THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
OCTOBER 2011

SMOKEJUMPER

HONORING OUR VETERANS

Firearms of Early USFS 9
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First NSA Scholarship Awards 28

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Message from the President

by John Twiss
(Redmond '67)
President

I got to participate in a National Smokejumper Association Volunteer Trail Rehabilitation Project this summer. It felt good to again use every muscle in my body and drag back to camp each evening dog tired. I slept like a baby.

It was wonderful to be back in the woods, chinking away with smokejumpers, the people to whom I have always been the closest. And it pleased me to be doing something very needed on one of our national forests.

Our age group ran 42 to 82. Everyone told stories, smiled and laughed each day as we left our sweat on the trail. For a while we were in our 20s again digging fire line as a team. We were tough, cocky, and the world was at our fingertips.

The highlight of the week for me was listening to what these smokejumpers accomplished with their lives. The schoolteacher who worked with problem children, the Navy pilot who volunteered for multiple tours in Vietnam, the FBI agent who tracked Soviet spies, the forester who started his own forestry company ... and so many more. Often they talked about the role smokejumping played in their lives.

Thanks to the NSA Trails Committee for their wonderful leadership. For those of you who worked on an NSA Volunteer Trail or Facility Project this summer. my hat's off to you. For those who haven't, you may want to give it a try. Perhaps it is time for a winter project in the Southwest!

Help The NSA With Your Website Skills

Know your way around a website? Want to contribute to your favorite organization and profession? The National Smokejumper Association is looking for folks with technical and web experience to contribute to *smokejumpers.com*.

We would welcome HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Graphics, and/or database skills. Additional opportunities exist as well. Contact the Web coordinator at: *webmaster@smokejumpers.com* with your skills and interest.

Former Jumpers Help Maintain, Rebuild Forest Trail In West Virginia

by Rick Steelhammer

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DAVIS, W.Va.—Former firefighters who once parachuted to remote Western wildfires are spending some time on the ground in the Monongahela National Forest, maintaining and rebuilding an eight-mile section of the planned 23-mile Heart of the Highlands Trail.

The 16 former smokejumpers range in age from 32 to 82, all members of the National Smokejumper Association. Among other things, the alumni group organizes volunteer work crews for weeklong repair and maintenance projects on U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands.

Their work on West Virginia's Monongahela National Forest is one of 21 association projects scheduled for this summer, and the first to take place east of the Mississippi, the Charleston Sunday Gazette reports.

Crew leader **John McDaniel** (CJ-57) of Falun, Kan., is a Grafton, W.Va., native and graduate of West Virginia University's forestry program. He spent three fire seasons as a smokejumper in Cave Junction, Ore.

"I used to come here, to the Blackwater Falls area, with my aunt and uncle," McDaniel said during a break from trail maintenance work on the Allegheny Trail. It will form part of the western arc of the Heart of the Highlands Trail.

"On this project, we have volunteers from Montana, Alabama, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington and New York," McDaniel said. "Everyone comes here at their own expense. Our motto is 'We work for food.'"

This summer's work includes the restoration of a two-mile section of the Allegheny Trail, known as the Davis Trail as it passes through Blackwater Falls State Park. The 330-mile Allegheny Trail stretches from Preston County's border with Pennsylvania to the Virginia state line at the edge of Monroe County.

All former smokejumpers taking part in NSA work projects must first pass a physical exam. "We have to keep reminding ourselves we're not 25 anymore," McDaniel said.

When the day's work is done, the volunteers retire to their cabins, "where we tell stories and drink lots of beer," McDaniel said with a smile.

"We're here partly for the camaraderie and partly for a little payback," said **Bill Tucker** (MSO-50) of Arlington, Va., who at age 82 was the senior member of the crew.

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Smokejumper base abbreviations:

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

"Being a smokejumper means being part of a unique organization with a unique mission," said Tucker, who started his stint as a smokejumper in 1950 at the U.S. Forest Service's Missoula, Mont., Air Center.

Most NSA volunteers on the crew worked as smokejumpers to help pay their way through college, and then moved on to other ventures. McDaniel and Tucker both pursued military careers, with McDaniel flying Navy fighter-bombers for 30 years and Tucker retiring from the Air Force as a lieutenant colonel.

The U.S. Forest Service initiated its smokejumper program in 1940, starting with a crew of 10. There are now about 400 smokejumpers based at nine Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management air centers across the West and in Alaska.

Annual Get-Together Pushes Cave Junction Base Museum Closer To Reality

by Jeff Duewel

(Copyright 2011, The Grants Pass Daily Courier. Reprinted with permission. The Siskiyou Smokejumper Museum is one of the NSA Restoration Projects.)

The former Siskiyou Smokejumpers brandished their hammers and paintbrushes for the annual work party in mid-June, and the museum honoring their work is a step closer to completion.

People can now take a walking tour, with eight new interpretive signs, at the former base at the Illinois Valley Airport just outside Cave Junction, Oregon. The museum became a reality when Josephine County commissioners last year granted museum backers a lease.

"It's not where we want it to be yet, but a lot of progress was made during the week," said **Gary Buck** (CJ-66), former smokejumper and Cave Junction resident. "We'd like to be open for steady hours, by August, five or six days a week."

Buck said about 40 people participated each day, building a wheelchair-accessible sidewalk, fixing roofs, repairing walls, and doing anything else needed to restore the place to its original state.

The work party has been held each June for the past few years.

The base operated from 1943 to 1981, one of three original bases in the country for the rugged men who jumped out of planes to fight remote wildfires. They called it "The Gobi" for the rocky landscape.

Buck said restoring the historical A-frame loft where parachutes were repaired and rigged is the next phase, now that businessman Jack McCornack has moved to the former warehouse next door.

The first day of the work party involved building rigging tables just like the originals.

Historian **Roger Brandt** (Associate) noted that as many as 17 Singer sewing machines were needed to keep the chutes in working order, and the parachute loft was featured in Singer's company magazine in 1956.

When the former dispatch office opens, visitors will be able to see old photographs and also see more photos and buy food and drink at the former mess hall.

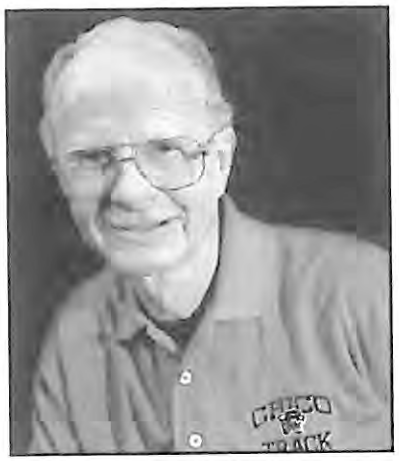
The interpretive signs each have a number of old black-and-white photos, telling a different part of the story.

One tells of **Tommy Smith** (CJ-61), the jumper who drowned in the Illinois River returning from a jump. Another shows one of the original moon trees, grown from seeds taken to the moon by astronaut **Stuart Roosa** (CJ-53), who was a smokejumper before going to flight school and later commander for Apollo 14.

Another sign shows the work in the parachute loft, another details the training, and another shows the barracks and mess hall. One large interpretive sign discusses the entire loop.

To reach the museum, take Redwood Highway (U.S. 199) south from Cave Junction to the Illinois Valley Airport and turn right at the second entrance, marked "Smokejumper Way."

SOUNDING OFF from the Editor



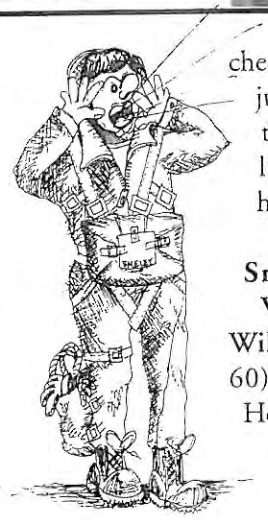
by Chuck Sheley
(Cave Junction '59)
MANAGING EDITOR

I WANTED TO try something a bit different for this issue in honoring smokejumpers who have served in the military. Veterans Day is November 11, 2011, and the October issue is appropriate for this purpose.

The NSA database has over 5,000 listed smokejumpers, and the number who have served in the military must run over a thousand. There is no way possible that I could list all of those individuals.

As a representation of all jumpers who have been in the military, I chose MSG U.S. Army (Ret.) **Ben Musquez** (MSO-56). As you can see from the excellent centerfold done by our Photo Editor **Johnny Kirkley** (CJ-64), the Musquez family has a long-standing tradition of military history. There were even more relatives, but we had to limit our space to the centerfold section.

Two of our members have lost sons in Iraq. I was very hesitant to approach these gentlemen on such a sensitive subject, but both **Jack Atkins** (MSO-68) and **John MacKinnon** (MSO-57) have been gracious enough to let us tell the stories of these young men. Thanks to **Carl Gidlund** (MSO-58) for writing up the articles on Capt. Michael MacKinnon and Staff Sgt. Travis Atkins.



The cover photo is of **Jim Allen** (NCSB-46), our highly respected leader at Cave Junction. With this photo, I thought back to an article in the April 2000 issue of *Smokejumper* by **Gary "Tex" Welch** (CJ-60). Tex was telling about his thirteenth jump on the dreaded Umpqua N.F. The Umpqua was the land of the "big trees" where a 150-foot letdown rope was usually carried.

From the article: "Project Air Officer Jim Allen asked about the tree landing. Keep in mind that we were mostly 21-25 years old and thought that we were the roughest, toughest specimens on earth. We accepted it with humility.

"I gave Jim the report, mentioned that it was my thirteenth jump and that I was due a little excitement. *(His letdown rope was 50 feet short of the ground-Ed.)* Jim said he also remembered his thirteenth jump. 'Yeah,' I said, 'What was it like?' My bubble burst and the wind left my sails when he said, 'I was 21. It was September 17, 1944, Operation Market Garden *(A Bridge Too Far)* in Holland and a couple months before Bastogne."

As a final part of this issue I went through our database and checked out all deceased jumpers for comments in their listings. I know this list is not complete, but here is what we have:

Smokejumpers Killed While in the Military

William R. Beasley (IDC-60): September 25, 1966. Helicopter pilot in Vietnam. Died in crash.

Malvin L. Brown (PNOR-45): August 6, 1945. Member of Triple Nickles. First Smokejumper killed in line of duty, Umpqua N.F., Oregon, while making a letdown.

Ralph Cordes (NCSB-48): Killed during Korean War.

Steven Henault (MSO-46): February 1971. Alaska Air National Guard aircraft crash.

Jerry Hofer (MYC-43): Pilot during Korean War. Failed to return from mission.

Hugh Jenkins (MSO-49): April 25, 1953. KIA Korea. Awarded the Silver Star.

Robert Kester (CJ-55): Crash of his Marine Corps F8U fighter.

Richard McClung (MSO-42): Pilot MIA South Pacific WII.

Richard Pratt (NCSB-66): December 8,1967. KIA Vietnam.

James Putnam (NCSB-48): Died of wounds, Korea 1951.

George "Ken" Sisler (NCSB-57): February 7, 1967. Died of wounds suffered in action, Laos. Awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Please send any update or corrections so we can make our NSA records as accurate as possible.

The Magnificent Hole: A Tale Of Smokejumper Culture In The 1950s

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

This story is a happening in the late 1950s and told as remembered after more than 50 years. It reflects a time when the average smokejumper was 22 years old, and he jumped for an average of two and a half years. Most of the jumpers in Missoula stayed in the dorm at the fire depot, that was more like a college dormitory than a Forest Service facility.

Let the story begin: In those days, the main parachute a smokejumper used was 28 feet in diameter, and when he – there were no female smokejumpers in those days – hit the ground, it was said the impact was equal to a free fall from 16 feet.

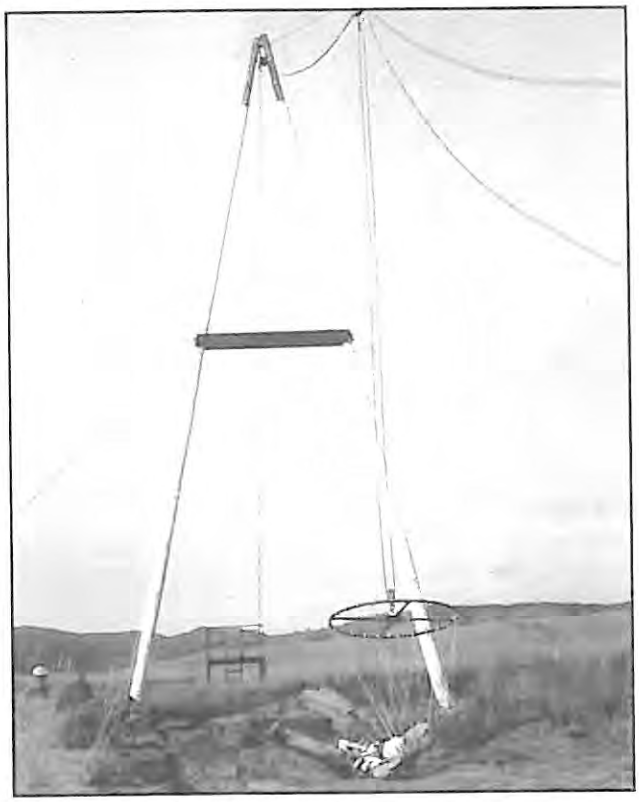
Landing properly was essential to keep from breaking an ankle or worse. Because of this, during a jumper's first year – I never heard the term "rookie year" used then – one hour a day for three weeks was spent in practice making a proper landing called the "Allen Roll."

In his book "Young Men and Fire," Norman McLean says: "If a jumper lands on flat ground at all, it is something like jumping off the roof of an automobile going 25 miles an hour, and in 1949 he finished his jump by the 'Allen Roll,' landing sideways, with his right side from his hips down taking the shock, the upper part of his body continuing to pivot to the right until his body falls on its back and then rolls over on its knees. As a jumping instructor once said, the roll is to spread the pain over all the body."

We practiced the roll standing on the ground, jumping off platforms, running off platforms, or using a device called the "Canadian Swing," which could make us roll forward or backward. We practiced and practiced, but we still broke our ankles. As I remember, the number of broken bones in Missoula in 1955 was more than 30, including one broken back and a permanent leg disability.

So, in 1957, to help perfect the proper landing, a new apparatus shaped like a large letter "A" was constructed. It consisted of a large A-frame held upright by a concrete anchor, a pulley system, a gasoline engine, and a transmission from a Crosley automobile.

A jumper's chute harness was attached to some risers. He was pulled up to the cross arm of the "A," the transmission was taken out of reverse and put into a forward gear, and the jumper was pulled to the ground. The idea was that the rate of descent could be controlled by what gear was used in the transmission.



The "A" Frame (Courtesy B. Breyfogle)

Some jumpers taking refresher training were given the opportunity to try this new training device. Even in low gear we hit the ground harder – much harder – than on a normal landing. Given the opportunity to try it a second time, I think we all declined the honor.

The A-frame was never used again as a training device.

In 1958 the A-frame was gone, but the anchor, which held it in place, was still there. It was a piece of concrete, eight feet by eight feet by two feet thick. It had no purpose.

In the 50s there were 150 jumpers in Missoula and if there were no fires, most of the jumpers were sent out to ranger districts on projects. The projects consisted of such good deals as trail work, cruising timber, hanging phone line, cutting helicopter landing spots, or anything else the ranger wanted done. The

"good deal" was that the ranger district did not have to pay the salary of the jumpers – fire control did that – but the district did furnish the jumpers with room and board.

When there was a fire bust, all the jumpers were recalled to Missoula, and if the fire bust fizzled, there were a lot of jumpers at the fire depot without anything to do.

When this happened, the "overhead" had to come up with some creative ideas to keep us earning our pay.

Some of the jobs were essential to keep the base in operation: such as checking parachutes and other gear returned from fires, and packing fire packs, but many of the jobs were put in the category respectfully called "Mickey Mousing." These consisted of jobs that were designed to keep us busy and make the government feel we had earned our pay, even though we had done things of little importance.

From these jobs we would take time off each morning and afternoon for physical training, called volleyball.

Back to the anchor. It could provide an opportunity to keep some jumpers occupied as they waited for a fire call. With this in mind, four of us were sent to dig a hole at least eight feet by eight feet by more than two feet deep to bury the A-frame anchor.

Now four people in the same hole, digging at the same time, could be unsafe; so to make sure that no one was hurt, it was decided (by us, not the overhead) that for safety's sake, each of us would work for 15 minutes and take 45 minutes off. And so on the first day the hole was started.

The next morning, the "overhead" was assured that the work on the hole was progressing, and armed with our shovels (and a radio and some reading material), we proceeded to our work site and continued our work. To ensure that more work was done, we decided that we would work two hours on and six hours off – with time out for physical training, called volleyball.

So we listened to the radio, read, napped, played volleyball and worked on the hole. The next day, and the next, progressed in like fashion. The hole got deeper, and nobody came to see how we were doing.

The fire depot is located on the bed of old Lake Missoula, and as the hole got deeper, we dug through different layers of sediment, and the hole became very interesting. We liked it and we dug faster and deeper. Because the hole was in the bottom of the old lakebed, and there is much clay and gravel in the soil, there seemed to be no chance of a cave-in.

We needed steps to get in and out of the hole, and we needed buckets and rope to lift the dirt out of the hole. There wasn't time to read or rest. The hole was magnificent and we were very proud of it. We continued to work and hit water at 16 feet, as I remember it.

This was great, but no overhead came to see the magnificent hole. We were disappointed. Now we had ideas for this hole other than a burial site for a concrete anchor – maybe we'd get it filled with water and use it for swimming.

But all good things must come to an end. We got a fire call.

When we returned from the fire, we volunteered to return to our project. The offer was refused with some language, which I will not repeat. It seemed that after we left, another crew was sent out to work on the hole, but they had no imagination and could not see the endless possibilities of working on this hole out of sight and mind of the overhead.

What were they thinking? They went back to the overhead and asked the foolish question: "How deep do you want that hole, anyway?"

Thus ended one of the best "Mickey Mouse" projects ever undertaken.

By the way ... how the eight-by-eight-by-two concrete anchor was moved into the hole must be a different story, but because we were on a fire, we missed the "hole" thing.

The Magnificent Hole (Courtesy B. Breyfogle)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

The First Doctor Trained By Smokejumpers For Rescue Work

by Jack Demmons (Missoula '50)

THE DAILY MISSOULIAN paper on Sept.19, 1941, had an article that read: "The saga of a fearless girl, an intrepid doctor, dauntless airmen and hardy rescue workers (including smokejumpers), ended at the Missoula airport here Thursday afternoon when Barbara Streit, pretty 20-year-old Missoula co-ed, was lifted carefully from an airplane and placed in a waiting ambulance.

"Thus ended a 95-mile, 24-hour-long trip on an improvised stretcher and through the air for Miss Streit, shot through both knees in mid-afternoon Wednesday while on a hunting trip in a remote forest wilderness deep in the heart of the South Fork primitive area, about 75 miles by airplane northeast of Missoula.

"Bob Johnson had flown Dr. Martin and nurse Cathryn Ward to the Big Prairie strip, and from there they started up the trail with three Forest Service personnel from the ranger station. They met the members of the hunting party from the Tamaracks Lodge at Seeley Lake, of which Barbara Streit was a member, six hours later, 18 miles up the trail, and at 3:30 a.m. the reinforced party arrived at the Hahn F.S. Guard Station, about 10 miles above Big Prairie.

"Dr. Martin said her condition was critical until she was given a blood transfusion at the lonely Forest Service cabin. She was believed to be near death from shock before the transfusion was administered. 'She snapped out of the shock immediately afterwards,' Dr. Martin said.

"New of the accident had been telephoned from Big Prairie late Wednesday afternoon. It was then that Johnson flew Dr. Martin and nurse Cathryn Ward to Big Prairie, where they started the hike towards Hahn Creek.

"Dick Johnson then flew smokejumpers **Karl Nussbacher** (MSO-41), **Roy Mattson** (MSO-41), **Bill Musgrove** (MSO-41) and **Wag Dodge** (MSO-41), along with Miss Streit's father, Norman C. Streit, to Big Prairie in another Travel Air 6000.

"This group had been delayed because a 60-mile round trip had been necessary to secure parachutes and jump suits at the Forest Service headquarters at Nine Mile, when it was thought the men would jump, but that did not materialize.

"At 7:30 a.m. these men, along with several Forest Service members, met the party bringing Miss Streit to Big Prairie three miles above the ranger station. They had a mule-drawn, rubber-tired cart to which she was transferred.

"Pilot Bob Johnson said that the rescue could have been effected much more quickly if it had been known from the first that the girl was far up the trail, instead of at the ranger station, as had been reported.

"If this had been known, Dr. Martin, a trained parachutist, and several smokejumpers could have been dropped, possibly at the Hahn Creek Guard Station, and that would have saved many hours, Johnson said.

"After Miss Streit's arrival at the ranger station, the two Travel Air aircraft and passengers quickly took off for the 75-mile return flight to Missoula.

"Others in the hunting party when the accident occurred included Bud and Pel Turner of the Tamaracks Lodge *[author's note: Bud later became a Marine Corps fighter pilot flying in the South Pacific during World War II]* and several guests from the lodge. The one who wounded Miss Streit was not from that party."

"It hurts my pride," Barbara Streit later said, with a grin, "to have somebody mistake me for an elk."

She survived and today lives in the Missoula area. I have talked to her several times about the accident.

Continued from **12**

The Jump List

model; better training in all aspects of the job; better equipment, such as fire-resistant items, hard hats, communications from jumper to aircraft and probably to the ranger station (we, of course, had no communication other than colored panels); and no hires without considerable fire experience."

Firearms Of The Early Forest Service

by Karl Brauneis (Missoula '77)

"A ranger of any grade must be thoroughly sound and able-bodied, capable of enduring hardships and performing severe labor under trying conditions. He must be able to take care of himself and his horses in regions remote from settlement and supplies."

– U.S. Forest Service Use Book, 1908

When President Theodore Roosevelt and his Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot reorganized and consolidated forestry in 1905 under the United States Forest Service, their first aim was to develop a qualified and competent corps of forest rangers.

Political appointments had been the standard practice of previous administrations, resulting in a less-than-desirable work force. That all changed with Roosevelt and Pinchot and their selection process designed around a civil service testing system to get the best new rangers.

The rangers test

The new rangers test consisted of a classroom written test and a field practical. Part of the field test consisted of marksmanship with both rifle and pistol. The ranger candidate had to supply his own horses, tack and firearms for work.

Forest Ranger Henry L. Benham was later interviewed and quoted: "Then they tested to see what you knew about handling a gun, so you didn't go out and shoot somebody with it the first day. And you had to put a pack on a horse, a bunch of cooking utensils, bedding, bedrolls, and a tarp to cover it with – and a rope to tie it on with. I'd learned all that before I went into the Forest Service. I didn't have much trouble."

In the early days no two rangers looked alike. Considerable variety was the norm with a common western "cowboy" thread and bronze Forest Service badge that bound the rangers together. Most of the rangers were Western men skilled in woodsmanship and livestock.

Even today, field officers follow the old cowboy ideal that "you might not have a lot, but your outfit darned sure better look good."

Ranger Fred Herrig

Many men were known simply by their outfit and the firearms they carried. Fred Herrig punched cows for Teddy Roosevelt on his ranch in North Dakota. He was also one of the first men to whom Roosevelt turned when he formed the Rough Riders (1st Volunteer Cavalry) and was there with his "cow boss" as they stormed up San Juan Hill.

Fred was later appointed a forest ranger by Roosevelt, himself, and was known for his "outfit." W.J. Yenne, in his book "Switchback," gave this account: "Fred's spurs were silver, and his horse wore a silver-studded bridle and martingale. He carried a 45/70 rifle in his saddle scabbard and wore a .38 revolver, a gift from his friend, President Roosevelt."

Ranger Bill Bell

One ranger, made famous in the story by Norman Maclean in "USFS 1919: The Ranger, the Cook, and a Hole in the Sky," was Bill Bell of the old Elk Summit Ranger District on the Selway National Forest in the Bitterroot Mountains. Later, Sam Elliott played Bell in the Echo Bridge home-entertainment movie of 2006. But it was forester Bud Moore who brought more of ranger Bell to light in his book "The Lochsa Story – Land Ethics in the Bitterroot Mountains."

Like most rangers, Bell carried a single-action Army Colt .45 with a seven-inch barrel. When some tough miners from Butte, Mont., had enough of the Bald Mountain Fire, they gathered around Bell, who was mounted on his black horse.

The leader said: "We're taking your pack train" to ride out of here. Bill hauled his long-barreled, single-action .45 pistol from the scabbard on his belt, thumbed back the hammer and responded, "Ye might take my pack train. But five or six of you ain't goin' out." Thus ended the miners' idea of a free ride out of the wilderness.

Ranger Walt Perry

Walt Perry's life as a forest ranger is well-documented in "Walt Perry – An Early-Day Ranger in New Mexico and Oregon" by Les Joslin. Like Bell, Ranger Perry packed a single-action Army Colt .45 with the long barrel. In the backcountry of the Carson Forest, Walt was forced to shoot a horse he found that was hobble-burned, cut bloody and raw with his hoof turned back.

As the ranger later wrote: "Then something happened which I have never been able to explain. Stepping up to within eight or ten paces of the horse, he standing still looking straight at me, I drew a bead just above his eyes where the bullet would range into his brain and fired. He never even wiggled an ear! I blinked a couple of times, then drew the same bead again and at the crack

of the gun he fell stone dead, never so much as to move a foot, with a bullet exactly where I had aimed. But what became of that first bullet – if any? Certainly I could not miss at that short distance. If someone had drawn the lead from my first cartridge – I am still looking for the son-of-a-gun! I expect that gun to throw lead, and throw it straight, any time and every time I pulled the trigger. Quien sabe?"

Ranger Clyde Fickes

Some rangers opted for innovations in firearms. Clyde Fickes was famous in the Forest Service for his work in developing a pre-fabricated lookout station (Fickes 14-foot-by-14-foot L-29 design) that could be packed in by mule and horse to be assembled on site. Ranger Fickes was also instrumental in developing and managing the Remount Depot at Nine Mile west of Missoula, Mont. Through his work, the Forest Service would now have a dependable supply of mules and horses for backcountry use and resupply.

But within the Forest Service, Clyde was known for his choice of a personal sidearm – the German Luger semi-automatic. The Luger cost Clyde $25 in 1908. Other rangers also opted for the lighter-weight .38-caliber revolvers, but soon went back to the big-frame 45s after encounters with bears and other big or dangerous game. Not until the development of the 357 magnum would rangers have a powerful alternative to the old single-action Army Colts.

Lookout-Smokechaser Bill Reimer

Bill Yenne tells the story of his friend Bill Reimer and his encounter with a grizzly in 1930. Bill was the lookout on Nasukoin Mountain on the Blackfeet National Forest during the summer of 1930. About dusk Bill discovered a fire and left the lookout with his smokechaser pack to fight it.

When he reached the valley floor, he soon became aware of an animal approaching him in the darkness. He shed his pack and beat a hasty retreat, but tripped in the darkness. A large grizzly was instantly on him. The bear seized one of his feet and lifted him into the air to where his shoulders barley touched the ground, dislocating his hip.

As this was taking place, Bill unfastened his holster strap and got out his .38-caliber revolver. He fired three shots low into the bear's body, afraid to shoot higher at the risk of hitting his foot. With each bullet the bear became more fierce and shook all the harder. Finally in desperation, he decided to try for a more vital spot, hitting his foot or not.

Accordingly he aimed toward the top part of the bear and fired again. This produced the desired results as the bear let go of his foot and ambled off into the darkness.

Bill was able to make it back to his lookout station and call for help before passing out. It was some weeks before he was able to walk normally, and it bothered him for years. Bill would often wake up at night screaming as he relived the horrible event.

Modern day

As a Missoula smokejumper in 1977 detailed to Alaska, I soon became acquainted with the firearm rules for jumpers up north. The lightest-accepted revolver was the .357 Magnum. Still, most jumpers carried the .44 Magnum or the new .41 Magnum. If you were faced with a bear problem and had time to react, a 375 H and H Magnum rifle was dropped to you by parachute. Today, the .12-gauge shotgun with rifled slugs is the preferred firearm of protection against bears.

We live in west-central Wyoming at the base of the Wind River Mountains. The entire ecosystem north of us may have more grizzly bears now then at the turn of the previous century. Throw in black bears, wolves and mountain lions and soon any discussion will turn to an individual's preference of firearm for self-defense.

Recently a grizzly was killed in self-defense with the standard GI-issue 1911 .45. Still, most opt for the revolver due to its failsafe design. However, no matter how large the handgun, it will always pale in comparison to the old Winchester or Marlin saddle rifles in 30-30.

The rifle

Rifles were carried as the preferred tool by rangers for everyday work and predator control at the time. Because the forest ranger was often the only law enforcement in the area, he was often deputized by the local sheriff or game warden.

Forest rangers have always had the authority to enforce state game laws on National Forest lands (Organic Act of 1897) and work in cooperation with the state game and fish departments.

The ranger's long gun of choice was the saddle rifle. Most often the Winchester or Marlin, chambered in the 30-30 or like cartridge, that could reach out and also be carried easily on a horse.

I had an old fire warden friend, Cap Lee, once tell me, "Never leave home ... never go anywhere without your 30-30."

I find it humorous to read articles about the 30-30 that claim it is an Eastern deer rifle and seldom used out West. I suppose they have never read about Tom Horn's 30-30 or looked at the old cowboy pictures from the West. The advent of the smokeless powder 30-30 in a

Forest Assistant W. H. B. Kent. Taken on Huachuca National Forest—Now called Coronado National Forest, Arizona 1905. (Courtesy USFS)

light and easy-to-handle 94 Winchester truly gave the cowboy or ranger a solid, reliable working man's tool.

It is important to note there are no employees within the U.S. Forest Service. By the Organic Act of 1897, all within the agency are federal officers and can wear the "Bronze Pine Tree Badge."

In my career we considered the most basic classes to perform the job as that of law-enforcement training and fire-guard school. Without these two basic skills, the local forest officer is ill-equipped to perform the most basic protection functions of the agency.

Smokechaser Warren Yahr

Warren Yahr writes the classic tale of a bear encounter in his book "Smokechaser." The forest packer had walked into a lookout station with resupply only to be confronted by two black bears that had torn the place apart. The packer carried a .22 Colt Woodsman – more then a bit light for bear – and emptied the gun as the bears rushed towards him. Finally the bears broke through a window to make their escape.

It was believed that one of the bears died but the larger bear was alive and would soon return. The packer returned to the ranger station and reported the incident. The ranger then gave the young Yahr his Winchester 30-30 with one cartridge, but assured him that a box of 30-30s was at the Lookout. So the next morning Yarr headed the four miles to the lookout and was able to dispatch the bear the following morning.

Rangers R.D. Jones and Clinton Hodges

Unfortunately some of the work the rangers performed turned deadly. Rangers Jones and Hodges were deputized by the sheriff to assist in trailing a cattle rustler. After tracking down the rustler, they approached him, along with the owner of one of the big ranch outfits. The rangers were both armed with their 30-30s.

Within feet and seconds, the rustler pulled his revolver ... the gun was out of the holster when the rangers fired. Jones and Hodges were later exonerated after a hearing.

The 1895 Winchester gave the ranger a more powerful rifle that could still be carried easily on a horse. Hank Payson, a local Lander, Wyo., district ranger, carried an

1895 Winchester in the .405 caliber. His rifle is on display at the Fremont County Pioneer Museum in Lander.

To affirm Payson, many 1895 Winchesters can be seen in old photographs throughout the area – a testimony to the need for more stopping power when confronting the grizzly bear.

Other rifles often used with "stopping power" were the older 1876 Winchester and the 1886 Winchester in the preferred 45/70 cartridge. The Savage lever action rifle was used by local Lander Forest Ranger Charlie Bayer of the Washakie National Forest in the 1910s. Today some of the agencies' law-enforcement officers carry the 45/70 in a lever-action Marlin saddle rifle.

Conclusion

Early forest rangers used the firearms that they were most comfortable with in their prior work as woodsmen, stockmen and cowboys. First and foremost the firearm had to be reliable with sufficient stopping power and ease of handle. Although a variety of arms were used, the standard of judgment was the Colt Single-Action Army .45 and the Winchester Model 1894 or Marlin 1893 in .30 WCF (30-30), 38/55 or .32 Winchester Special.

Opinion

Today, each forest supervisor authorizes the firearm use for forest officers on that forest. For a rugged backcountry wilderness forest like the Shoshone in Wyoming – where pack stock, grizzly, black bear, mountain lion and wolves are the norm – a firearm presence should be of common practice.

Most forest officers are avid hunters and many participate in shooting sports. Their familiarity with and actual use of firearms is often superior to that of the average citizen or city police officer.

When mounted on horseback, a ranger should be armed with a handgun for fast use in defense or to put down injured stock. In other instances, such as all-terrain vehicle and pickup truck travel, a rifle can be stored for use in a scabbard, rack or case. The rifle is an accepted norm of Western Americana and does not invoke the image of an armed police force. To the contrary, a rifle presents the quintessential image of a western-working culture and the traditions of the U.S. forest ranger.

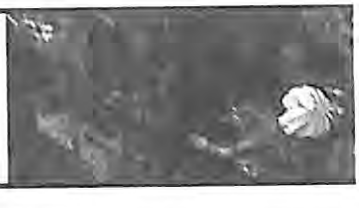
"The well equipped ranger would hardly consider riding out over his district without his rifle and six-shooter. The guns were as necessary a part of his equipment as his tools for firefighting."

– Tucker / Fitzpatrick, "Men Who Matched the Mountains"

The author wishes to thank Sarah Stiles of the U.S. Forest Service's Washington office and Jack States of Lander, Wyo., for their assistance in securing the historical photographs used in this article.

Karl Brauneis served in his Forest Service career as a smokechaser, hotshot, smokejumper, forester, range conservationist and fire management officer. Throughout his career he worked in law enforcement as a collateral duty like all the early rangers.

THE JUMP LIST



The Jump List is intended to bring you up-to-date on your fellow NSA members. Send your information to Chuck Sheley; see his contact information on page 3 of this magazine.

Joseph Saltsman (Missoula '46)

Now living in: Chevy Chase, Md.

Jumped: MSO 46

Since jumping: Joined smokejumpers in Missoula following a year in college and two in U.S. Army, serving as infantry private in Europe; began Forestry school at University of Montana, January 1946, graduating in 1948; served as assistant ranger in Beaverhead, Flathead and Cabinet National Forests; went to Alaska as logging camp boss on Dahl Island, 60 miles west of Ketchikan; then worked for the CIA 42 years, almost all of it in Africa, Middle East and Europe; now retired.

Joe says: "In forestry school, I heard about smokejumping and it sounded great. I contacted **Fred Brauer** (MSO-41) and was hired after a very brief interview for Missoula in the summer of 1946 rookie class. I had virtually no qualifications; I had never seen a mountain except for a few weeks at Camp Carson, Colo., and I'd never seen a wildfire. My only qualifications were a general familiarity with farm tools and horses. I was the right age (21), healthy, strong and a forestry school student. I don't know much today about the jumpers, but they have better chutes than the Derry 1946

Continued on **page 8**

Jim Fritz (CJ-59)

Office Restoration

Roddy Baumann (CJ-70)

Gobi Restoration Project

Photo's Courtesy Roger Brandt

K G Sheley

Bob Snyder (CJ-48) & Bob Nolan (CJ-47)

Mike Hardy (MYC-75)

Gary Buck (CJ-66) & Wolf Emonds

Roofing Crew

Layout Design, by Johnny Kirkley (CJ-64)

THE VIEW FROM OUTSIDE THE FENCE

by Chris Sorensen
(Associate)

In May, the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, held a hearing about the U.S. Forest Service Budget. Sitting at the witness table was the chief of the Forest Service, Tom Tidwell.

Two topics related to wildfire management were discussed during the hearing: a major budget cut and the future of the heavy air-tanker fleet.

Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) grilled Tidwell on budget cuts in the fuel-reduction program and the proposed cutting of more than 1,800 positions in the Forest Service – presumably replacing many of these positions with contractors.

Here is an excerpt from the exchange:

Tester: You touched on something that drives me crazy in government, and that we reduce the workforce on one hand and we replace it with contract labor on the other hand. The cost is more than the workforce that existed before. That's not going to happen here?

Tidwell: No. No, I—I believe we'll probably be doing less contract work in 2012 to be able to, you know, maintain our existing workforce.

It's great to see a politician who understands the true cost of hiring contractors. The Forest Service couldn't function without using contractors and consultants, but using contractors to replace full-time employees doesn't make good fiscal sense or policy.

By the time this issue reaches you, yet another air-tanker study will be out. The latest study is by the Rand Corporation, which was due in January. I am at a loss to answer why it was necessary to hire yet another consultant to pump out yet another study on air tankers for an untold amount of money.

You will recall the 2002 "Blue Ribbon Panel," chaired by the former NTSB Chairman Jim Hall, who has since passed away. He was held in high regard by the aviation community and by those who worked for him, including a friend of mine who is a 737 captain.

We can only speculate if this study by the Rand Corp. will gather dust on obscure library shelves like the Blue Ribbon Panel report, or if management will actually implement the recommendations forthcoming from the Rand Corp.

You can find the Blue Ribbon Panel report here: www.wildfirelessons.net/documents/BRP_final12052002.pdf.

According to the 2009 "Forest Service's Replacement Plan for Firefighting Aerial Resources," after 2012 "air tankers currently approved for use by the federal agencies will be either too expensive to maintain or no longer airworthy."

One of my friends in the aviation business says the only real solution is to build a dedicated standalone air-tanker platform designed and built for the task at hand.

When the Las Conchas fire broke out in late June and the evacuation of Los Alamos was ordered, I tried to find information on the Los Alamos County website. The site had crashed and was unavailable during the early stages of the fire and evacuation.

This brings up a concern of mine: an overuse of cellular telephone and a dangerous dependence on these – and the Internet – during major emergencies.

After the Interstate 35W bridge collapse in Minneapolis a few years ago, cellular service was lost in the first 10 minutes. During a sniper incident in Glasgow, Mont., cell service was lost in about the same amount of time.

In my jurisdiction there is a latent refusal by responders to use ICS forms for any purpose, especially during exercises. There is a dominant attitude that "we can fix anything in two hours."

I assembled two portable file boxes last winter – including multiple copies of all of the Federal ICS forms – and gave one box to the local CERT team and the other to the local Amateur

Radio Emergency Service.

Other forms in the boxes include the Coast Guard oil spill ICS forms. There is a refinery in our jurisdiction, and CERT and ARES may provide support of the refinery during a spill or other emergency. Looking back, the first generation "ICS Box" seems a little crude, but I am working on improvements for the next generation.

It seems that a lot of people in emergency management think they're going to have unlimited cellular and Internet service and power is never going to be lost during a disaster.

There I Was

by Rich Halligan (McCall '76)

July 1979. We had jumped a sweet little six-manner up north of Fairbanks on Beaver Creek. **Lynn Flock** (MYC-68) and I shared your basic Alaska jumper hootch consisting of a cargo strap tied between two black spruce trees with a cargo chute hung from the strap to make a skeeter-proof shelter and a piece of visqueen draped over the top to keep everything dry.

I was awakened at about 5:30 a.m. by a "snuffling" sound outside our hootch. Suddenly, I saw the wall of the hootch above Lynn's feet pushed inward a few inches, and a set of huge claws (at the time I estimated them at 3-4 feet in length, though, in retrospect, I suspect they may have been somewhat shorter than that) poke through the nylon. The claws raked down, tearing a large hole.

I prodded Lynn awake and told him, with considerably more aplomb than I was actually experiencing, that we had a bear problem and pointed toward the foot of the hootch. Lynn rolled over onto his back, just in time to see the bear double the size of the opening by raking the fabric a second time. The bear stuck his head in through the hole.

I was extremely scared. A debate raged in my mind as to whether I should shout and make a racket to scare the bear off or remain silent and motionless and hope that he would ignore me. As it turned out, I remained motionless, but I don't know if it was a conscious decision or if I was just too scared to move.

Lynn apparently came to the same conclusion as I did because he remained motionless, also. During this time I had occasion to notice the size of the bear's teeth, as well as his claws. Having some medical training as an EMT, I contemplated the pathophysiology of death by mauling. Such thoughts added greatly to my anxiety.

The bear stepped in through the hole and stood on Lynn's sleeping bag with his front legs. He then began pawing at the sleeping bag, which, I might point out, still contained Lynn. After trying three or four times to hook it with his paw, the bear reached down, grabbed the sleeping bag with his teeth, and dragged it out of the hootch.

I briefly had a vision of Lynn remaining in the sleeping bag and taking his leave with it. Instead, he lifted himself onto his elbows, and the sleeping bag slipped out from beneath him.

I was able to see the bear through the hole and observed him chewing on the sleeping bag for a couple of minutes. He eventually lost interest and ambled off in the general direction of the rest of camp. Lynn and I yelled, "bear in camp" a couple of times to warn the others.

I lay there in the hootch considering whether to get up and get dressed or remain in the false security of my sleeping bag. Lynn, quite sensibly, elected to get dressed, as the "remain in the sleeping bag" option no longer existed for him.

As it turned out, the bear walked over to check out the next-closest hootch, which was occupied by **Brian Fitzsimmons** (MSO-70). We could hear the visqueen crinkle and tear as the bear pawed at Fitzsimmons' hootch.

Brian hollered, in a rather annoyed voice: "Knock it off!" and "Hey, you guys. Quit it." He had heard our warning about a bear in camp but thought we were joking (like I'm going to get up at 0530 to B.S. someone).

A moment later, Fitz let out the most bloodcurdling scream I've ever heard in my life: "GET HIM OFF OF MEEEE!" The scream abruptly stopped, was followed by a brief period of silence, and then the sound of the bear padding through the tundra back toward our hootch.

Whatever the hell else may have been happening in the world at that time, I knew only the following: A bear had torn up my hootch, went to the neighbor's hootch, killed the occupant, and was headed back toward my hootch with, I assumed, homicidal intent. I didn't know whether to crap or go blind; I may have done a little of both.

I remember looking up at Lynn, and the expression on his face did nothing to reassure me; I doubt that he

saw much confidence in mine. As I had mentioned earlier, Lynn had enough sense to get dressed and was now standing, hunched over and tying his boots.

With sounds of the bear's footfalls getting closer each second, my fear was escalating exponentially. I finally made up my mind to get dressed and die with my boots on (as well as my clothes). I reached for my jeans.

The bear was now immediately outside the hootch, and I could hear him breathing. I was on the verge of panic. I then heard two sounds almost simultaneously – the first was a loud slapping noise on the visqueen, and the second was a short, sharp, gut-wrenching scream.

That pretty much did it for me. Without looking back to confirm my good friend's apparent decapitation, I shot out from my sleeping bag, under the edge of the hootch, took two rapid strides, and ran full speed into one of the spruce trees to which the hootch was tied. The impact with the tree interrupted what no doubt was the fastest, most fluid and complex movements I have ever made.

I then leapt back to my feet, adroitly dodged the tree and ran into camp. I grabbed a fusee in one hand and a Pulaski in the other. I lit the fusee and began dancing around dripping molten sulfur onto my bare feet and blood from my fractured nose onto my T-shirt. Skeeters began feasting on my scantily clothed body.

The "lull" in the action gave me an opportunity to reflect on my abrupt abandonment of Lynn while he was being killed by the bear. I rationalized that "at least it was quick" and he didn't suffer. I figured that if our positions had been reversed, he too, would have bravely and quickly departed the scene to seek additional assistance.

I saw the bear again a few moments later. He was moseying through camp, quite unconcerned with the carnage he had wrought and the din now rising from the survivors. Someone, who had it together better than I, finally threw a lit fusee at the bear. It hit him in the ribs and bounced to the ground.

The bear stopped, whirled around and took a big sniff of the burning fusee laying next to him. He let out a bawl and took off running. Four minutes later we saw him crossing a ridge about a mile away, still running at full speed.

When the dust settled, the smoke cleared, and I had put some pants on, I was able to sort out the death and destruction:

Fitz survived his encounter with the bear, unscathed. He had been asleep, face up, when he was awakened by Lynn and me hollering. The bear pawed at his hootch a couple of times, then apparently reared up, placed its front paws on the top of the hootch, and began bouncing up and down on the cargo strap.

The weight of the bear was causing the trees, to which the cargo strap was tied, to bend toward each other. Fitz finally realized it was a real bear when he saw a couple of inches of claws sticking through the nylon. He claimed at one point that the bear's claws were within an "inch or two" of his face.

Lynn also survived his encounter alive, much to my relief. His head and shoulders had been hitting the top of the hootch while he was tying his shoes. The bear apparently noticed this and reached out and slapped at the movements. Lynn was struck lightly on the shoulder by the bear and sustained no injury. He exited the hootch at a high velocity through the hole that the bear had made on his first visit.

I, however, ended up with a fractured nose, multiple small, second-degree burns on the top of my feet, and a whole lot of s— flicked my way, compliments of **Jim Anderson** (MYC-74), who had observed the festivities from his hootch.

Lynn claims that the scream heard when he was slapped by the bear came from me. I'm here to testify that that is a blatant falsehood. You must bear in mind (no pun intended) that Mr. Flock is now a pilot, and we all know what liars pilots are. You know the routine – a 50-acre Meadow with a single snag in the middle, your firepack and two saw packs are hung up in the top of it, and the pilot swears he "wasn't aiming for the snag."

I will, however, accede that I may have joined in a two-part harmony immediately after Lynn began the original.

McDaniel Looking For Recruits For West Virginia Project

This summer will again see a major trail project on the Monongahela N.F., WV. Following a very successful project on the Allegheny Trail at Black Water Falls, Davis, WV, plans are being made to take on a four and one-half-mile Loop Trail in the Monongahela NF Wilderness near White Sulphur Springs, WV. In addition, the trail team will replace flooring in the U.S. Forest Service office at the Blue Bend Recreational Area. No specific date has been established, but June 2012 is the most likely. There is a need for a cook for 20-30 workers and a skilled carpenter to oversee the flooring project.

Interested Jumpers and Associates should contact John McDaniel at: *jumpercj57@hotmail.com* or by mail at P.O. Box 105, Falun, KS 67442 for specifics on the project.

Blue Bend is a beautiful camping area and has a great swimming hole near by.

Atkins' Courage Likely Saved Lives Of Squad Members

by Carl Gidlund (Missoula '58)

Staff Sgt. Travis Atkins, son of Elaine and **Jack Atkins** (MSO-68) of Bozeman, Mont., was killed June 1, 2007, by a suicide bomber who detonated an explosive near a mosque in al-Yusufiyah, Iraq. He was 31.

A member of the 10th Mountain Division, Atkins was on his second tour of duty in Iraq. Because of his leadership skills, he led a squad of 15 soldiers.

Atkins and several other U.S. soldiers were on patrol when they observed four suspicious Iraqis. The Iraqis tried to run away, but Atkins caught one and took him to the ground. The man detonated a suicide bomb attached to his vest, killing himself and Atkins.

A second Iraqi man then began to run at the other soldiers. He also detonated a suicide bomb, but killed only himself. The other two men fled.

Atkins died the way he lived: aggressive, tenacious and eager to get his job done.

When his father heard the details, he wasn't surprised. "I said to myself, 'That's Travis. He's not going to let that son of a bitch get away.'"

"He loved the Army. He did an excellent job," said his mother. "He was well thought of by his subordinates and his superior officers."

Atkins attended Bozeman High School and Kemper Military School in Missouri, eventually earning his GED. After high school he worked as a painter, poured concrete and worked in a snowmobile shop.

He enlisted in November 2000 and, according to his mother, "When he joined the Army, that's when he found his niche."

Atkins was initially sent to Iraq for 10 months beginning in March 2003, the start of the war. Following his first tour there, he left the Army, attended the University of Montana, and worked in the building trades. He re-enlisted in the Army in December 2005 and was sent back to Iraq in the summer of 2006.

Atkins had already survived two roadside bombs, so he knew the risks of being in Iraq, said his father, a Vietnam veteran.

Atkins joined the Army because he wanted to serve his country, according to Nancy Sander, an Army Reserve nurse who had known him since he was in the fifth grade.

"He also enjoyed the discipline and camaraderie the Army offered," she said, "and he was a good, hard-working guy. He was totally courageous. He probably saved those other guys from being killed."

Atkins wasn't very big – perhaps 5-foot-7 and about 150 pounds. He didn't tower over a crowd, but people still looked up to him, according to Marcus Graf, who served with Atkins in Iraq.

"I looked up to him and respected him more than anyone I ever met," Graf said.

Travis has received the Distinguished Service Cross. Travis's other awards and decorations include a Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Combat Infantryman's Badge and Air Assault Badge.

In addition to his parents, who live in Bozeman, and a sister who lives in Washington state, Atkins left an 11-year-old son, Trevor, who lives in Minnesota.

Travis Atkins (Courtesy Jack Atkins)

MSG Ben Mu

Photo's Courtesy B

Inez Jr. (Brother)

Rudy (Brother)

Armando (Brother)

Leroy (Nephew)

James (Nephew)

Efrain (Nephew)

Angie (Daughter)

Ben Musq
U. S A

Justin (Great Nephew)

Adrian Lee (Nephew)

Roman (Nephew)

Rub

In The Service of the United
Commemorating Vetera

Layout Design: J

uez & Family
Musquez (MSO-56)

MSO-56)
(Ret.)

Eddy (Brother)

Angel Sr. (Brother)

Johnny (Brother)

Dio (Brother)

Lydia (Daughter)

Jimmy (Nephew)

Angel Jr. (Nephew)

Son)

Anthony (Nephew)

Kenneth (Grandson)

Rachael (Niece)

ates of America Since WWII
Day November 11, 2011

y Kirkley (CJ-64)