



THE DIXIE RANGER

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President's Corner

Recently I had an e-mail message that included "The Chief's Desk", a news release much like "The Friday News Letter" from the past. There were a number of items of interest to me, so I'm sure they would be of interest to you. Here are a few.

One article was quoted from the "Roanoke Times", dated March 16, 2007. Congressman Rich Brucker, a democrat from the 9th District of Virginia, wrote to the USDA Undersecretary Mark Rey regarding a proposal entitled "Schools Need Money More Than Forest Land". Mr. Rey proposed selling Forest Lands and giving the monies to education. The Congressman disagreed with the Undersecretary and could not find ANY personal nor public support for his proposal. I wonder if Undersecretary Rey has ever read the book "The lands Nobody Wanted" by William Shands of the Conservation Foundation? This is an excellent report on the work that was done by the Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps, on the public lands from the White Mountains National Forest in the North to the Talladega National Forest in the South. The report shows how the lands were restored from the over harvesting of the twenties and thirties. These lands are now a valuable resource for the public in a densely populated part of our country. What a resource for the future!

John Marker, a retiree from the Pacific Northwest, recently sent an interesting e-mail regarding the use of the Forest Service traditional title "U.S. Forest Service", rather than the "USDA Forest Service". It is once again legal and correct to use the traditional title. Chief Bosworth 'fixed' this minor problem before he left Washington; George Leonard verified this when he met with the new Chief recently.

There are many changes taking place in the agency these days as usual, some of which are positive and some negative, for the men and women on the ground. You all have seen and been through many changes through the years and remember how they affected you and your colleagues.

We have new leadership in the House and Senate with new committee chairmen taking the reins. It should be interesting to see what legislation, if any, comes out of the committee during these next two years. With the campaign for President already underway, I do not expect much to be done related to the Natural Resources until the year 2009 or 2010.

The Capital Campaign for the National Museum of Forest Service History in Missoula is moving along. It needs our financial help; every little bit helps.

I hope you all have a great summer; get out to visit old Forest Service friends. If you know of one of our retirees that is incapacitated, give him/her a call, drop him/her a note, or better, drop in for a visit, then pass the information on to others.

Jerry Contant, President



DECEMBER LUNCHEON/BOARD MEETING

Jim McConnell, Secretary/Historian

A SFSRA Board Meeting was held prior to the December luncheon. Present were: President, Gerald Coutant; President-Elect, Jean Paul Kruglewicz; Secretary/Historian, Jim McConnell; Director, Mike Sparks; Director, Bob James; and Ex-Officio, Ed Cook. This represents the full Board of Directors.

Gerald Coutant proposed that a change be made in the length of time Association officers serve. He suggested that the current one-year term be extended to two years. There was little discussion. Because we only meet twice a year, learning the duties generally takes a year and getting someone to serve is always hard. The motion passed unanimously. This is a change to the Association's Constitution. President Coutant announced it at the meeting, it will be published in the next issue of *The Dixie Ranger* and will be voted on at the next luncheon meeting in June 2007. This will meet the requirement for a change of the Constitution.

Amendment No. 11.

The Constitution now reads:

Article V - Officers

Section 2. A President-elect, a Secretary, and a Treasurer shall be elected annually and shall hold office for one year or until their successors are chosen. The President-elect shall serve as President the year following his election as President-elect.

When passed the new Amendment will read:

Section 2. A President-elect, a Secretary, and a Treasurer shall be elected biennially and shall hold office for two years or until their successors are chosen. The President-elect shall serve as President two years following his election as President-elect.

Note - when this Amendment passes, the current officers will serve one more year.

The Board also voted that the National Museum of Forest Service History in Missoula, MT, be given \$500 from the Association treasury and the Forest History Society in Durham, NC, be given \$250. Both motions were presented to those attending and were passed unanimously. The budget for 2007 was also presented and passed.

Following the Board meeting, President Coutant presided at the luncheon meeting. There was an excellent turnout of seventy-two members and guests. Sally Collins, Associate Chief, was the speaker and gave us much to think about. Among the topics she talked about were:

- Chief Dale Bosworth was on his way to Mississippi to award the National Forests of Mississippi the John McGuire Award for the heroic work they did after Hurricane Katrina.
- Six states have had the largest fires in their history during the past year. Many fires now go over 20,000 acres. How does one fight fires that large and frequent?
- The Emerald Ash Borer from China is out of control.
- Loss of open spaces means loss of many ecosystems.
- Un-managed recreation is a big problem.
- Climate changes are being picked up by Forest Service Research.
- Population growth is, of course, a problem.
- 42% of the Forest Service is, now, in fire suppression.

The tables were beautifully decorated for the Christmas occasion by Kathryn and John Allen and door prizes were provided by Shirley and John Lamb.

2007 LUNCHEON DATES TO REMEMBER - JUNE 7 AND DECEMBER 6 - MARK YOUR CALENDARS
★★ National Association of Forest Service Retirees President George Leonard to speak at June 7 Luncheon★★

RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FOREST SERVICE HISTORY DONATION *Letter dated February 28, 2007*

Dave Stack, Vice President of the Museum, writes: "I want to express the appreciation of the officers and directors of the National Museum of Forest Service History for the Southern Forest Service Retirees Association gift of \$500.00 on February 9, 2007 to support the programs of the National Museum of Forest Service History. Thank you and your members for your generous contribution....We hope that you will consider an additional donation in the very near future in support of our efforts to preserve the history of the U.S. Forest Service and its century of conservation leadership."

Oops.....This letter should have been included in this issue of *The Dixie Ranger*. We felt it was important so are adding it as an insert.

Editors

To: All Employees and Retirees

My Take on 41 years with the Forest Service. I have used this forum to give you “my take” on a variety of issues over the past several years. Today, I announced by intention to retire on Feb 2 after 41 years of service,, having been Chief for almost six of those years. So here’s “my take” on leaving the agency that has been such a big part of my life. In a letter to all employees when I first became Chief, I talked about our history and rich traditions but emphasized the need to look to the future.

I shared my view about what the important work of “caring for the land and serving the people” meant to me ... That our care for the land should continue to be multiple-use, with a focus on stewardship and sustainability of the land, the water and the communities we serve. I said that I felt that the best approach to meeting that stewardship objective would be to focus on what we leave on the land rather than what we take from it. I also speculated that through the use of stewardship contracts and other innovative management tools, we could have healthy ecosystems and continue to produce goods and services.

I have traveled all over the country doing this job, and I am in awe of the beauty of the land we manage. You have embraced the idea of the “Four Threats” and I have been gratified by your hard work in response to those threats. You truly are the protectors of our nation’s forests.

We have lived through traumatic events such as September 11 and Hurricane Katrina, and we responded to those events and many others as only the Forest Service can. We have grieved too often for those who lost their lives in support of our mission. I continue to be startled and pleased at the skill, talent and enthusiasm of our people. Your dedication to our mission, to the land, and to the American people amazes me. The hardest moments for a Chief are when we lose people. I have tried hard to make safety a big part of my work. My deepest hope is that the Forest Service truly develops a culture around safety. At the end of the day, I want everyone to go home.

This has been a time of great change for the Forest Service. You have struggled with me through the changes, and I can’t begin to tell you how much that has meant to me. I have felt tremendous support from Forest Service people, during both the good times and the bad times. I know that you will give the next Chief that same support. Like me, your new Chief will be awestruck and grateful for it.

Words can’t begin to describe how I feel today. Thank you for everything that you do. As I said in April 2001, it is important work. I am proud to have served with you. That’s my take.

Dale

USDA NEWS RELEASE
USDA ANNOUNCES ABIGAIL "GAIL" KIMBELL AS THE 16TH CHIEF OF THE FOREST SERVICE

Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth Announces his Retirement

Washington, January 12, 2007 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the selection of Abigail Kimbell as the 16th chief of the Forest Service. Kimbell succeeds Chief Dale Bosworth, who is retiring on Feb. 2 after 41 years with the Forest Service.

"Abigail Kimbell is a veteran of the Forest Service who began as a seasonal worker and has since filled an impressive series of field assignments," said Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns. "Gail brings a wealth of knowledge to her new position. She is well respected both within the agency and by our stakeholders. I'm confident she will do a terrific job as chief."

"I am grateful to Dale Bosworth for his 41 years of public service and especially for the tremendous leadership he provided during his six years as chief," Johanns continued. "I am struck by all that the Forest Service accomplished under his watch, from advancing the Healthy Forest Initiative to a four-fold increase in fuels treatment work. He also bolstered the agency's financial system, making it a source of pride government wide. I wish Dale all the best in retirement."

Kimbell currently serves as Regional Forester for the Northern Region in Missoula, Montana, which includes northern Idaho and North Dakota. As Forest Service Chief, Kimbell will oversee an organization of over 30,000 employees and a budget of just over \$4 billion. Before becoming regional forester, Kimbell served in the Washington Office as Associate Deputy Chief for the National Forest System, with responsibility for assisting in the development of the Healthy Forest Restoration.

FORMER CHIEFS - provided by Jim McConnell, *SFSRA Historian*

DIVISION OF FORESTRY (1881 - 1901) then, THE BUREAU OF FORESTRY (1901 - 1905)

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Franklin . Hough (note 1) | 1876 - 1883 |
| Nathaniel H. Egleston | 1883 - 1886 |
| Bernhard E. Fernow | 1886 - 1898 |
| Gifford Pinchot (note 2) | 1898 - 1905 |

FOREST SERVICE (1905 - present)

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Gifford Pinchot | 1905 - 1910 |
| Henry S. Graves | 1910 - 1920 |
| William B. Greeley | 1920 - 1928 |
| Robert Y. Stuart | 1928 - 1933 |
| Ferdinand A. Silcox | 1933 - 1939 |
| Earle H. Clapp (Acting) | 1939 - 1943 |
| Lyle F. Watts | 1943 - 1952 |
| Richard E. McArdle | 1952 - 1962 |
| Edward P. Cliff | 1962 - 1972 |
| John McGulre | 1972 - 1979 |
| R. Max Peterson | 1979 - 1987 |
| F. Dale Robertson | 1987 - 1993 |
| Jack Ward Thomas | 1993 - 1996 |
| Michael P. Dombeck | 1997 - 2001 |
| Dale Bosworth | 2001 - 2007 |
| Gail Kimbell | 2007 - Present |

Note 1 - Dr. Franklin B. Hough was originally given the title of "Forest Agent" in 1876. When the Division of Forestry was temporarily established in 1881, he was given the title of "Chief".

Note 2 - When Gifford Pinchot became Chief of the Division, he requested that his title be changed from "Chief" to "Forester", as there were many Chiefs in Washington, but only one Forester. The "Forester" title remained in effect until 1935 when the title of "Chief" was readapted.

★ ★ ★



Chuck Meyer

Tony Dixon

George Leonard

NF'S IN MISSISSIPPI RECEIVE JOHN MCGUIRE AWARD

by *Ralph Mumme*, R-8 Representative

On December 14, 2006, NAFSR President George Leonard traveled to Jackson Mississippi and awarded the prestigious John McGuire Award to the NF's in Mississippi for the Forests efforts following Hurricane Katrina. Region 8 Regional Forester Chuck Meyer, along with NAFSR SE Representative Ralph Mumme, assisted George Leonard in presenting the award to Forest Supervisor Tony Dixon. Chief Dale Bosworth was scheduled to participate; however, fog in DC cancelled his flight.

Approximately 200 Forest employees were present at the awards ceremony, along with the State Forester of Mississippi, numerous Congressional Staffers, industry representatives, and Forest Service retirees. In addition to the beautiful wooden plaque presented to the Forest, each of the employees received a paper certificate with a replica of the award including their individual names.

The John McGuire Award was presented to employees, both active and retired, on the NF's in Mississippi in recognition of the extraordinary and unprecedented accomplishments in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In spite of many individual personal hardships, the employees were able to initiate restoration of healthy forest and critical wildlife habitat while doing so in an expeditious, effective and safe manner.

Over 305 million board feet of damaged timber was recovered and 1400 miles of road were cleared and opened to public use. Extensive efforts were made to reduce hazardous fuels in the wildland/urban interface, 135 cavity inserts were installed for the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, and numerous miles of forest trails reopened to the public. More than a half million individuals were directly assisted or benefitted in the surrounding communities.

The John McGuire award was created by the National Association of Forest Service Retirees as a way of recognizing outstanding work of current Forest Service employees. We can be proud that this is the second time a unit in Region 8 has been so recognized in the brief history of the award.

NAFSR President George Leonard in his remarks stressed the "extraordinary efforts of all the employees, some in spite of numerous individual hardships, to bring the Forest back into productivity in the short span of 16 months". George pointed out that John McGuire would be proud of the employees and their truly "Can-do" attitude.

OUACHITA NATIONAL FOREST CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION PLANNED

March 7, 2007, Press release from Debbie Ubade of the ONF

The Ouachita National Forest (Arkansas/Oklahoma) will commemorate its Centennial in 2007 with a series of events taking place across the Forest. The oldest national forest in the South, the Ouachita (wa-shi-ta) shares this anniversary with some pretty distinctive friends. The Great State of Oklahoma, which is home to more than 350,000 acres of the Ouachita National Forest, also celebrates its Centennial in 2007. Additionally, Hot Springs National Park, a long standing partner with the Forest Service, will commemorate an incredible 175 years.

Ouachita NF Centennial plans include joining together with these partners and others at select events over the course of the year to showcase the natural, cultural, and historic assets that have been under Forest Service stewardship during a pivotal time in human history. More importantly, **the remembrances will honor people—retirees, employees, friends, partners and all members of the public.**

One key event will focus on celebrating with Ouachita National Forest employees and retirees. This All-Employee Day will be held on Thursday, **May 10, 2007**, and will provide an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the past, as well as discuss how the next generation will continue caring for the land and serving people. The Employee Day Celebration will be held at the Christian Motorcycle Association's Iron Mountain Facility, 4278 Hwy 71 South, Hatfield, AR 71945 (Hatfield is located approximately 10 miles south of Mena).

Following is tentative Employee Day Agenda:

| | | |
|------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 0930 | Welcome | Darrel Schwillig |
| 0935 | Retiree Recognition | |
| 0940 | Forest Supervisor's Remarks | Norman Wagoner |
| 0945 | Musical Entertainment | Fiddlin Foresters |
| | Fallen Firefighters Memorial | |
| 1100 | Fun and Games | |
| 1200 | Lunch | |
| 1330 | Musical Entertainment | The Blues Rangers |
| 1430 | Awards Presentations | Regional Forester |
| 1445 | Closing Remarks | |
| 1500 | Adjourn for a safe trip home | |

The Chief of the Forest Service has been invited; however, we have not received confirmation whether she will attend.

Students from Lakeside School District (Hot Springs) will be on site to collect oral and video recordings from employees and retirees who want to be a part of a historical documentary of the Forest.

(Jim Wenner adds: Lynn Young and the *Fiddlin' Foresters* will perform after the 9:30 welcome and will include a tribute to fallen foresters killed fighting forest fires. As you know, listening to the *Fiddlin Foresters* is reason enough to come to this event. After lunch on the site, The *Blues Rangers* from Mississippi will entertain us.)

There are several options for retirees who plan to attend Employee Day and will need overnight facilities.

- Queen Wilhelmina State Park (camp sites or hotel rooms) is located 13 miles west of Mena on the Talimena Drive. Additional information on rates/reservation requirements can be found at <http://www.queenwilhelmina.com/camping/>. The phone number for Lodge Reservations is 1-800-264-2477; Campsite Reservations: can be made by calling (479) 394-2863 or (479) 394-2864.

Camping atop Arkansas's second highest peak has its own rewards. Queen Wilhelmina's campground is a cloud-capped getaway wrapped in the cool mountain breezes of summer or the blaze of fall colors in autumn. It is a winter wonderland or the magic of spring. The park campground offers 35 "Class B" campsites with water and electricity, and five "Tent" sites with water hookups available at each site. In addition, the campground offers one "Walk-in" site, a special primitive site for tents. The campground includes a modern bathhouse with hot showers and a trailer dump station. Campers must register at the lodge before occupying a site. All sites are assigned. Campsites are available on a first-come basis or by reservation.

- Shadow Mountain RV Park is a reasonably-priced private facility just 6 miles south of Mena, which is very close to the Centennial meeting site. Reservations can be made at 479-394-6099. See also: <http://www.shadowmountaincampground.com/>

Shadow Mountain RV Park is located in the Ouachita Mountains just 6 miles South of Mena, Arkansas on Highway 71 South. The location places you near many of the outdoor activities that are available in the Ouachita National Forest, including ATV and Motorcycle Trails, Equestrian Trails, Mountain Biking and Hiking Trails. Shadow Mountain has 64 sites, of which most are pull through sites for easy access. Full Hookup sites include Water, Electricity (20 30 & 50 amp), and sewage.

Other lodging opportunities are listed at <http://www.mena-ark.com/lodging/>

We hope you can join us in celebrating "100 Years of Caring for the Land and Serving People." Information on the Centennial can be found at the forest web site www.aokforests.com. Please contact Debbie Ugbade at dugbade@fs.fed.us 501-321-5327 or Caroline Mitchell carolinemitchell@fs.fed.us 501-321-5318 to let us know if you'll be attending and the number in your party.

JUNE 2, 2007 - NATIONAL TRAILS DAY EVENT

David Samuel, USFS retiree and SRSFA member writes:

"In conjunction with the Ouachita National Forest's Centennial Celebration this year, I have volunteered to coordinate the National Trails Day event on June 2, 2007, at the Albert Pike Recreation Area, located six miles north of Langley, Arkansas, on State Hwy 369. There will be a number of running, hiking and mountain biking events. There is something for everyone. The hiking trail into the "Wild segment" of the Winding Stairs area on the Little Missouri River is considered one of the most scenic trails in Arkansas. At the opening ceremony we will not only be recognizing the Arkansas Trail Volunteer of the Year, but also the **oldest male and female Ouachita NF retirees participating**. We will also recognize the **Ouachita NF retiree that travels the longest distance to participate**. RV and tent camping is available in the Recreation Area. We hope anyone that has served on the Ouachita NF will return and join us in this celebration. Please help us put out the word. "

SRSFA member Jim Wenner adds: Even if you do not do one of the hikes or runs, you can cheer for those in the short runs and hikes and enjoy camping in the area -- an opportunity to sit around the campfire and swap "stories".

Details about AP are at http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/ouachita/maps/documents/RA-01AlbertPikeRecArea_009.pdf
Get there early and you can even have electric & water hookups. The campground is adjacent to the Little Missouri River and very popular for canoers. Sites are closer together than found in most NF campgrounds. There is a convenience store and public phone near the entrance to the campground.

Hikers should enjoy using the Albert Pike campground as a base camp to hike the Eagle Rock Loop Trail. The trail is the longest loop trail in Arkansas at 26.8 miles. The trail actually combines several trails and takes 2 to 3 days to hike. Hikers successfully completing the trail receive an attractive patch and are added to the Eagle Rock Loop Trail Honor Roll.

We can make this a delightful FS Retiree-Ouachita Centennial - National Trails Day "multi-tasking" spectacular! Are you interested? Anyone planning to attend either, or both, of these events let Jim Wenner know where you will be staying: e-mail jimwenner@cablelynx.com or phone: (501) 525-8284 and he will try to plan some time together other than the single day's activities.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- May 10** Ouachita Centennial - All-Employee Day - Hatfield, Arkansas
- June 2** Ouachita Centennial Celebration - National Trails Day Event - Albert Pike Recreation Area
- June 7** SFSRA Luncheon/Meeting - 11:30 at the Petite Auberge Restaurant, Toco Hills Shopping Center on North Druid Hills Rd, Atlanta GA
- Dec 6** SFSRA Christmas Luncheon/Meeting - 11:30 at the Petite Auberge Restaurant, Toco Hills Shopping Center on North Druid Hills Rd, Atlanta GA
- Sep 7 - 11 2009** Forest Service National Retirees Reunion in Missoula MT - hosted by the National Museum of Forest Service History - Details will be reported in future Dixie Rangers

RETIREE GET-TOGETHERS

Cobb County Georgia - Forest Service retirees meet the last Tuesday of the month at the Cracker Barrel Restaurant at I-75 & Chastain Road, Marietta, GA, at 9:a.m. All are welcome!

Northeast Atlanta - Forest Service retirees meet the last Tuesday of each month (except December) at Matthews Cafeteria in Tucker at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast. Spouses are welcome. The address is 2299 Main Street. The cafeteria is next to the railroad tracks. Main Street is in front of Tucker High School. If you get lost, just ask anyone - everybody in Tucker knows where Matthews Cafeteria is located.

Jefferson National Forest - Retirees get together at noon on the second Wednesday of **even** numbered months at the Roanoker Restaurant in Roanoke, VA. They have been meeting for the last 15 years. No dues are collected and only rarely are there programs or expressions of professional concerns. For information, contact Charles Blankenship at (540) 774-6272.

Ouachita National Forest - Retirees, spouses and friends meet the third Tuesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast at the Cracker Barrel Restaurant in the Cornerstone Shopping Center, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Let us know if you would like your group listed.

LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

DEAN McALISTER - Tennessee - As each copy of *The Dixie Ranger* arrives in my mailbox it brings with it a "bitter sweet" feeling. On the "sweet" or good side are the many newsy items about the employees I enjoyed working with during my 30+ years with Region 8. Now the sad feeling I get when the issue arrives is the "In Memoriam" column. Each issue brings news of someone I knew that has gone on before us.

A couple of issues ago brought news of the passing of a very dear friend, Clint Sykes. Clint and I first met and worked together on the Cherokee in the late 60's. In 1972 Clint transferred to Texas, a few months later I transferred to Texas. We both moved to Texas, let's just say, "they said to enhance our career with the FS, and it really did." After arriving from the mountains of Tennessee to the flat country of Texas, in August no less, Clint and I often reminisced about Tennessee. One day as we were wishing we were back in Cleveland, Clint said, "Dean, let's just hijack a bus and go back to Cleveland." That is how I remember Clint always joking and being a friend to everyone he met.

As I was writing this letter I heard a gospel song playing on television. Some of the lyrics of the song go this way: *"Soon we'll come to the end of life's journey and perhaps we'll never meet any more, Till we gather in heaven's bright city...As we struggle thru this world and its strife, There's another meeting place somewhere in heaven By the side of the river of life."* Words and thoughts such as these can help lessen the sadness as we lose many of our friends.

Here's my check to cover a couple more years. A big "THANK YOU" as always to our fine editors. It would be difficult to find such an excellent and informative retirement newsletter as *The Dixie Ranger*. Thanks for your time and devotion to this organization. Also, many thanks to the other Officers and Directors of the SFSRA.

STEVE McCORQUODALE - Louisiana - It's dues time. We are so thankful for *The Dixie Ranger* and the Southern Forest Retirees Association. Helga and I wouldn't trade anything for our 31-year trek of the Southern Region. Beginning with the Southeastern Forest Experimental Station, then seven ranger districts, two SO's, the RO, and retiring in '94. We still take every opportunity to camp and hike in the National Forests whose beauty can't be matched. *The Dixie Ranger* is a primary way we keep up with our many Forest Service friends.

This past April we were able to get together with the NC Pisgah RD retirees that we worked with in the late 60's. Ray Fisher, retired summer recreation technician and Horace Jarrett, retired forester who live in the Brevard area contacted all the local retirees (approx. 15) and we met at the Fish Camp restaurant in Pisgah Forest. Dan Hile who was our ranger, drove up from Florida, Carl Wilhelm who was the resource forester, and myself, the district TMA, came up from Louisiana. Also, Roy Moore who was the forest investigator and now lives in the Atlanta area and Harold Patterson who was one of the NC state area game managers were able to attend. We had a great time reminiscing about the old times. Diane Bolt, who is the Pisgah district resource forester took the time to show us their beautiful office and visitor center. Things have really changed! When we were there the office was only four small rooms downstairs and two sloped, bump-your-head rooms upstairs. That afternoon some of us took a tour of the Cradle of Forestry that was just getting off the ground when we were there. It's a showplace. If you visit the Cradle and watch the movie you will see Ranger Dan, Carl, and a bunch of the district folks star in the movie that was made on location around '68. For a reality check, Helga and I walked up to the site where we lived in the old ranger dwelling. The house was later removed to expand the Davidson River campground. The site looked the same, except the trees growing where the foundation was are now 40 ft tall. Also along the trail by the house site is a memorial stone/plaque for long-time ranger Ted Sealy whom many of you may remember. We have fond memories of this place in the forest where our daughter was born and our son tramped in the woods as a toddler, as well as of the many fine folks we were privileged to know.

If any of our Forest Service friends ever pass this way in SW Louisiana please stop by. We can treat you to catfish from the pond and seafood gumbo or even let you work at the sawmill. Again, thanks to *The Dixie Ranger* and keep up the good work.

GEORGE BLOMSTROM - Virginia - It is such a pleasure receiving the SFSRA's *Dixie Ranger*. The stories are great, maybe somewhat exaggerated over time, anyway they are good reading. I'd like to mention some of my friends/co-workers, but there are so many I'd probably omit some as there are many during my time in USFS from 1958 to 1989. Anyway, here are my dues again. God Bless, keep up the good work.

STAN ADAMS - North Carolina - Thanks for being such good editors of *The Dixie Ranger*. No matter how far apart we may be, *The Dixie Ranger* is the piece that keeps us all together.

I officially retired on May 1st after 34 years with the Forest Service and 15 years with the State of North Carolina. Retirement is requiring quite an adjustment - I must be getting better at it, because I'm becoming more worthless everyday. I'm most grateful for all the people with whom I've had a chance to work over the years. It has been a challenging career and we've all faced some tough times and happy times together. Most importantly, we were able to get a lot of important work done. My work as State Forester for the last 15 years has been a real joy. When I began 15 years ago, I found an organization that was very much like the Forest Service during my early years. Holding on to those elements and moving forward in a sea of change was most challenging. In spite of all the retirements and outside pressures we were able to pull it off. The result, a strong and well trained organization that is willing to work nights, weekends and holidays. This year we made more people available to fight fire in the West and across the South than ever before. They did their jobs well and in the tradition we all know and understand. Here is a check for my dues for the next three years. Our goal for '07 is to make one of the luncheons at the Petite Auberge.

JIM MacNAUGHTON - Virginia - Greetings from Virginia! I see from my mailing label that dues time has arrived. Here's \$30 to take us through the final single digit years in this century! Seems like only yesterday that 2000 seemed far off and now we're paying dues until 2010.

Unless the George Washington & Jefferson National Forest (i.e., The I-81 National Forest) is ordered to merge with the Shenandoah National Park, I think we've reached the resting point in the District consolidation game. Now after a few years, we can divide the areas back into more manageable sizes. Some of the things we do in the name of progress really make you wonder.

Life here in the Valley is good, but the secret has reached the folks that are retiring in other parts of the country and our population has taken off big time. Thanks for all your hard work to keep the *Dixie Ranger* very meaningful.

DOUG SHENKYR - Maryland - Just noticed I had better catch up. I'm optimistic so am sending \$20 for two years. We sold our summer place in Minnesota, so you can send the summer issue to our Maryland address. We hated to part with the place but, after over 20 years, it was becoming somewhat a burden, with the long trip back and forth. I always look forward to the new issue.

JOHN CHAFFIN - Arizona - Sorry I'm late with the dues. Thanks to all of you involved in keeping the Association active and viable. Dave and you do a particularly good job with the *Dixie Ranger*, an excellent publication always full of things that jog an old guy's memory of R-8.

MARGERY WHITLOCK - Alabama - **Buddy** has been in NHC Healthcare in Anniston since March 2006. He has had Parkinson's for over 14 years and until then was doing fairly well, until dementia was added and I was unable to keep him at home anymore. He always loved the Forest Service and enjoys hearing about friends he remembers from all our moves. I look forward to reading each issue to him. His long-term memory is still good.

BILL WILLIAMS - Louisiana - Some day when I'm not too lazy, I will write about some interesting times on the Francis Marion and also the Ouachita. The best one of the Francis Marion had to do with a dead mule.

From the Editors: In our last issue of the newsletter, Jim Wenner suggested that we consider a new Dixie Ranger logo which would better represent the native trees of R-8. There was absolutely no response other than a conversation we had with a member at the last luncheon. As a result of this conversation, the member sent us a logo which used a very generic "stick" tree inside a circle around which SOUTHERN FOREST SERVICE RETIREE ASSOCIATION is written. Apparently the logo was created by Harry Rossoll and was used for the 1990 SFSRA Membership Directory. The issue is still open. Any ideas are welcome.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mary Jane Close (Frank)
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Roger Dennington new e-mail: rogerdennington@bellsouth.net

Jack Edwards new address: 285 Joann Circle
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Edmond Swensen change Dunwoody to Atlanta
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Jimmy Walker new address: 395 Tennyson Knoll
Grayson, GA 30017

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William "Bill" Williams new e-mail: bokcowboy@aol.com

IN MEMORIAM

Meta "Babs" Smith, wife of Arthur D. Smith, Jr, died on October 17, 2005. She was born June 21, 1915. Her daughter notified us of her death. Meta writes that her father's career with the Forest Service began on the Francis Marion NF in 1934, and he was working in the Regional Office in Atlanta when he retired in 1970. Most of his career was in various assignments in Fire Management. She writes that he enjoyed a nice 95th birthday celebration at his favorite Italian restaurant last July.

Kevin Ellis Cathey, son of John and Bernice Cathey, died on February 18, 2007, after a sudden unexpected illness. Kevin was 33. He was a graduate of Lander University in Greenwood South Carolina where he earned a Bachelors Degree in Business Management and was a member of Phi Kappa Fraternity. Kevin was a faithful Deacon and member of Saluda River Baptist Church where he was active in youth ministry. In addition to his parents, Kevin is survived by his wife Kelly Blackwell Cathey; daughter Katelyn; son Jacob; sisters Janna and Pennie; and his grandmother Kate Cathey. His father, "Big John" Cathey served in Georgia, Arkansas, and Tennessee. He retired as District Ranger of the Long Cane District on the Sumpter NF in South Carolina.

Clark Sell, age 74 of Sugar Hill, GA, died on December 3, 2006. Clark was born in Kutztown, PA, and was a graduate of Kutztown High School, a member of the 1950 Class 1-A State High School Basketball team and an Eagle Scout. Clark graduated from Penn State University and went to work on the Chattahoochee NF. He joined the US Air Force and became an F86 Fighter Pilot. After returning to the Forest Service he received a scholarship from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard where he received his MBA. Clark worked for the Forest Service for 32 years; he retired in 1985 as the Director of Management Systems for the Southern Region and was a member of the Society of American Foresters for 52 years. Clark is survived by Shirley, his wife of 50 years; daughter Vicky Sell of Chatsworth, GA; son Allyn and wife Deborah of Dacula, GA; daughter Tracy and husband Jim Sands of Sugar Hill, GA; sisters Joyce Rentscheler of Danvers, PA, and Margaret Epp of Andrews, NC.

Elbert Conway Wilkey, 93, of Candler, NC, passed away on September 21, 2006, at Pisgah Manor Health care Facility after a period of declining health. He was born in Graham County, NC, on January 25, 1913. Mr. Wilkey started his Forest Service career in the Civilian Conservation Corp Program in Robbinsville, NC, where he helped build the Haeo Fire Tower in what is now the Joyce Kilmer-Slick Rock Wilderness Area. Elbert continued working in Robbinsville until August of 1957 when he transferred to the Supervisor's office in Asheville as an Engineering Technician. He retired from the National Forests in North Carolina in 1974 after 37 years of service. He continued doing land surveying work after his retirement. He had a great love for trains working, as a young man, with his father on the railroad in the Snowbird Community of Graham County. He helped build the last logging railroad in Western North Carolina, and just before his retirement from the Forest Service, he built the trestle for the steam engine on display at the Cradle of Forestry in the Pink Beds at Pisgah Forest, NC. Surviving are his wife of 74 years, Ola Moody Wilkey; daughter, Martha Joan Cook and husband Frank "Bud" of Asheville, NC; son, Rick C. Wilkey and wife Connie of Castle Rock, CO; brother Blake Wilkey and wife Helen Louise of Robbinsville, NC.

Christine "Tina" Quillian Thompson, 92, of Marietta GA, died November 23, 2006, at Hospice Atlanta. She was a native of Atlanta, a graduate of Girls High School, attended Shorter College, Rome GA, and graduated from Draughtons Business College in Atlanta. She worked as a personnel specialist for the Federal government for 16 years and with the US Forest Service for 15 years in the Regional Office in Atlanta. She retired from the Forest Service in 1971 and then worked for 7 years in the floral department of Ogletree's Grocery Stores. Among her many affiliations, she was a member of the Southern Forest Service Retirees Association and the National Museum of Forest Service History. Christine was predeceased by her husband, W. Maurice Thompson and her sister, Frances Wilkerson.

Arthur "Dick" Woody died in his sleep at home in Suches, GA, on February 27, 2007. Dick graduated with a degree in Forest Management from the University of Georgia. His career spanned 34 years, beginning in 1948 when he held seasonal positions as timber marker, engineering aid and forestry aid on the Chattahoochee NF in GA. He joined the US Navy in 1951 and worked in Washington, DC until 1953 when he received his first professional appointment with the Forest Service in Gloster, MS. He was Assistant District Ranger on the Chickasawhay Ranger District of the Desoto National Forest at Laurel, MS, followed by his appointment as District Ranger on the Bienville District of the Bienville NF. He was then assigned as Director of Timber Management on the Ouachita NF in AR. Subsequently, he worked on the National Forests in

Florida and in the Regional Office in Atlanta, GA. He was then assigned to the Umpqua National Forest in Roseburg, OR, as Deputy Forest Supervisor. He was Forest Supervisor of the National Forests in Alabama from 1971 until he retired in 1981. Dick is predeceased by his wife Eileen and survived by sons Edward and Bill.

Henry Hammond died in June of 2006. No more information was available at press time.

Dave Urbston 1936 - 2007 - Dr. Urbston, who had a degree in forestry and a PhD in wildlife biology from Virginia Tech, joined the USFS at the Savannah River Plant in 1976. There he brought the deer herd under control while sidestepping radiation along the way. Dr. Urbston worked on the Ouachita National Forest where he helped establish wildlife biologist positions on each of the twelve ranger districts. John Orr, retired Supervisor on the Ouachita NF called him "the premier deer biologist in Region 8". Robert Daley, retired Administrative Officer on the Ouachita NF remembers that when Dr. Urbston came to the Ouachita, "I sensed some fear and trepidation about his building a vibrant wildlife program that might interfere with timber management. However, that was never the case, Dr. Urbston knew from the start that the success of the wildlife program should be in harmony with timber. After all, he also had a degree in forestry. The result of his effort was an outstanding wildlife program." He was respected both for his humor and his professionalism. Dr. Urbston left the Forest Service in 1987 to join the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission where his reputation as a deer management specialist spread across the nation.

Sedgwick H. Watson, 91, of Hot Springs, Arkansas died February 27, 2007. He was a technician on the Warm Springs District of the George Washington NF. Sedg was a Navy Veteran of World War II. He retired from the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the White River National Wildlife Refuge in Arkansas.

Jim Winner writes: This is of interest to R-7 folks, particularly from the George Washington National Forest. If you remember Andy Anderson as Supervisor, Pete Hanlon Timber Staff and Jack Hicks Ranger of the Warm Springs District, you will remember Sedge Watson. He was technician on the Warm Springs District, and a good friend of Leon Powell, technician on the adjacent James River District. We are talking about 1956 and earlier.

Sedge "lived off the land." When Doris and I visited for dinner, we had roast venison with blackberry cobbler for desert. His freezer was full of native fish, wildlife and fruit. (How much was collected on official time, no one could prove.)

Warm Springs was not the warmest place in Virginia, being at 3800 feet elevation. And Sedge's activities may have contributed to arthritis. Add to this the R-7 policy that ranger districts should have only professional foresters, and existing technicians could stay until retirement, but could not be promoted. That could drive any sane person to leave.

And leave he did, transferring to Tennessee with (oh, my memory fails me) either TVA or the Fish and Wildlife Service. I lost contact with him, but I'm sure his freezer was full of the fruits of the land. Later, he moved to the White River National Wildlife Refuge in Arkansas where he finished his Federal career (at a much higher grade than the Forest Service would have provided).

He retired to Hot Springs, AR, where I again knew him. He lived on Lake Hamilton and fished daily. Pheasants were brought from Kansas, Elk and Antelope from Montana. He lived a good retirement. Once he told me he just returned from Africa where he shot an elephant, a lion, a zebra and other miscellaneous wildlife. Then he admitted he didn't even bring a rifle, but shot them all with his camera! Oh well, no elephant stew.

When age caught up with him, he moved to West Shores, an independent living facility in Hot Springs. He was still active though and would bring fish for the cook to prepare. I visited with him periodically. He lived a good life, was a man I admired, a person who taught me about the goodness of life.

Request from JIM McConnell, SFSRA Historian:

As the SFSRA Secretary/Historian I try to keep up with the names of our members when they pass on. It's called the necrology. Most of the names I get from the information you send to the DR, others from old friends, newspapers and forestry journals. Paul Russell kept the list using a typewriter for many years. Probably it was Jeannette that did it but, together, we have a list of around 630 names which dates back to the early 70's. I have moved them all over to the computer and can access them by year or name. The Jollys and I have to depend upon all of you to let us know when someone dies. They put the names and what information you send in the DR, and I add the names to the SFSRA list of obituaries. This gives more information than does a bare-facts list of names. If you folks out on the Forests would clip the obituaries out of the newspaper and send them to me at the same time you let the Jollys know, probably by e-mail, I would appreciate it. Those that follow us will know how good we really were. I will put them in the binder in archival-type sleeves, and they will be preserved for a long time. Thanks. My address: Jim McConnell, 3699 Wentworth Lane, Lilburn, GA 30047.

2006 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

| Proposed Budget | | Actual |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| Printing | \$ 1950.00 | \$ 1372.05 |
| Postage | 600.00 | 557.63 |
| Door Prizes | 223.00 | 175.00 |
| Oral Histories | 250.00 | 82.77 |
| Miscellaneous | <u>300.00</u> | <u>236.33</u> |
| Total | \$ 3323.00 | \$ 2423.78 |
| Miscellaneous expenses: National FS Museum donation | | \$ 100.00 |
| Guest speaker lunches and newsletter supplies | | \$ 136.33 |
| Carryover from 2005 | | \$ 6446.64 |
| Income for 2006 (dues & luncheon) | | 4181.00 |
| Interest earned | | <u>115.53</u> |
| | Total | \$10739.17 |
| Less Expenses | | <u>2423.78</u> |
| | | \$ 8315.39 |
| Less Luncheon Costs | | <u>1557.82</u> |
| BALANCE FORWARD | | \$ 6757.57 |

An audit of the SFSRA financial records for 2005 and 2006 was completed by Ed Cook in February 2007. Ed reports, "In my opinion, the 2006 Financial Statement for SFSRA accurately and fairly represents the condition of the organization as of December 31, 2006."

A LASTING LEGACY - NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FOREST SERVICE HISTORY

"The National Museum of Forest Service History provides a unique opportunity for all of us to be a part of a continuing legacy of public service dedicated to the scientific management of natural resources that will be increasingly important in the future." This is a quote from Max Peterson's letter which was published in the last newsletter.

The Museum's goals are to tell the Forest Service history beginning with Gifford Pinchot's original conservation objectives through current Forest Service policies. Emphasis will be placed on the innovations and early day management challenges, as well as the important roles played by others such as local and state officials, permittees, state and private foresters, resource users, engineers, fire management personnel, summer and winter recreationists, and wilderness managers.

The Capital Campaign to fund this endeavor is on-going and we, as retirees, are encouraged to take the opportunity to share in this legacy. The Museum offers Forest Service History Memorials to honor the living or to memorialize deceased persons who worked for or were a cooperator/partner for the Forest Service. This is an excellent way to memorialize our friends and family who were an important part of the history of the Forest Service. For a \$100 donation the Museum staff will format a biography and a photo submitted and will maintain a record in the Forest Service History Memorial Book and in the web site. A Memorial Grove of trees at the Museum has also been planted in honor and memory of the people listed in the Forest Service History Memorial. Whatever the size of your contribution, it is important and appreciated.

For more information, contact the Museum at (406) 541-6374 or nationalforest@montana.com or www.nmfs-history.net

Donations can be mailed to: National Museum of Forest Service History
Post Office Box 2772
Missoula, MT 59806-2772

Log onto the web site at www.foresthistory.org for "A visual journey through 100 years of land and resource management."

Words of wisdom from Will Rogers (via the Internet):

Never slap a man who's chewing tobacco.

Never kick a cow chip on a hot day.

There are 2 theories for arguing with a woman...neither works.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him. The moral: When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.

TO "FIT A FAR"

by *Mike Sparks*

Now where I grew up in Arkansas, the Ozark Mountain folks didn't "fight a fire"...they would "fit a far". So I will tell you this story about fire fightin' or better yet...fittin' a far in the West.

Life was good in East Texas in 1974. I was the Timber Management Assistant on the Tenaha Ranger District of the Sabine National Forest. My Ranger was Kenneth Crawford who ran a "tight ship". When we found time for an occasional break from our work of trying to meet our objectives of Forest Management, we would be fishing for the elusive largemouth bass in Lake Toledo Bend Reservoir. What a wonderful place that was.

Now some of you may recall that the year 1973 had been a rather troublesome year in the realm of firefighting in the West. The interagency fire center had been unable to find sufficient personnel to control the fires so in the following year, 1974, they were not going to be caught short. That summer, when things started heating up in the West, the call went out for volunteers. Many, many personnel across the country said, "I'll go" when the call went out and that was true on the Tenaha RD also.

Now this was the first year, as I recall, when we had to pass a physical, a step test, in order to go out West and fight the big fires. So when we took our "test", it was rather easy to pass because most of the FS personnel were in fairly good physical shape and used to working hard in the Forest. There were a few exceptions who, although not in the best shape, still passed the physical test. Such was the case with Joe, our motor patrol operator. Joe had led a fairly simple life, living in East Texas and never traveling far from home. I don't know Joe's age but, at the time, he was probably near 50 years and a bit overweight. I'll get into the weight thing in a little more detail as this story evolves.

So, we loaded up in a van and traveled to Shreveport, LA, where we boarded the big Continental jet. Now get this picture...some of these folks, including Joe had never flown before. What a big adventure for them. As we took off, one of the younger guys, Sammy, seemed a bit apprehensive, even to the point of "white knuckles" gripping the armrests. He would not even look out the window but kept his gaze straight ahead toward the bulkhead. Now we had flown about a half hour when we approached Little Rock, Arkansas, to pick up more firefighters. As we descended and made our approach to the runway, the jet engines slowed, and those of us who had experienced landings before knew to expect the "thump" when the wheels touched down on the tarmac. Sammy had not experienced this "bump" so when it came, Sammy let out a scream, "We're crashing" and tried to get out of his seat but the lap belt restrained him. We all had a good laugh at Sammy's expense as we taxied to the terminal.

Later, after we had eaten a good supper, we boarded the plane again which was now completely full of firefighters and our gear. Our destination was Boise, ID. About 2 a.m. our plane landed in Denver to refuel. Most of us were asleep in the cabin. After an hour or so, we taxied to the end of the runway for takeoff, but the Captain came on the loudspeaker and stated that we had to return to the terminal because "we had taken on too much fuel and were too heavy for takeoff". We later found out that was a ruse to cover the real reason for our delay.

When we arrived at the terminal gate, two of the biggest, ugliest, meanest looking security guards I had ever seen came on board. They went to a firefighter seated across from me and bodily lifted him out of his seat. When I later looked out the window to the terminal, his legs were dangling as they had him fully suspended, carrying him into the office. By now, everyone in the cabin was awake, wondering what had caused this to happen. Was our co-worker a crook, a bank robber, a serial killer???

After an hour or so, our crew boss went into the terminal to find out what had happened. Now you may remember that in the early 70's, there was a lot of news on TV about "airplane high jacking". The terminal halls were lined with pictures stating that "High Jacking is not a joking matter".

Well, it seems that our friend had handed the stewardess a note which read something like this..."I don't have a bomb, a knife or any type of weapon but I sure would like to go to Cuba". That was enough so that when the pilot was made aware of it, he stopped the plane and radioed the control tower who sent the guards. Our friend was later released but he was somewhat subdued for the rest of our adventure.

We arrived in Boise and found out that the delay had cost us dearly. The fire we were supposed to be working on was now fully manned, and we were sent to the barracks at the Fire Center to await another assignment.

Now the barracks were constructed military style as was everything else, including the cafeteria. The food was plenty but it was heavily salted and was greasy. I'll elaborate on that a little more as we go on.

Suffice it to say, we stayed in the barracks for a week or more...it seemed like an eternity. Seems that the Interagency Fire Center had overmanned the fire season based on their fear from the previous year's problems. So there we sat, along with hundreds of other potential firefighters, earning our 8 hours a day with no overtime or hazard duty pay. When would it end? The answer to that came about a week later when we were scheduled to return home in disappointment but, at the last minute, our plane was diverted to New Mexico where a lightning fire had started and we had been assigned to work on it. As we started our descent, we could see the fire burning in the distant mountains, glowing in the darkness like the red eyes of some unearthly beast.

In the wee hours of the morning, we landed, unloaded our gear and promptly loaded it onto a school bus heading for the fire. Our excitement soon turned to fear as the bus began steadily climbing along a narrow logging road. As the bus speeded onward, we could see that the road had been cut from solid rock because when the bus turned one way, the lights shined onto the rock wall. When the bus turned the other way, the lights shined onto nothingness, indicating a void and an uncertainty as to how far the bottom was below us. Now the bus driver was going exceedingly fast. Our crew boss yelled for him to slow down. No response from the driver. Again our crew boss spoke...a little louder this time...the bus driver responded..."No comprehende English, Senor". We knew we were in trouble. It got deathly quiet in the bus, and I think every person on board, with no exception, was praying silently for safe passage.

We finally arrived at the fire camp...a well run organization. For two days, we worked on the fire...it was a small fire by Western standards...probably less than 100 acres and caused by lightning. Our work was dirty mop-up because the fire line was holding and the fire wasn't going anywhere.

At night, the temperature dropped in that mountain pasture, where we camped. We slept in paper sleeping bags...yes...they were made of paper but exceedingly warm. The only thing we feared was the fact that there were cattle grazing nearby. We had seen the cows and the one lone bull...a Brahman bull...one of the biggest I had ever seen. He must have weighed close to a ton and had a bell around his neck. As we went to sleep, we listened for the tinkling of that bell and if it got louder, that meant the behemoth was coming close to us, so we stayed awake in our bags in apprehension of being stepped on by that creature. But our fears were ungrounded and nobody had an encounter with the bull.

Now the real excitement began on the third day. We had walked down the mountainside to the valley where the fire was burning. It was a steep descent, taking about an hour. We arrived on the fire line and began working to extinguish hot spots such as burning logs or other organic debris which had to be declared "dead out" before we could call the fire controlled.

It was a rather hot day so about mid-morning, I noticed our friend Joe was not doing well. He was sitting on the ground, complaining of discomfort. He was nauseated and lost his breakfast. His face was deep red and he complained of chest discomfort and pains in his left shoulder and arm and as he put it... "the miseries". We radioed the fire boss who told us to keep him immobile and he would send a rescue crew down to us. We tried to console Joe but he was convinced he was going to die right there from a heart attack in some God-forsaken place of which he had never heard.

After an hour or so, the rescue crew arrived. Now we all thought there would be a large crew of people...not so, the crew consisted of two men and a litter basket along with ropes and pulleys.

They strapped Joe into that basket and the crew boss appointed eight of us to go with them back up the mountain and carry Joe. We worked four on and four off and had to change about every 10 minutes because as I mentioned at the start, Joe was a bit overweight...no...he was a LOT overweight.

At times, Joe was hollering at the top of his lungs to let him walk because he would be dangling at the end of the rope while we pulled him up a virtually vertical embankment. It's a wonder he didn't leave us right there from being frightened to death.

We had never worked so hard in our lives, but we were convinced that Joe would die if we did not get him to the fire camp and a waiting ambulance. Finally, after 2 hours or more, we set Joe down at campsite and all breathed a sigh of relief because Joe was still with us. Joe was looking forward to a nice ambulance ride but that wasn't gonna happen. They strapped Joe's litter basket onto the strut of a waiting helicopter and when we last saw him he was screaming to let me off of this thing". Now keep in mind that Joe had very seldom traveled outside of Shelby County, Texas, in his entire life. What a tale he would have to tell his grandchildren if he made it home safely.

Three more days dragged by and we heard that Joe was doing well in the hospital. Then one day, it rained on the fire. We got an opportunity to travel that same logging road during daylight. I wish we hadn't. It must have been half a mile straight down so we were all relieved to reach the valley floor safely. Afterwards, we traveled into town to clean up at the local national guard armory in the small community. A shower, clean clothes and a cot never felt so good after a week of sleeping on the ground and wearing the same dirty, smelly clothing.

Well, it just so happened that the hospital was only a couple of blocks from the armory so after supper, we went to see Joe. We expected to find him in intensive care with hoses, tubes and wires attached, but that was not the case.

As we walked into his room, he was sitting up in bed, reading a book, watching TV and eating some really good looking food. Our first question was "Joe, how are you feeling?". His response was, "Hey, boys. I'm doin' just great". He explained that when he arrived at the emergency room, they did all sorts of tests and later, a nurse handed him a big glass of this "chocolatey lookin' stuff". Within an hour, he got relief and his discomfort was gone. As he explained.. "Heh, Heh...I was just stopped up!" We could have killed him then and there. It seems that his digestive system was not used to the greasy, bland food of a military style cafeteria and so he had a problem. Or more appropriately, the rest of us had a problem. He was sent home on a plane the next day. I will never forget the physical torture of carrying Joe up that mountain and the frustration I felt when we discovered his problem could have been solved with a bit of Ex Lax, but I will also never forget the relief and joy I felt when I knew my friend was going home alive and well.

Needless to say, Joe got a lot of teasing when we all arrived home and guess what...Joe didn't volunteer for Western firefighting the next year. As for me, I never volunteered again either for Western fire detail, but shall never forget the wonderful memories of that adventure back in 1974.

THE BULL THAT ALMOST GOT US

by *John Archer*

This event happened some time in 1962 on the Somerset District of the Cumberland National Forest. Everett Towle was District Ranger and I was Assistant District Ranger. My duties covered about everything but timber management.

We had hired a bunch of people under the accelerated public works program to do forest work. We had been putting in wildlife openings that would serve as helispots in the Mt. Victory part of the district. We had several completed, and Everett and I thought we should take a look at them from the air and see if they were large enough to land a helicopter for fire control. The helicopter was based at Stearns so we borrowed it for a day to check out our work. Helicopter safety wasn't what it is today. It was sort of like you climb in and go in what ever clothes you might have on. I am not sure what model it was but it had only the front seat where the pilot and two passengers sat. It had an internal combustion engine.

The ship met us at the Somerset Airport and Everett and I climbed aboard. We then headed for Mt. Victory following a power line cross country at about 500 feet. We were a ways out, but not to the forest yet, when the engine coughed. I looked at the pilot and said, "What's that?". He replied, "Oh, probably a little water in the gas, no problem". I settled back down for about 30 seconds when the engine coughed again, then it spewed, then it quit. The pilot took a quick look at the situation and banked left as we started for the ground. There was a little back bone ridge under the power line. That ridge couldn't have been thirty feet wide, then there was a pasture going up hill from the power line. There were two cows in the only place where we could land if we didn't hit the power line. I don't know how we made it, except the pilot did a good job. I don't know what happened to the cows for they were no where to be seen. We were sitting there with the engine coughing and spewing and the rotor going around, looking through the front of the bubble.

All of a sudden this mad bull appeared from over the ridge and headed for us at top speed. I thought, "Oh, no, we survive the helicopter now this bull is going to smash us to a pulp. Well, he stopped just short of the end of the rotor blade, that was still going around. He began to paw the ground and do menacing things that mad bulls do. Then, thank goodness, he turned around and trotted back over the ridge and out of sight. Now the problem was, where were we and how were we going to get out of here. We tried the radio we had brought with us but couldn't get the office. Repeaters weren't around in those days and you had to have elevation to do any good with a radio or the towers had to be up so the tower man could relay your message.

We got out of the ship and the pilot started fooling around with the engine. I'll tell you, I wasn't about to get back in that thing. Everett got out his camera and took a picture of me standing in front of the helicopter. I told him this might be the last time you see me around one of these things. We spotted a man looking over the ridge across the pasture. He wasn't moving our way, just standing there. Everett and I headed his way and finally caught up with him. We went to his house and called the office and had a truck come and get us. Also the pilot called for a mechanic to work on the helicopter. We didn't fly in that helicopter any more that year. The pilot didn't get up out of bed one morning about two weeks later and had to be replaced. I'm sure glad he did good on the day that the bull almost got us.

★ ★ ★

A group of Americans were traveling by tour bus through Holland. As they stopped at a cheese farm, a young guide led them through the process of cheese making, explaining that goat's milk was used. She showed the group a lively hillside where many goats were grazing. "These," she exclaimed "are the older goats put out to pasture when they no longer produce." The guide then asked, "What do you do in America with your old goats?" A spry old gentleman answered, "They send us on bus tours!"

A MODERN DAY FOREST SERVICE PARABLE

The Old Forest Service and the Modern Forest Service decided to have a canoe race on the Missouri River. Both teams practiced long and hard to reach their peak performance before the race. On the big day, the Old Forest Service won by a mile. The Modern Forest Service, very discouraged and depressed, decided to investigate the reason for the crushing defeat. A management team made up of senior management was formed to investigate and recommend appropriate action.

Their conclusion was the Old Forest Service had 8 people rowing and 1 person steering, while the Modern Forest Service team had 8 people steering and 1 person rowing. Feeling a deeper study was in order, Modern Forest Service management hired a consulting company and paid them a large amount of money for a second opinion. They also implemented a new performance system that would make the 1 person rowing the boat more professional and accountable. It was called the "IFPM Rowing Team Program", with meetings, classes and deadlines for the rower and a requirement to take 15 more courses on AgLearn. There was discussion of getting new paddles, canoes and other equipment, extra vacation days for practices and bonuses, but it never occurred to anyone to add additional rowers.

The next year the Old Forest Service won by two miles. Humiliated, the Modern Forest Service management abandoned the National Rowing Plan, laid off the rower not meeting the deadline, halted development of a new canoe, sold the paddles, and canceled all capital investments for new equipment. The money saved was distributed to the Albuquerque Service Center as bonuses and the next year's racing team was outsourced to private contractors.

Via the internet - Author Unknown

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Please notify us of any address, phone or e-mail changes. (9-digit zip codes get your Dixie Ranger to you more quickly.)

SFSRA
128 Wind Trace
Alexander City, AL 35010-8772

I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

Will Rogers

LOOKING BACK - PART II

by *Jim McConnell*

I have been going through old Dixie Rangers trying to glean from them items that may still be interesting to us. Those old codgers sure stayed busy and don't we do the same.

From the August 1972 issue, I find that a group of 33 retirees made a bus trip from Atlanta to Franklin, NC, and then on to Brevard and the Pisgah Ranger District (Danny Hile was the Ranger). They had lunch at the Schenck Job Corps Center and visited Duke Power Company's Nuclear Power Plant. All that in two days.

The BOD met and determined that the Environmental Committee be made inactive until some action was needed. Also, Rick Eriksson tried to sponsor an Explorer Scout Troop, but none of the Boy Scout Troops were interested.

Letters with news were received from J. N. Van Alstine, M. B. Jones, Clyde Hitt, Russell "Chip" Chipman, Dan Todd, Edwin Cole, E. E. "Emory Hunnicutt, Lew Milkie, Viola Meltz, Hank Scherer, Ernie DeSilvia, Q. R. Boerner, D. F. Bradfield, Albert Toftle, Leon Thomas, Hermine Love, Jimmy Cheek, H. O. Mills, Orrie Hanson, Clodene Whaley, Stan Johnson, and Ruth Schaap. All had news. You may remember some of these folks.

Margaret McPherson sent in a poem:

Rain

The storm clouds some lower
As the wind brings a shower
The rain bites the window
As a child looks out;
"I can't go out and play today
But maybe the rain will bring my Daddy.

He fights the forest fire so grim
He's in the woods so dark and green,
And works so hard for Uncle Sam,
I seldom get to see him.
The lightning flashes, thunder screams,
But after rain - it sometimes brings my Daddy.

I love the sun, I love to play,
To see my friends most every day.
But when at night I go to bed
No Daddy's here to kiss my head.
Dear God, please may the rain
Bring home my Daddy.

My mother looks so sad tonight,
She's at the window, and no light.
But watch her face, a smile so bright,
As she runs to set things right,
Because it did, it rained us both my Daddy.

Ain't that great??

If you do not plan to use this form for your own personal use - dues or changes - please pass it on to a prospective SRFSA member.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP or EXTENSION
SOUTHERN FOREST SERVICE RETIREES ASSOCIATION**

Date: _____

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____ Apt. # : _____

City:State: _____ 9-Digit Zip Code: _____

Phone: (Optional) Area Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Retired From (Unit): _____

Membership Dues are \$10.00 per year. Amount Enclosed: _____

Membership in the SFSRA includes:

Three issues per year of *The Dixie Ranger*, issued in March, July and November.

Directory of Membership, issued every two years.

The opportunity to become published as an author when articles are submitted to *The Dixie Ranger*.

The most economical way to stay in touch with friends and co-workers through *The Dixie Ranger*.

Notification of what's happening in the Forest Service through *The Dixie Ranger*.

Mail application, with payment to:

Peggy Jolly, Treasurer
SFSRA
128 Wind Trace
Alexander City, AL 35010-8772

Southern Forest Service
Retirees Association
128 Wind Trace
Alexander City AL 35010-8772

Prst Std
Postage Paid
Permit #30
Alexander City AL

Note: Your mailing label shows the year through which your dues are paid. For example, if your label shows (07) your dues are paid through December 31, 2007. SFSRA policy is to discontinue sending The Dixie Ranger one year after a member's dues are expired. 21 members were paid through '05 and have been dropped.

REMINDER: **Reservations** for the June luncheon need to be made by **Monday, June 5th** and can be made by calling either Nancy Sorrells @ (770) 469-5799 or Joyce Keith @ (770) 277-5841 - leave a message on their answering machine if you do not reach one of them. Post the date on your calendar today!

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