to look at one of the new Model T's that everyone else was driving. He wasn't impressed; he wanted something a little classier and that stood out from the Model T. After all, he was trying to impress a nurse. So, he hopped up into the saddle and rode to the Willys-Overland dealership up the road a bit. There he found a more elegant selection of cars, although a little more expensive. He rode his horse over to the local bank and talked to a banker about a car loan. Being a reputable hard worker in the area, the bank offered to loan him some of the money if he put some of his own money down. The deal was made, and Howard was a first-time car owner.

Now it was time to head over to the hospital to impress Johanna. We will never know what was going through Howard's mind as he approached the hospital that day, but whatever he said, it worked. They were married later that year, in November of 1927. Over the next five years, they had three children.



1926 Overland car before restoration. Canvas top missing. Painted with latex house paint.

At some point in the 1950's, the car began showing signs of aging with the paint fading from being in the high-altitude Colorado sunlight for so many years. To resolve this, Howard acquired a can of green latex house paint, a can of black paint for the fenders, and a paint brush and went to work repainting his family car. He also was able to patch up holes in the canvas roof fabric, mohair seat cushion, and interior upholstery using scrap burlap potato bags.

After Howard's passing in 1982 his eldest son John inherited the Overland. Being stored outdoors for many years, the car went through several severe hailstorms, rain, and heavy snow, damaging the canvas top, allowing rain and snow into the cab of the car. With the canvas top mostly missing and water damage to the interior, John moved the car into a barn at a farm just north of Greeley, to prevent any further damage caused by being stored outdoors.

(Continued from Page 20)

TR: Sounds like the end of the story.

FC: In 2007, I asked John about the whereabouts of the Overland. It had been more than 25 years since the car was moved to Greeley. We went looking for the farm where the car was believed to be stored. We stopped at a farm that had a barn and looked familiar. With no property owner in sight, we attempted to look in the barn to find the car. About that time, the farm owner appeared and asked why we were snooping around his farm.

After a brief discussion, the farm owner stated that he had purchased the farm and all its contents several years earlier. The new farm owner said that there was an old car in the barn, but the previous farm owner said that he did not remember who owned it, so it was assumed to be the property of the new owner. And he was about ready to take the car to the local auto salvage yard in town to get it out of his way. The owner allowed us to look at the car. After cleaning

a quarter century of barn dirt and grime off the car, John recognized that it was his Overland. The farmer agreed that if we could find the title to the car, and the serial numbers matched, that we could take it away.

Finding the title proved to be a challenge but was eventually located. We returned to the farm with a flat-bed trailer in tow. The serial number on the title matched that of the car, so we loaded up the Overland and moved it back to Fort Collins.

TR: So now just a little cleaning and elbow grease?

FC: I acquired the car from my Uncle John just before his passing in 2014. I moved the car to my current residence. Once I retired in 2020, I started

in on the restoration. I ended up tearing down the car into every little piece. Every nut, bolt, screw, washer, etc. Keeping track of each part was a monumental task. I took hundreds of digital photos. I went through hundreds of little plastic bags, big plastic bags, cardboard boxes, each with a label and reference to a photo. I had to put this thing back together, so keeping track of parts was critical.

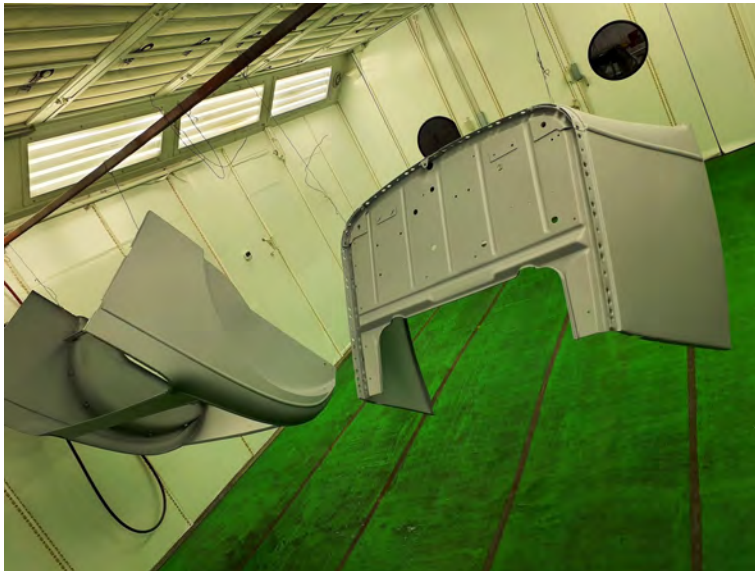
All the rust removal, body work, and painting were done by a professional restoration shop in the Denver area. The structure of the cab was made

from wood. It was rotted and had come apart enough that I couldn't re-use it, so I had to rebuild the entire wooden structure. I had no plans to work from, so I used the old cab to take all measurements and angles to construct an identical replica. I used white oak, since that was what it was made from originally. Back in the 1920's, there was no such thing as Phillips head screws, so to keep it original, I used slotted screws. And not just any slotted screws. Most hardware today is zinc-plated, which didn't exist back then, so I had to

use stainless steel slotted screws.

All attempts were made to restore this car back to its original condition. Even the chrome-looking parts couldn't be redone in chrome. That didn't exist back in the 1920's. I had to find a business that still did nickel plating. I found a place in Sacramento, CA. It took them 10 months to do the plating. Do you know what it costs to have antique car parts nickel plated and polished? Wow!!

All the upholstery had to be re-made to exactly the way it was done originally. The seats were made of mohair. The upholstery liner on the inside of the cab was a specialized product, right down to the fabric trim and tacks. Even the paint is as close to the original color as possible.



Overland car during restoration. At the body shop waiting for paint.

Every part of this car went through multiple processes to get it back to its original condition. It was truly a test of patience. I estimate that I put about 2,200 hours of labor over three years into the restoration. By May of 2023, the Overland was fully restored to its original condition and running once again.



Overland car after restoration, at Centennial Airport car show, 2023. For the airplane enthusiasts, that's a 1943 Boeing Model E75, single engine bi-wing. They were originally built for WWII; unknown if this plane ever saw combat. Airplane resides in Cheyenne, WY.

TR: I've heard of Ford Model T's, Chevrolet, Dodge, etc. What's an Overland? It must be really rare.

FC: Overland cars were built by John Willys and the Willys-Overland car company in Toledo, Ohio. The first line of Overland cars started in 1908. From 1912 to 1927, Overland cars were the second most common automobile on the road in America, only behind Henry Ford's Model T.

The Model 93 was built from 1925 to 1927. It was the only Overland model to have a 6-cylinder engine. The flat-head 170 cubic inch put out a maximum of 38 horsepower. Most model 93's were a sedan or coach body style. About 200 coupes were made during the last half of 1926 only. According to the 2023 Willys Overland Knight Registry (www.wokr.org), there are about 900 Overland's (all years 1908 - 1927, all body types) known to still exist worldwide. There are only five 1926 model 93 coupes remaining worldwide. Two of those five are not complete cars, just parts.

There were about 88,000 model 93's (all body types) made. Compare that to an estimated 100,000 Model T's believed to be still around today. My math says that for every 1,000 Model T's on the road today, there is 1 Overland. I guess that makes Overlands rare.

In 1941, Willys lead a combined effort with Ford and American Bantam to produce a rugged 4-wheel drive General Purpose vehicle (abbreviated GP and nicknamed "Jeep" by the US Army) just in time for World War II.

The Willys brand name became obsolete in August of 1963 after being phased into Kaiser-Jeep. In 1970 American Motors Company (AMC) bought out Kaiser-Jeep. For over three decades, Jeep was owned by Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. As of January 2021, Jeep is now owned by Stellantis, who also owns Chrysler, Fiat, Dodge, Ram, Alfa Romero, and Maserati.

TR: Where did you find parts for such a rare old car?

FC: Finding parts was an enormous challenge. Overall, the car was fairly complete. NAPA auto came through with spark plugs, distributor rotor arm, fan belt, gasket-making materials and radiator hoses. The gas tank had to be completely fabricated new. I did find some parts on eBay. I even had to resort to fabricating some parts from JB weld and a Dremel tool. That took patience. All the fabric (mohair seat covers, interior liner, canvas top cover, etc.) had to be made new, from material that came as close as possible to the original.

TR: What do you fill your free time with now that the restoration is done?

FC: Once I retired, I started an LLC business doing fire mitigation work around homes, mostly in the Jefferson County area. I am also one of about ten defensible space contract inspectors for Jefferson County Planning & Zoning Department.

I must admit, there is another old automobile sitting at our family ranch in Estes Park that could use some work. It is a 1916 White model TEB truck. My dad and I got it running and drove it around about 15 years ago.

(Continued from Page 22)

I don't want to do a complete restoration on it, but it does need to have some mechanical work done. It has so much character the way it is, I'd like to keep it in its current condition.

I also do a lot of work on our family's property in Estes Park. I find time to do "retired" things as well, like some travel and woodworking. I don't have grandkids (yet) like so many other retirees do. Maybe someday.

Is it too late to be a civil engineer?



Flint's family, Pike NF, 2022 holidays. L-R: Daniel, Laurel, Flint, & Danelle.



The full restoration of the Overland 1926 model 93 coupe.

Some Lassie History!



Photo of the 1960 cast of the television program Lassie. Pictured are June Lockhart, Hugh Reilly, Jon Provost and Lassie.

It was on September 12 1954 that the television series *Lassie* debuted on CBS. The show followed the adventures of a female rough collie named Lassie. Over the years Lassie's humans would change, but the heroic dog was a constant on the show.

The character of Lassie originated in a short story by Eric Knight first published in 1938 in *The Saturday Evening Post*, which Eric Knight expanded into the novel *Lassie Come Home*, published in 1940. The novel centered on a female rough collie in Depression Era England who journeys back to her family after they have been forced to sell her. *Lassie Come Home* was adapted as the motion picture *Lassie Come Home*, starring Roddy McDowall and Elizabeth Taylor, in 1943. The movie proved to be a success and was followed by five more movies before the television even debuted.

<http://mercurie.blogspot.com/2024/09/seventy-years-of-tv-show-lassie.html>

Dramatic Episode Description from 1965

(02/21/65) "Look Homeward, Lassie" part 1:

Corey and Lassie parachute from a damaged airplane, but collie and man are separated; while Corey is in the hospital recovering from surgery, Lassie picks her way across the desert, looking for a way home.



The Lassie Gold Award was made live on a locally - Denver - produced (KLZ-TV) Kiddie Show at 3:30 PM on December 29, 1966.

Mr. Tremmel, Lassie, the husband and wife team who run the "Kiddie" Show with Chuck Waggoner between them.

MR. GLENN A. KOVAR, DIRECTOR
MOTION PICTURES, RADIO & TV
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
1015 NORTH LAKE AVENUE
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91104

DEAR GLENN:

HERE ARE TWO STILLS THE KLZ STUDIO SENT ON THE LASSIE AWARD PROGRAM.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE:

MR. TREMMEL, LASSIE, THE HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM WHO RUN THE "KIDDIE" SHOW WITH CHUCK WAGGONER BETWEEN THEM.

SINCERELY,

Edward Littlehales

E. F. LITTLEHALES

The letter above was from Ed Littlehales - R-2 Assistant Director of Information and Education in Region 2 to Glenn Kovar, Director of Motion Pictures, Radio and TV for the Forest Service in Pasadena, California. He was reporting on the award and enclosed two still pictures.

The Farmerettes

In time of war, American women take over the jobs left vacant by the men fighting on the war front. These jobs include the cultivation and harvesting of crops needed to feed the armed forces, the civilian population, and our allies.

In WWI women (farmerettes) of all ages from schools and colleges, from professional and business offices, and from homes in towns and cities joined the farmerettes who came to the aid of farmers in 1917 and 1918.

These farmerettes (right) are harvesting a peach crop on a farm near Leesburg, VA, in August 1917.



The farmerettes (below) are wearing the regulation bloomers and smocks and are ready to march into the Virginia peach orchard.

Photos courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration.



Rocky Mountain Region Historical Photos



Shoshone Canyon. Shoshone dam in distance. Cody road to Yellowstone Park on Right. Taken by W.I. Hutchins August 31st, 1916.



Group of Forest officers assembled at Foxpark Ranger Station for timber sales, patrol, and silvics experimental work. Medicine Bow National Forest, Wyoming (Forest Service photo by C. G. Bates) 1909.



Restocking the streams with fish in Black Hills National Forest. Lawrence Co., Black Hills National Forest, South Dakota. (Forest Service photo by S.D. Smith) 1913.



At the nursery. Crowd of men ready to go to the field for a day of tree planting. Nebraska National Forest Reserve. Halsey Farm Nursery, Thomas Co., Nebraska 1906.

A Place to Call Home

Housing Crisis for public servants



Laura Deaton, Forestry Technician (HELITACK), Caribou-Targhee National Forest, lives in a tiny home she built herself and parks at the home of some co-workers. In many areas where our employees are based, particularly in remote areas in the West, housing is currently unaffordable, unavailable, or inadequate. This is impacting our ability to recruit, retain, and support the workforce needed to protect and maintain the nation's forests and grasslands. (USDA Forest Service photo by Preston Keres)

The Forest Service has some of the most remote working locations of any federal agency. Whether it's firefighters responding to wildfires, recreation managers ensuring campgrounds are ready for visitors, or wildlife biologists deep in the woods monitoring sensitive species, the remoteness is part of the draw for these types of jobs, but it's also part of the challenge.

For many of these outdoor professionals, their duty station is sometimes located one to three hours from the nearest mid-sized town. And often just as far away from the nearest available apartment or house.

That's one reason why the Forest Service and other federal agencies offer government housing to

employees. There is value in having employees reside in facilities near their work locations, to respond to after-hour emergencies, safer commutes and better work life balance.

Providing this housing option to Forest Service employees in 37 states on 106 forests is no easy task. And the challenges associated with housing varies widely by location.

That's why the agency hired a National Housing Project Manager and assembled an Integrated Project Team to identify a diverse set of options to help address housing challenges and better serve today's workforce.

For More: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/features/place-call-home>

Where in the World is Jim Thinnes?



Jim and Cindy

The Rocky Mountaineers next international trip will be to Morocco this coming November. This trip and our Nepal trip next November are sold out, but space is still available for our April 2025 Malta & Sicily trip. A new trip to Alpine Europe is now available for June 6-23, 2026 (details are available on the website at [Rocky Mountaineers Retiree Association](http://RockyMountaineersRetireeAssociation.com)).

Group travel is a lot of fun. You travel with people you know and develop camaraderie as you see new places and share new experiences. Feel free to contact me at JimThinnes2@gmail.com if you have questions about any of our trips or if you have suggestions for future trips.

Some people prefer traveling by themselves, which can also be rewarding. My wife Cindy and I traveled to the Peruvian Amazon in July and France in August. Our two trips were very different, and we enjoyed both.

Our Amazon adventure began with a flight to Iquitos, Peru. We made arrangements with Grand Amazon Lodge & Tours for a week's stay. We were picked up at the airport and given a city tour of Iquitos before driving an hour to catch a boat to the lodge. The Amazon River at Iquitos is already twice the size of the Mississippi at its mouth. We spent the next week in a roadless region where travel is by boat or foot. The lodge provided nice, rustic accommodations, three meals a day, and our own private guides. We selected our itinerary each day and were treated to amazing fauna and flora. We saw 80 bird species, six monkey species, plus sloths, capybara, cayman, and many other critters.



France was completely different with a cruise on the Seine River from Paris to Normandy plus an extension into Brittany. The MS Bizet was our hotel and restaurant for 11 days as it moved from the City of Light to small towns and countryside of rural France. We enjoyed cosmopolitan experiences of Paris, Monet's gardens in Giverny, the 10th century castle ruins of Richard the Lionheart, Rouen's historic city center where Joan of Arc was convicted of heresy by the British and burned at the stake in 1431, the charm of the seaside towns, and the Normandy sites where the Allies landed and liberated France from Nazi Germany.

I encourage you to travel, whether it be group or independent, guided or self-directed, urban or rural, historic or natural, international or domestic.

Enjoy your journey.



Odds and Ends to Make You Smarter

National Park Service Fashion Week Leader?

I don't remember when the USFS celebrated Fashion Week! Do You?

[theodorerooseveltnps](https://www.instagram.com/reel/CtW4xQSVZ2/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh)

It's #NPSFashionWeek and Ranger Peelee is dressed to the nines in some of our uniform variations!

https://www.instagram.com/reel/CtW4xQSVZ2/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh

Our Locality Pay

Following years of encouragement from federal employee unions and some lawmakers, the Office of Personnel Management is set to propose new rules that would standardize the maps relied upon to determine locality pay rates for white- and blue-collar federal employees across the U.S.

https://www.govexec.com/pay-benefits/2024/10/opm-moves-standardize-general-schedule-blue-collar-locality-pay-areas/400100/?oref=govexec_news_alert_nl&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=GovExecAlert:Oct.7.

Women Ranger Teams!

DAMARAN BARU, Indonesia (AP) — In a lush jungle at the foothills of a volcano in Indonesia's Aceh province, the song of gibbons in the trees mixes with the laughter of the seven forest rangers trekking below them. An hour into their patrol, the rangers spot another mammal in the forest with them.

<https://apnews.com/article/aceh-indonesia-deforestation-forestry-women-rangers-83edf59f3914a512aa5031829d290d98>

WW I: 10th & 20th Forestry Engineers

During World War I, two U.S. Army regiments of forestry engineers worked in France to provide the Allied forces with the large amount of timber necessary for the war effort. Those making up these regiments came from forest ranger, logging, and sawmill jobs throughout the U.S., and served their country in France by providing work crucial to the eventual success of the Allied forces in Europe.

<https://foresthistor.org/digital-collections/world-war-10th-20th-forestry-engineers/>

New RF for R-2

USDA Forest Service Chief Randy today announced the appointment of Troy Heithecker as the new regional forester for the Rocky Mountain Region, effective later this summer. Deputy Regional Forester Steve Lohr will serve as acting regional forester until Heithecker reports.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r2/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD1177381>

Good Fire - Bad Fire film

The film explores healthy forest ecology and the history of forest management, from Native Americans to Smokey Bear and beyond. Through expert insights and stories from the front lines, it illustrates how the size and intensity of today's wildfires are directly tied to the health of our forests—and how we manage them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O46J--z56qY>



Remembrances



Mary Louise Nelson

Mary Nelson, age 61, passed away May 24, 2024, at her home in Price. She was born February 11, 1963, in Price, Utah to Louis and Carol Christianson Nelson.

Mary was the consummate forester – fiercely dedicated to the health and future of our national forests through skilled and thoughtful forest management. She found her career mission in timber and took on the scientific and strategic challenges of timber growth and timber sales. She “bled green,” loyal to both the Forest Service and the people she worked with. She was a role model and mentor, ever aware of her legacy to the next generation of foresters.

Mary was known for her love of the outdoors, particularly the mountains, and she spent much of her life in Colorado. She was fiercely independent and lived life on her own terms with a contagious energy that lit up any room. Mary was a forester at the Saguache Ranger District in the Rio Grande National Forest retiring in 2019. She dedicated her career to preserving and caring for the natural beauty she cherished. Mary’s passion for her work was evident to all who knew her.

Mary entered the Forest Service at a time when there were few professional women in the agency. Never one to be dissuaded from a purpose, Mary leveraged her knowledge and skills in forestry

management to gain acceptance in the timber industry and cross traditional gender boundaries in the agency.

Mary was resolutely independent, witty, compassionate, and loyal. And she loved “The Valley.” She was an active member of the Saguache Kiwanis Club, and organized innumerable holiday celebrations, fundraisers, and community events. She served on the board of the Northern Saguache County Rural Fire District from 2004 to 2019. She was an ardent supporter of local artisans, of which The Valley has many. Mary also brought the Forest Service culture into the community. She participated in the local parades, once dressed as Smokey Bear. She also assisted in bringing the Smokey Bear hot air balloon and the R2 Pack String to the community.

Mary loved animals (of every kind). She adored her dogs, Picasso Moon and Chica, and her cats, Stella Blue and China Cat.

Mary will be dearly missed by all who knew her. She is survived by her brother, David (Barbara) Nelson; nephew, Michael Louis (MaryAnn) Nelson; niece, Amy Jean (Jeff); and great niece, Riley Jean.



James (Jim) Sosten Lujan

Jim Lujan was born June 6, 1933 and passed away on January 27, 2024. He was a purchasing agent in the contracting office of

the San Juan N.F. After his retirement from the San Juan he moved to Farmington, N.M.



Remembrances



John Murphy

John Murphy was born Jan 1, 1936. He passed away Sept 2, 2024. John is survived by his wife, Florence; children, Maureen, Shawn (Kathy), Shaila (Bruce Boutell) and Michael (Tanya), five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. John grew up in Canonchet, R.I., and after graduating Westerly High School he

attended the University of Maine to study forestry. He left school to join the U.S. Army in February 1958. Upon fulfilling his active-duty requirements with the army, he finished his forestry studies at the University of Rhode Island and graduated in 1963. He joined the U.S. Forest Service and was assigned to the Black Hills National Forest in Custer. It is here where he met his wife, Florence. After retirement John and Florence returned to his beloved Black Hills of South Dakota, where they lived happily for 30 years.



Gilbert (Gil) Walker

Gil Walker of Buffalo passed away on May 29, 2024 at the age of 99. Gilbert (Gil to his many friends) was born on May 16, 1925 in Mohler, Oregon to his parents Lester and Lillian Walker, with a

younger brother Fred to form their family.

He and his brother spent their early years in Mohler and Nehalem, Oregon, graduating from high school

there. His youth was accentuated by a service to his country in the Marine Corps, rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant by the conclusion of his honorable term.

In 1975 he became a part of the U.S. Forest Service, ending with his retirement in 1990. He was the GDA on the Buffalo R.D of the Bighorn N.F. for many years.

Throughout his life, Gil loved hunting and fishing, firing his last successful shot at an elk at age 90.

The Last Word

By Tom L.Thompson

Choose Wisely

Ah yes, it is fall and indeed we are amid another major presidential election. Over the last dozen or so years I have written several times in this space about the polarization that exists in our country. The foundation of our democratic republic is again being severely tested. Having the freedom to participate in fair and open determination of our governance is basic to our democracy.

What has become so worrisome is how information is used or misused in these processes. It has become a season and a time for crazy rhetoric, outlandish promises, name calling, disregard for truth, and behavior that often times would not be tolerated in a first-grade class. It has unfortunately become a time to question, seek verification, or just ignore most anything you hear or read.

The past six months have been a very difficult time for Kitty and I to pay much attention to politics but it is really hard to totally ignore the same old, same old if you turn on the TV, open up a Sunday paper, log in to your computer, or glance at your phone. I am not a big fan or user of Facebook or other social media platforms but appreciate the upside of them to connect and communicate. Unfortunately, as with any useful tool there are usually cautions, and downsides and dissemination of false information has become all too prevalent. It is easy to understand why it is used heavily to try to influence opinion, and truth most often takes a back seat either unknowingly or intentionally.

It seems to me that what most of us as Americans want is not all that different...my neighbors and friends like me want a comfortable life, a loving caring family, support when needed, meaningful relationships with others, ability to contribute to society in some way, and security. It seems to me that most of us understand and even appreciate that in our diverse and complex society we have huge differences of opinion, but we also come to appreciate and even respect our different views and leanings and understand how these differences strengthen who we are as a nation.

I trust and hope we will endure the next few months and hopefully be able to make the right choices based on truth and solid credible information. The choice is ours.



“Don’t believe everything you read on the Internet just because there’s a picture with a quote next to it.”

—Abraham Lincoln

