

USDA FOREST SERVICE
ALASKA REGION
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802

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Please take a minute and let us know how *SourDough Notes* can best suit your needs. You can continue to mail your comments to Sandy Frost, Editor (see page 2).

Tongass Plans to Celebrate Centennial

On August 20, 1902, President Teddy Roosevelt set pen to paper and signed the proclamation that created the Alexander Archipelago Forest Reserve. This pivotal act was the forerunner of the Tongass National Forest, established in 1907. (*The Chugach National Forest was also established that same year.*)

Employees throughout the Tongass National Forest are hard at work developing plans to celebrate the upcoming centennial of the nation's largest National Forest. Although projects are still in their draft stages, a wide range of activities, events and products are on the drawing board.

One of the most exciting events will be a Tongass Employee Retiree reunion. This multi-day event would be held in Ketchikan and would feature speakers, day-trips and evening gatherings. "The key to making the reunion a success is enlisting two or three retirees who would be willing to help organize the event and help take care of logistics," said Centennial Committee Chairman Mike Weber.

Other plans include interpretive displays and exhibits, community celebrations, a Ranger Boat Roundup, a centennial marathon, and hosting a *Fiddlin' Foresters* tour of Southeast Alaska. "The *Fiddlin' Foresters* are a group of FS employees



from Region 2 who travel the country playing old-time, bluegrass music at FS events," said Weber.

During the coming year, *SourDough Notes* will highlight centennial plans and Tongass history in each edition.

SourDough Notes will continue to collect and share stories about 'the good ole days' in the Alaska Region. Please take a moment and jot down one of your memories and send it in.

If you have ideas about what you'd like to see in the coming year (*or if you would like to help!*), please contact the Tongass Centennial Coordinator, Mike Weber at:

mweber@fs.fed.us *

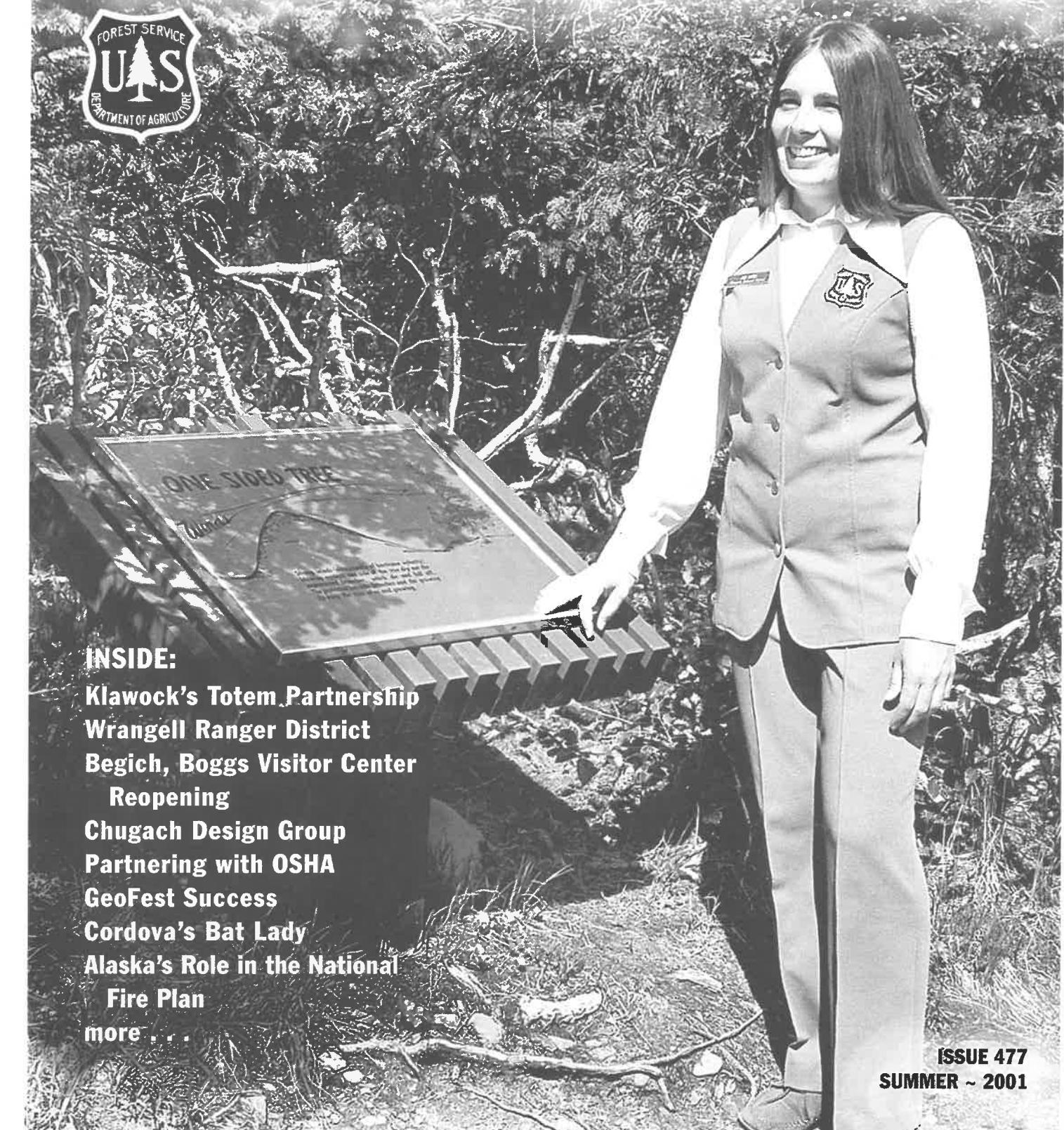


SourDough Notes

ALASKA REGION

USDA FOREST SERVICE

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



INSIDE:

Klawock's Totem Partnership

Wrangell Ranger District

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Reopening**

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Cordova's Bat Lady

**Alaska's Role in the National
Fire Plan**

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ISSUE 477

SUMMER ~ 2001

SourDough Notes

Quarterly newsletter of the employees and retirees of the USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region
PO Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802-1628
www.fs.fed.us/r10

SUMMER, 2001

PRODUCED BY:
Sandy Frost: Writer-Editor
Annette Untalasco: Pre-Press
Wini Weber: Printing Specialist

SUBMISSIONS:

SourDough Notes is a way for employees—past and present—of the Alaska Region to stay in touch and share their stories. If you would like to submit an article or photograph, have a good idea for a story, or have a suggestion or comment, WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. Please contact:

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Please keep in mind that articles should be no more than 800 words and may be edited. Submitted articles may not all be printed.

Photos submitted electronically—scanned or digital—need to be about 5" X 7", at least 200 dots per inch resolution (300 dpi is best) and saved as grayscale TIF graphics.



ON THE COVER:

A forest interpreter explains glacial landscapes along the Moraine Nature Trail in Portage Valley in the Chugach National Forest. The date of this photograph is estimated as the mid-1970s. Can you identify this employee?

A View from Here

by Acting Regional Forester Paul Forward

As summer winds down, I'm sure that most of us can look back at a busy time with many accomplishments. In the rush and hubbub of our daily work, I encourage everyone to pause, reflect on the beauty of Alaska and take pride in the role you play in helping manage our country's natural resources and contributing to your communities. For some of you, this may be your first season with the Forest Service. Whether it is your 1st, 5th, 15th or 30th year, I hope your experience on these incredible public lands continues to stimulate and reward you.

This edition of *SourDough Notes* is packed with stories about the hard and important work that our seasonal workforce accomplishes. When the public thinks about what the Forest Service does, they often identify building trails, operating visitor centers or managing timber, or maintaining the health of the forest (fire, beetles, etc.). Many of these responsibilities are accomplished through the efforts of our seasonal employees. The Forest Service could not "care for the land, and serve people", without these important contributions. I would like to extend a personal thank you to each one of the region's seasonal employees.

Over the last six months, I have been greatly impressed by the hard work and dedication of ALL the region's employees. Although the new Regional Forester has not yet been named, and important court and administration decisions still loom, you have done an exemplary job of 'keeping your eyes on the ball' and practicing wise resource management. I appreciate these efforts too.



Deidre St. Louis, transfer from
Glacier RD to Recreation Staff,
Coconino NF

Joe Williams, to Law Enforcement
Officer, Glacier RD

Stephanie Williams, transfer from
US Navy to Administrative
Officer, GRD

Gerry Xavier, to Supervisory Civil
Engineer, Chugach SO

Mary Lou Zimmerman, reassign-
ment to Student Trainee,
Cordova RD

Promotions

Jeff Bryden, from Seward RD to
Lead Law Enforcement Officer,
Seward RD

Wes Burton, from CRD to
Computer Specialist, Ketchikan
SO, Tongass

Ann Davis, to Budget Analyst,
Chugach SO

Steve Hennig, from Chugach SO
to Landscape Architect, Chugach SO

Greg Killinger, from Sitka RD to
Acting Ranger, Cordova RD

Kent Kolhase, time-limited
promotion to Supervisory Civil
Engineer, Chugach SO

Orville Lamson, to Information
Technology Specialist, Chugach SO

Don Martin, from Juneau RD to
acting District Ranger, Glacier RD

Johnsua Northrup, to Forest
Technician (fire), R9

Nancy O'Brien, to Administra-
tive Officer, Cordova RD

Erica Osterman, to Business
Management Assistant, Glacier RD

Merlyn Schelske, from Cordova
RD to Biological Sciences Tech.,
Glacier RD

Rob Spangler, from Glacier RD to
Subsistence Fishery Biologist,
Glacier RD

Kirk Warrington, to Forestry
Tech. (fire), Seward RD

Resignations & Retirements

Cheryl Gargrave, resignation
from Computer Assistant, S&PF
Lela Davis, resignation from
Chugach SO



Fair Winds and Calm Seas, Friends

Editor's Note: This edition of *SourDough Notes* introduces a new section—a place where we remember Alaska Region employees who have recently passed on. While we cannot independently gather all the relevant information, we will gladly share information that you send us.

D. Robert "Bob" Hakala

Bob was the "founding father" of the interpretive and visitor services program in the Alaska Region. While serving as the Alaska Region's first Chief of Interpretation from 1962 to 1977, he was personally involved in the development of the Forest Service's first visitor center at Mendenhall Glacier, the information stations at Portage Glacier and Ward Lake, and the development of the Tongass and Chugach Marine Highway Programs. He was very active in retirement and recently received the Distinguished Senior Interpreter award from the National Association for Interpretation. The region's 'Interpreter of the Year Award' is named after Bob.

He will be missed as a mentor and friend of the interpretive and visitor services programs throughout the Forest Service. *



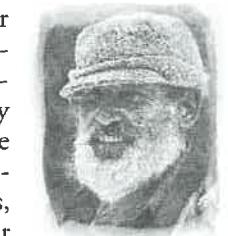
John Shibley

John came to the Camino Real Ranger District on the Carson National Forest in the late 1980s. Having grown up in northern New Mexico, he was instrumental in healing the rift between the Forest Service and the local mountain residents. His collaborative stewardship work, and the District's, was recognized with the prestigious 'Innovations in American Government Award' presented by Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

John could work on his computer equally as well as throw a double diamond on a packhorse, saddle up, and head to the wilderness for days at a time. He and his family moved to the Regional Office, Juneau in 2000 to work in the Ecosystem Planning shop. He is missed by his friends and family both in New Mexico and Alaska. *

James "Jim" Sutherland Watson

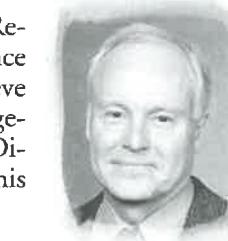
Starting at the tender age of 16, Jim's Forest Service career began in Idaho and culminated in leading the Tongass National Forest from the 1970s to 1982. He first came to the Region in 1966 to serve as timber staff officer in Juneau. In the early 1970s, he became the Tongass Forest Supervisor in Petersburg. He was the Forest Supervisor for the Ketchikan Area during the controversies surrounding the D2 wilderness land debates and hearings, and the Borax molybdenum mine development at Quartz Hill near Ketchikan.



After retiring in 1982, Jim and his wife Betti, led an active and adventurous life exploring some of the wilder areas of Alaska. He loved flying, sailing, and skiing and is remembered for his love of Southeast Alaska's resources and people. *

Stephen "Steve" Duane Zeckser

Steve was a well-known and greatly-respected member of the Regional Office team for twenty-one years. His quiet competence was appreciated by all who worked with him in his career. Steve served the region in different roles in contracting, property management and small purchase acquisition. In 1998 Steve became the Director of Acquisition Management for the Alaska Region until his untimely death.



In late December, 2000, the small plane Steve was piloting disappeared during a flight review in the Juneau area. *



Personnel Actions

Regional Office

Reassignments & Transfers

David Bruce, *from Federal*

Highways Admin. to Chief Financial Officer, Office of Financial Management, RO

Penny Coronell, *from RO to Human Resources Specialist-Classification, RO*

Karlene Hale, *from Ketchikan Office to Human Resources, RO; duty station Ketchikan SO*

Michelle Morrell, *to Acquisition Management, RO*

Fred Salinas, *from Assistant Forest Supervisor, Tongass to Deputy Forest Supervisor, Tongass NF*

Karol Turner, *from Dept. of Energy to Safety & Occupational Health Manager, RO*

Richard Woodsmith, *within staff Reassigned to Human Resources Service Center*

Mary Dowling, *Benefits Assistant; duty station Ketchikan SO*

Sally Gregory, *HR Specialist (Recruitment); duty station Chugach SO*

Rhonda Howard, *Payroll Technician; duty station Sitka SO*

Christina Sanchez, *Personnel Assistant for Temporary Employment; duty station Chugach SO*

Retirements & Resignations

Todd Anderson, *resignation*

Cynthia Wolfe, *retirement*

Promotions

Calvin Casipit, *within subsistence staff*

Sandra Frost, *from Cordova RD to Writer/Editor, RO; duty station Thorne Bay*

Janice Haigh, *from RO to Supervisory Human Resources Specialist, RO*

Charlette Malacas, *within support services staff*

Sheela McLean, *Public Affairs Specialist, RO*

Gilbert Mendoza, *within Acquisition Management staff*

Roy Morris, *from Tongass NF to Human Resources Computer Specialist, RO; duty station Ketchikan Office, Tongass NF*

Marty Myers, *within law Enforcement staff*

Julie Simpson, *from Tongass NF to Supervisory Human Resources Specialist, RO; duty station Sitka SO*

Ken Vaughan, *within Engineering staff*

Karen White, *from Tongass NF to Supervisory Personnel Management Specialist, RO; duty station Sitka SO*

Tongass

New Hires

Margaret Cable, *Forest Technician, Ketchikan-Misty RD*

Alicia Duzinski, *Transportation Assistant, Wrangell RD*

Jody Freund, *Law Enforcement Officer, Juneau RD*

Susan Marthaller, *from KMRD to Monument Manager, Admiralty National Monument*

Chad Hood, *Biological Technician, Hoonah RD*

Darlene Huston, *Business Management Assistant, Admiralty NM & Juneau RD*

Robert Barto, *transfer from Cordova RD to Fish, Wildlife Staff, Kisatchie NF*

Mary Ann Benoit, *from Coconino NF to Wildlife Biologist, Seward RD*

Doug Blanc, *reassignment to Outdoor Recreation Planner, Petersburg SO*

Lauro Garcia, *to Supervisory Computer Specialist, Chugach SO*

Debra Hallek, *reassignment to Human Resources Advisor; duty station Chugach SO*

Paul Kain, *from TBRD, Tongass, to Law Enforcement Officer, Seward RD*

Linda Kelly, *reassignment to Computer Specialist, Chugach SO*

Barry Maijala, *from WO to Special Agent, Anchorage*

William Ulmer, *from Ketchikan SO to Accounting Technician, Ketchikan SO*

Diane Woodling, *from Ketchikan SO to Staffing Assistant, R3 RO*

Phyllis Woolwine, *from Juneau RD to Special Forest Products Coordinator, Juneau RD*

Chugach

Promotions

Warren Brigham, *from Sitka RD to Forestry Technician, Thorne Bay RD*

Tina Boucher, *to Ecologist, Anchorage Forestry Sciences Lab*

John Burick, *from Petersburg RD to Lead Law Enforcement Officer, Petersburg RD*

New Hires

Deborah Aiken, *Admin. Officer, Seward RD*

Brenda Short, *transfer to Accounting Technician, Chugach SO*

Paula Smith, *reassignment to Computer Specialist, Chugach SO*

Gerald Snoozy, *transfer to Aircraft Dispatcher, Chugach SO*

A Totem Reborn

Partnership with Native Community Promotes Culture

Terry Fifield, Archeologist, Craig RD, Tongass NF & **Linda White**, Director Civil Rights & Tribal Government Relations, Regional Office

Sixty years ago, after decades of deliberation and planning, visionary managers, artisans, and Native leaders came together under the auspices of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in an attempt to preserve the last great examples of the monumental art of the Tlingit and Haida people of southeast Alaska—their totem poles. The Forest Service played a lead role in establishing the totem parks of southeast Alaska in the 1930s and 40s, and today has a historical interest in ensuring that the parks remain, not only as a way of preserving a part of southeast Native culture and heritage, but also a reminder of very effective and significant cooperation between the Agency and the Native peoples of this region.

Coordinated in southeast Alaska by the Forest Service, the CCC Totem Restoration project of the 1940s rekindled traditional Native carving skills that had languished, unused for many years. It restored pride in Native workmanship, traditions, and history associated with creating, preserving, and restoring the poles, and it reasserted their significance in the context of Tlingit and Haida culture and heritage. It gave this traditional art form a place in contemporary society and provided opportunities for visitors to view and appreciate this unique cultural tradition. On Prince of Wales Island, on the outer coast of the southern Alexander Archipelago, totem parks were created in three of the island's communities—Hydaburg, Kasaan, and Klawock.

Today, through the joint visionary efforts of the Forest Service's Craig Ranger District, the City of Klawock, and the Native community one of these magnificent wooden giants—a 25' to 30' totem pole—will be replicated in an effort to preserve a very significant part of the cultural identity and heritage of southeast Alaska's Native people for future generations to share.

This undertaking has been selected as a Public Outreach Demonstration Project by the Forest Service's national Civil Rights Staff. Funding for the project will be provided by the Civil Rights Staff. The red cedar tree, from which the pole is to be carved, will be donated by either Klawock

Heenya (Klawock's ANCSA village corporation) or Sealaska Inc., both of which have expressed enthusiastic support for the effort. Carving of the pole will begin in June 2002 and be completed by the end of the summer of 2002. Erection of the pole will take place during traditional ceremonies and festivities.

Terry Fifield, Archaeologist, Prince of Wales Island Districts, Tongass National Forest, stated, "The long-range goal is to establish a program, through which all the totem poles of the Klawock Park are eventually replicated and re-erected in the park. It is our belief that funding of the initial effort will start the process and lead to optimistic and aggressive actions within the community to ensure that the Klawock Totem Park remains a vital part of the community's future."

Today, 60 years after the totem poles of old Tuxekan Village were brought to Klawock, on Prince of Wales Island's west coast, to be replicated, most of the poles still stand in the City-managed totem park adjacent to the Klawock City School and just up the hill from the Alaska Native Brotherhood/Alaska Native Sisterhood Hall. Visitors to the island can be seen during the good weather months arranging themselves to photograph these magnificent wooden sculptures against the dramatic natural backdrop of the mountains and islands in the nearby bays. When snow covers the park grounds, local children ride their sleds, weaving among the poles. The park has become an integral part of the community and remains an important symbol of cultural identity.

Over the years the elements have taken their toll on the wood. Many of the poles are in danger of being lost to decay. Several have been taken down and are stored under a roof, near the river awaiting replication.

In recent years, efforts have been increasing to preserve the old poles in Klawock. In 2000 and 2001, the City of Klawock



Supported by a Forest Service grant, Native carvers in Klawock and Craig will replicate a historic totem pole. Photo by T. Fifield.

secured funding through a "Save Outdoor Sculpture" grant for preservation, treatment, and repair of several poles. ("Save Outdoor Sculpture" is a private/public effort coordinated by the Smithsonian Institution and Heritage Preservation.) However, preservation is a short-term solution and many of the treated poles will never stand in the park again. If the park and its totem poles are to remain a viable and safe part of the community for future generations to share, we must revive the past Native traditions of both replication and restoration of old totem poles.

Of equal importance is the need to educate and train the next generation of carvers. Klawock today has one Master Carver, Jonathan Rowan. Jon teaches traditional arts at Klawock City School during the school year and works for the City on carving related projects in the summer months. He occasionally has a student helper. But, his attention is often drawn away from the park to other pressing community needs. For the totem park to have a future, there must be a new generation of carvers who learn their trade from master craftsmen, understand the importance of preserving Native culture and heritage, and value service to the community.

As Carol Jorgensen (Shuk da heit), Dakl'awedi and Looknax.adi clans, and National Tribal Program Manager, Forest Service, once said, "The land calls to us to know our language." Totem poles are a part of that language and communicate stories, both fact and myth, ingrained in the fabric of the culture and heritage of the Tlingit and Haida peoples of Southeast and record their historical events and accomplishments.*

The Wrangell Ranger District—Wet and Wild!

An Interview with Chip Weber, Wrangell District Ranger

Sandy Frost, Writer-Editor,
Regional Office

As a former Cordovan, I have to confess that I've always had a soft spot in my heart for the Tongass National Forest's Wrangell Ranger District. Characterized by water—whether tidal, fresh, or locked up in glaciers, the area is a paradise for fish and wildlife, and the hardy people that depend on those resources.

The Wrangell District encompasses almost 1.7 million acres in the middle of the Southeastern Panhandle. It covers both mainland and a number of islands. Several large wilderness areas—the Stikine-LeConte and the South Etolin Wildernesses are within its boundaries.

The forests of the district are typical of the temperate rain forests of southeast Alaska.

The Stikine River Delta is perhaps the 'jewel of the Wrangell Ranger District'. Its vast expanses of intertidal wetlands provide critical migratory stopover habitat for a wide variety of waterfowl and shorebirds. Each spring, a run of eulachon (*sea-run smelt*) draws a large concentration of bald eagles, Steller's sea lions, and other wildlife to the lower reaches of the river.

One of the newer Rangers in the Region, Wrangell's Chip Weber took time out of his busy schedule to share his impressions of his new home. Born in New Jersey, Weber worked in the Pacific Northwest, and moved from Hoosier National Forest in Indiana to lead the district. Weber explained, "coming to a place like Wrangell has been a dream of ours—it's a place where I wanted to live, and a job that I wanted to do. My job is made easier by having such an effective and dedicated staff."

What factors make the Wrangell Ranger District unique within the region?

A Life Tied to the Land—"People's lives in the Wrangell area are focused on the forest. Almost everybody does some level of subsistence," said Weber. Unlike more developed areas, people are intimately tied to the land. From logging to fishing to crabbing, the resources of the forest and the ocean support the community.

Stikine-LeConte Wilderness—The Stikine River defines this area. The mighty river runs all the way from Canada to the ocean. Along its silty course are the southernmost tidewater glaciers in North America—the LeConte and the Shakes.

Among the wildernesses of the Tongass National Forest, the Stikine-LeConte is unique because it crosses the Alaskan Panhandle and goes to the British Columbia border along the navigable waters of the Stikine River. "The Stikine River is where much of the human activity is focused. People hunt, fish, and travel along the river," said Weber.

Elk!—Wrangell is the only district in the Alaska Region 'blessed' with elk. In 1987, 33 Roosevelt and 17 Rocky Mountain elk were released on Etolin Island and their introduction has been successful. Elk have been now been sighted on neighboring Zarembo Island.

Today the elk population on Etolin Island is estimated at 300-450 animals. A lottery hunting season is managed by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Anan Creek is one of the best places to view black bears in the nation (left).

The Stikine River Delta provides critical habitat for migrating birds (right).



Awards

RO	Extra Effort Debbie Anderson Jim Baichtal Janis Burns Michelle Canik Penny Coronell Curtis Edwards Sandra Frost David Hackett Everett Hinkley Carol Huber Fred James Marie Kanan John Kato William Lorenz Beth Pendleton Donna Peterson Karen Simpson Peggy Turner Orval Wieber Connie Wilkins	Quality Step Increase Susan Marvin	Time Off Terry Brock	Length of Service 35 Years Ken Nestler	30 Years Ken Vaughan	25 Years Don Fisher Bruce Rene Marylee Schmidt	20 Years Bob Housley Janice Lerum	10 Years Gary Fisher Sarah Iverson	Tongass Performance Bonus Awards Brian Crider Candy Fitzpatrick Judy Hendrickson Steve Hepner Steve Hohensee Marie Kanan Kristi Kantola Crystal Keeling Annmarie Lapalme Ken Maas Charlotte Malacas Marti Marshall Macky McClung Patrick McCoy Myrna McKinley Kermit Budinger Sheela McLean Michelle Morelle	Spot Awards Sherry Barnes Helen Bartlett Keith Appleman Gary Barlow George Bisset Patty Borgesen Nathalie Rice Jim Brainard Teresa Campbell Forest Cole	Extra Effort Richard Aho Keith Appleman Gary Barlow Karen Brand Myrna McKinley Kermit Budinger Sheela McLean Michelle Morelle	Spot Awards Jess Scholkowski Allyson Sharp Jane Smith Janet Stock Stephanie Stoddard Jon Swada Leslie Swada Catherine Tighe Todd Tisler Craig Trulock Emil Tucker Robyn Watkins David Wenner (2) Michael White Russell Wicka Diane Woodling	Time Off Cassandra Klee Christina Minillo	Chugach Performance Bonus Awards Peggy Cossaboom Ann Davis Annette Heckart Lezlie Murray	Length of Service 35 Years Shawnel Aanrud Beth Berrien Lela Davis Cheryl Gargrave Sally Gregory (2) Debbie Hallek Kevin Johnson Betty Kothe Teresa Paquet Christina Sanchez (2)	Spot Awards Karen Wickersham Connie Hubbard Jane Reid Deidre St. Louis Doug Stockdale Mike Stubbs Jennifer Trudeau Mike Kania Nicole Vasquez
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SourDough Memories . . .

The Great Kruzoff Range War of 1971

Ranger Learns Tough Lesson in Southeast Alaska

Marc Petty, Retired Alaska Region Employee, Florida

Shots rang out from both sides, then all was quiet. It was over.

It all started that spring when I arrived in Sitka. Don Brown's loggers, who had a logging camp at Mud Bay, complained that the cows on Kruzoff Island near Shelikof Bay were starving and we should do something about it. It seems that cattle had been put on an old homestead but pretty much grazed on the Tongass National Forest. Grass was plentiful in the summer.

We contacted the owner, a Juneau pilot, and notified him that he must have a grazing permit. The permit would stipulate that the cattle must be off the national forest and fed in the winter. However, the owner could not be bothered with feeding his cows.

We next notified him that the cattle would be impounded and that he would be billed for the cost. I had impounded cattle before in Northern California and it was no big deal. Hire a dozen cowboys with cow dogs and extra horses, build a corral and haul them to the nearest stock yard.

The great range war was on! After the impoundment date had passed with no results, we went at it. A corral was built, an impoundment team was established, horseless timber beasts were trained and ready. Note: horseless, and too many trees for helicopters.

It was a cold, rainy day as we departed Sitka for Kruzoff. We set up a skirmish line moving the cows toward the corral. We soon found out that timber beasts in hip boots were no match for wild cows. They looked pretty good with a summer of grazing behind them. Those critters could move! After several tries the cows got smarter and faster, and we got slower and no faster.

What to do! I put my humble hat on and contacted the owner. This is what we worked out. I would drop all the trespass charges (they were considerable and mounting) if he would remove the cows. The plan was simple. The owner would set up a line of marksmen along the road and we would drive the cattle across. It worked. Shots rang out from both sides—it was over. The beef was sold in Sitka.

Twenty years or so later, after I had retired from the WO, I was having dinner at Dick Power's Lodge near Angoon and Dick had also invited a contractor. The contractor told the story about a crazy Ranger who tried to impound his cattle. I said 'that was me!' We had a great meal thanks to Dick—and a great laugh. *

Marc Petty is enjoying the sunshine in Silver Springs, Florida after retiring from a fulfilling FS career. In the Alaska Region, Marc served as Sitka District Ranger 1971-1973; Director of Information, Juneau 1973-1976; and Director of Alaska Planning Team, Anchorage 1976-1979.

Editor's Note: Yee-ha! We LOVE to hear from you! Please continue to send your stories—touching, poignant, or down-right rib-tickling funny. We'll try to feature at least one retiree story in each edition of *SourDough Notes*.



Thanks!

Regional Leadership Pitches In

Sandra Herrera, EEO Specialist,
Regional Office

We asked and they responded—what a team! Jim Caplan, Deputy Regional Forester—Natural Resources, and Jacque Myers, Deputy Regional Forester—Operations were key note speakers for two separate Civil Rights events.

In February, Jim conducted a Racial Identity Discussion Session for Regional Office employees, in celebration of the National African-American History Month. In addition to having a videotape presentation entitled *Jefferson's Blood*, a facilitated question-and-answer session followed that allowed employees to share their own cultural, real-life experiences. Jim is a strong advocate of workforce diversity and a believer that racial choices in today's society can be measured under a new and creative perspective. Employees left the program with a better understanding of this African-American quote: *"Defining myself, as opposed to being defined by others, is one of the most difficult challenges I face"* (Carol Moseley-Braun, 1947).

A special thanks to Beth Pendleton, Director, Public Services, who volunteered to introduce Jacque, our Key Note Speaker, for the Regional Office Women's History program. Jacque's speech focused on the 2001 theme—*"Celebrating Women of Courage and Vision."*

Jacque gave an inspiring, uplifting, and challenging speech. Jacque spoke about the strategies that helped expand her 27-year Federal Service career. She said that life's choices, challenges, and opportunities made her stronger and developed the creative side of herself, which helped capitalize on opportunities coming her way. Throughout her speech, Jacque challenged the audience with some simple but profound questions: Do you choose to Succeed and Plan for Success? Do you believe you have the power to Love, Think, Imagine, Create, Plan, and Choose? Do you believe that you can Choose to Fail, Act, or Procrastinate? Jacque closed her speech by saying, "We are ALL women and men of courage and vision, ALL on our individual paths to greatness. It's not about where you began or where you may be right now, I think it's about where you want to end up and what you want to do along the way." *

explained that the district is looking for ways to support the community's efforts. "We're increasing our emphasis on partnerships—we want the community to know that the district is behind them for the long-haul," Weber said.

Can you list a few district accomplishments of which you are especially proud?

Anan Wildlife Viewing Area—Anan Creek Wildlife observatory, southeast of Wrangell, offers a premier opportunity to view black and brown bears in their native habitat. As the salmon return each year, Anan's estuary becomes a stunning setting for eagles, seals, and bears. During the viewing season, the observatory is staffed by knowledgeable "bear guides".

The goal at Anan is to provide for the safety of both visitors AND the bears! "Currently, visitors do not require a permit to visit Anan," explained Weber. "However, we're closely monitoring the impacts of visitor on the bears and are investigating options to help ensure that the resource that attracts visitors to this special place—the bears—are protected. The development at Anan and how we've adapted our management are great accomplishments."

The District's Recreation Program—"I'm incredibly impressed with the high quality recreation programs that the district is able to support," Weber said. "The recreation cabins are terrific. They offer a wide variety of recreation experiences for our users."

Creative Timber Sales—"I'm proud of the creative and wholistic way the district looks at timber sales," said Weber. "The sales effectively address ecosystem management concerns and set a new standard for visual management." Currently, much of the district's planned or ongoing timber sales are in roadless areas. The future direction of the district's timber program will be greatly affected by decisions made by the courts and the administration in the coming year.

Terrific Employees!—Weber has been truly impressed with the skills, talents and dedication of his district employees. "Every time that I turn around, there's another employee doing a fantastic job!" he enthused. "The Wrangell Ranger District employees are part and parcel of the community. They are the 'friends and neighbors' that the community turns to. My family has been welcomed with open arms, and we're delighted to be part of this special place." *

Take Your Children to Work

FS Offices Across the Region Welcome the Next Generation

Sandra Herrera, EEO Specialist,
Regional Office

Picture this—laughter, excitement, lots of small foot steps, and tiny working hands floating around our offices. That's what happened when over 60 Federal employee children visited their parents' workplace on April 26 at the Juneau Federal Building.

The Regional Office combined its efforts with other Federal agencies and put together a half-day program for all our employees' children. The event targeted daughters and sons, ages 9-14, of our employees. The theme for this year's program was "Celebrating Girls and Boys."

Early Thursday morning, Katie Benning, Administrative Assistant—Operations, had a few extra helping hands to assist in her daily work: Katie's son, 12-year old Levi, and 10-year old Danielle Hansen, a US Coast Guard employee's child.

Later in the morning, Macky McClung, Education Specialist, and our keynote speaker, did an outstanding job when the children assisted Macky during her presentation. It was an eye-opening experience for the kids when Macky explained the different Forest Service programs, and the many interesting and unique work opportunities within the Agency.

Supervised, fun activities (e.g. bridge construction, weather project, remote control



Katie Benning, RO, gets some cheerful assistance during the 'Take Your Child To Work' program.

boat, and miniature tepee construction), pictures with Smokey Bear, giveaways, and snacks were the children's talk of the day.

Around the Region, the fun continued. On the Tongass National Forest 9-year old Gina helped her mother Ginger Ressler with front desk duties. Steve Heppner brought his son, 11-year old Zach, and Darlene Hutson brought her girls, 12-year old Sasha and 11-year old Jessica to work at the Juneau Ranger District. Darlene stated, "The children were of big help and eager...they organized brochures for the front reception area and then they helped clean out an area in the storeroom." But wait, there is more! The Chugach National Forest will celebrate the 'Bring Your Children to Work Day' program during summer. Jamie Quade, Administrative Officer, said, "Summer is better for us as we can bring in more kids to the event, due to school break."

The 'Bring Your Children to Work Day' celebration is more than a fun day. It's a terrific way to expose our kids to the work environment. Parents take this opportunity to introduce their children to the corporate world and kids feel pride and are honored to be coached by their parents and share in the work experiences.



Regional Conservation Education Coordinator, Macky McClung helps kids understand the different responsibilities of the Forest Service.

Begich, Boggs Visitor Center Re-Opens to Public

Renovated Center Welcomes Visitors to the Chugach

Ken Osuna, Editor, *Turnagain Tides* newspaper,
Girdwood, Alaska

Although the US Forest Service's Begich, Boggs Visitor Center reopened on June 11 after a \$2.4 million remodeling that revamped all of the exhibits, the official grand opening and ribbon-cutting was held on July 21 when all of the displays were completed. While the center used to focus primarily on Portage Glacier, it now offers visitors a visually-stimulating tour of the Kenai Peninsula, Portage Valley, Portage Pass and Glacier, and Prince William Sound.

Audiovisuals displayed on television monitors throughout the center, along with dioramas that depict a slice of life in a part of the Chugach National Forest, comprise the majority of the new exhibits at the BBVC. They include both cultural and natural history in the mix.

"Each diorama is designed to represent a chunk of the resource you're in," said Lezlie Murray, the visitor center's director.

As Portage Glacier has retreated from Portage Lake, making it almost invisible from the visitor center, the number of people visiting the center and the glacier had declined in recent years. The opening of the Whittier road last summer also made the center one of the last stops before entering Prince William Sound rather than an attraction at the end of the road. The result was the broadening of exhibits to educate people about the vast region that encompasses the Chugach National Forest and put more of an emphasis on the Sound.



Children love the new interactive exhibits in the BBVC (left). Visitors are invited to climb into two sea kayaks to 'experience' Prince William Sound (above). Photos by K. Jones.



Chugach Forest Supervisor Dave Gibbons, Pegge Begich, Lindy Boggs, and Deputy Regional Forester Jim Caplan welcome visitors to the renovated visitor center (left to right). Photo by K. Jones

The Begich, Boggs Visitor Center is certainly not your old-fashioned museum where exhibits are roped off and any effort to touch something brings a sharp rebuke.

"We encourage people to touch and feel things," said Murray.

Pushing buttons on panels below the video monitors summon brief video clips about the area of the Chugach you're exploring in the visitor center. Some of the dioramas have panels that lift up, offering a peek into the underground world. In the Portage Valley exhibit, a panel comes up revealing a vole and its nest. The Portage Glacier exhibit has moraine from a glacier on top and a pull-up panel of blue ice underneath. The natural sounds that one would hear in Portage Valley boom from loudspeakers and you can pick the creature that you'd like to hear by pushing a panel of buttons.

"We're not trying to tell people everything here," said Murray. "We're trying to tickle their imagination so they'll want to learn more."

A new visitor center exhibit, The Alaskans' Room, shares some of the state's history with stories from the state's past. It is the final stop on the tour of the center.

"At the end here we ask people to share their Alaskan stories," said Murray, pointing out a message board in the room.

The Weather Lab tells the story of the extreme weather at Portage Valley and Glacier such as snowfall totaling 100 feet a year and 129 mph winds.

So far, the new exhibits seem popular with visitors. When the BBVC opened on June 11, 3,200 people visited the first day.

"People love it," Murray said. "It's really exciting to see people's responses."*

The Prince William Sound room features kayaks that people can sit in and some of the sea life of the Sound. It's designed to educate people about the Sound and convey the message to visitors that they should "leave no trace" in the Sound's pristine environment.

"This place really is an entryway to Prince William Sound," said Murray.

The Begich Boggs Visitor Center also has The Wildside Room, that gives the visitor a glimpse of the Chugach National Forest's wildlife. Windows on one end of the room offer spectacular views of Portage Lake and the nearby mountains, sometimes with a view of a bear or a moose. What visitors can't see outside, they'll find in the room dominated by a life-size statue of a female moose and her calf. An iceworm couch sits next to

the moose statue. Telescope-like devices let you view the world through the eyes of a deer, otter and bee.

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Digging Deep

Mentor Makes a Difference in Life of Thorne Bay Student

Sandy Frost, Writer-Editor,
Regional Office

Thorne Bay graduate, Janna Carpenter, did not have what most would consider a 'normal' high school career. "While my friends were planning proms and dances, I was picking ostracods and forams out of sediments," Carpenter explained.

Taken under mentor Jim Baichtal's wing during her high school years, Janna's natural curiosity blossomed. "Jim saw my potential and helped to nurture it," said Carpenter. "A career in the sciences never really crossed my mind before Jim's help."

With Baichtal's encouragement and support, Janna landed a volunteer position with paleontological and archeological excavations in "On Your Knees" cave on the northern end of Prince of Wales Island. For two summer seasons she 'spiked' out with university crews at the cave site. The work was hard, cold, and challenging. "The first year, I was the only girl in camp," said Carpenter. "The experience taught me a lot about myself and a lot about geology."

Carpenter is pursuing her passion for geology through a summer position with

the National Forests in Nebraska. This fall she will transfer to Montana State University to study geology and geochemistry.

Carpenter is passing on the mentoring spirit. "I know what a difference a mentor made in my life. I'm already encouraging local kids to go on to school and accomplish their dreams," she said.*



I Love My Job!

Dedicated Ketchikan Employee Makes a Difference for Visitors

Sandy Skrien, Education Specialist & Acting Public Affairs Specialist,
Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, Tongass National Forest



tant to her and is an important part of what she shares with people visiting Alaska.

Vesta Johnson, one of the native elders that served on the Native Elders committee and helped plan the Native Traditions exhibit room in the Discovery Center was Merle's aunt. Vesta's portrait is in the native traditions room at the center. Merle says, "She taught me how to make button blankets. People really like me sharing that native history with them."

On a typical day Merle starts out as a collection officer at the fee station in the lobby of the center where she works for most of the morning. At the fee station she greets people, collects money when they come in and lets them know what they are going to see in the building or around town. This is Merle's favorite part of the work, talking to the people and welcoming people to Ketchikan. What has kept Merle coming back for so many seasons? "You're not doing the same thing all-day or everyday because the job has different workstations."

In the afternoons she works in the area between the lobby and the exhibit spaces as a docent. When asked about the docent program Merle says, "I share with the visitors about buttons blankets and how to make native regalia. Most people don't know anything about button blankets so I have to start from the beginning. I tell them

that it's dance regalia. The blanket tells who you are and where you came from. My blankets usually have the clan emblems so if someone knows the tribe's history, and they saw my emblem, they would know which clan and which village my grandmother came from. Most people are on a pretty tight schedule so I don't get much time to talk with them and I try to get in as much as I can."

Merle is making a button blanket for display at the Discovery Center. She received permission from the Double-Fin Killer Whale Clan Chief to put the blanket on public display. The blanket has a black wool background with red appliquéd borders and mother of pearl buttons. It portrays the Double-Fin Killer Whale emblem in the center of the blanket. The fins on the whale have a raven beak and raven eye, which shows Merle's moiety.

In addition to her work for the Forest Service Ms. Hawkins is on the Ketchikan Indian Corporation (KIC) tribal council, which keeps her busy year round. Merle is the chair of the KIC subsistence committee, which she feels is an important part of her work. She is also a delegate for the Tlingit & Haida Central Council. Both groups are federally recognized tribes. Merle also dances one a week with KIC intertribal dance group. The group dances on the Radiance of the Sea cruise ship once a week when it is in port.*

Alaska's Role in the National Fire Plan

National Plan Assists Alaskan Communities

Contributions by **Al Murphy**, Fire Program Manager,
State & Private Forestry

Our understanding of the role of fire in the ecosystem continues to grow and evolve over time. Since the 1930s effective fire exclusion efforts held wildland fires in check. For over fifty years, the number of acres burned on national forests never approached one million acres/year. However, in the last decade wildland fires have burned over one million acres/year in five fire seasons. We have learned that while the inevitable blazes can be postponed, they cannot be forever avoided.

The 2000 fire season was the most severe yet in the new era of big blazes. The last decade's string of disastrous fire seasons has focused public attention on the need to effectively deal with the growing wildland fire crisis. Land management agencies, communities, and scientific institutions have joined forces to develop and implement a wide-reaching strategy to address the wildland fire threat. Collectively called the **National Fire Plan**, the strategy depends upon a number of integrated goals and objectives.

The National Fire Plan

The National Fire Plan offers an outstanding opportunity for Alaska's wildland fire community. The Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (AWFCG) serves as the forum for the coordination of fire plan activities. The plan addresses five key aspects of wildland fire control: firefighters; restoration and rehabilitation; hazardous fuels; community assistance; and accountability.

Alaska's Wildland/Urban Interface

Often the greatest threat from wildland fires develops in the margin where people choose to live near wildlands. We rarely think of Alaska as an area where wildland/urban interface issues dominate. However, in 1998, the catastrophic Big Lake Fire lo-



Excessive fuel loading in southcentral forests has created dangerous fire conditions.

cated north of Anchorage, Alaska destroyed over four hundred homes and structures. Alaska's role in the National Fire Plan largely focuses on protecting people and communities from wildland fires.

Community Assessments

The committee first tackled the assessment of fire risk for Alaskan communities. The interagency group used criteria such as fuels, climate, and fire history to help determine the relative risk of fire for all communities in Alaska.

Working with local communities, the task force is developing a range of projects that will reduce the threat of wildland/urban interface fires. The projects will be implemented over the next 10 years—the expected life of the **National Fire Plan**. To minimize bureaucratic red tape and duplication of services, one lead agency will serve each community.

Projects Underway

The **National Fire Plan** is already making a difference in Alaska. For example, two significant projects have been funded in 2001, and more are planned for the future.

The plan supports the continuation of the Kenai Spruce Bark Beetle hazard reduction project.

***Be Firewise**—The *Anchorage Firewise Project* is a new effort focused on the wildland/urban interface fire issues in Alaska's largest city—Anchorage. This multi-year project involves numerous agencies and other cooperators. While recognizing that wildland fires will occur, the goal of *Anchorage Firewise* is to reduce the potential losses from these fires. Public outreach and education efforts are helping homeowners to understand the risk of wildland fires and providing them the tools to "firewise" in and around their homes.

***Strengthening Fire Fighting Resources**—The National Fire Plan also provides the support for additional firefighters in Alaska. For example, the Tongass National Forest has hired two, five-person crews to enhance their initial attack capabilities in southeast Alaska.

Based in Hoonah and Thorne Bay, the crews are largely composed of local hires from the Hoonah and the Prince of Wales Island areas. *



The Kenai Lake Blaze

The Chugach National Forest had first-hand experience this summer with issues covered by the National Fire Plan. On June 14, the Seward Ranger District started a 1,200 acre prescribed fire on the northern shore of Kenai Lake on the Kenai Peninsula. Funded by the National Fire Plan, the purpose of the fire was to reduce fuel loading in the area and to improve wildlife habitat.

On June 25, high westerly winds carried the fire outside the prescription boundary. The district immediately declared the fire an escaped wildfire and requested a Type 1 Overhead Team and additional support to suppress the fire.

The Kenai Lake Fire created a great deal of public anger and fear as it threatened the communities of Moose Pass, Crown Point, Lawing, the Seward Highway, and the Alaska Railroad. In the end, no structures were destroyed and no serious injuries occurred.

At its peak, 360 personnel were assigned to the fire. It eventually consumed 3,200 acres before it was contained on July 3, 2001.

Currently the fire is being monitored but it is not completely extinguished. Due to abundant fuels in the area adjacent to the fire, it will not be declared "out" until snow is on the ground.

An interagency panel of experienced fire professionals met in Anchorage to conduct a thorough review of the Chugach prescribed fire policy. A final report is expected within 120 days. *

OSHA & FS Join Forces

Precedent-setting Partnership Helps Support FS Safety

Karol Turner, Regional Safety and Health Manager,
Regional Office

Throughout the Forest Service, safety is the most important job that we do. This spring, the Alaska Region joined forces with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) to establish a precedent-setting partnership to better accomplish that goal.

As outlined in the agreement, the goal of the OSHA partnership is to allow OSHA and the FS to work cooperatively to "develop and implement a safety and health program that will be integrated into the agency's culture, serve as a model for others, and reduce the rate of injuries and illnesses..." Within the first five years of the partnership, the program hopes to reduce the overall occurrence of injuries by three percent each year, reduce the lost work day rate by two percent each year, and eliminate repeat citations.

The Cordova Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest stepped up to the plate to be the first district to work under this agreement. In the coming year, district staff will work closely with OSHA to develop a comprehensive safety and health plan, and are committed to accomplishing the injury, illness, and worker compensation goals outlined in the agreement. In turn, OSHA will help identify safety problem areas and develop measures to correct hazards. Training and mentoring of FS staff will be an important component of the program.

The Partnership Agreement formally solidifies a partnership between OSHA, the Region, and the Union to work together to improve Region 10's safety culture. *



Deputy Regional Forester Jacque Myers and Cordova District Ranger Cal Baker celebrate the successful implementation of the OSHA/FS partnership. Randy White, OSHA, and Bill Dougan, NFFE also participated in the partnership signing. Photo by K. Kim.

The Lure of Alaska

Challenging Work in a Beautiful Place Draws Employee Back

Sandy Skrien, Education Specialist & Acting Public Affairs Specialist,
Tongass National Forest

Maurice Jones lives in Darien, Georgia but flies from Florida to Alaska each summer to work on pre-sale timber crew on the Tongass National Forest. Although he intends to become a permanent employee of the Forest Service, Maurice is a dedicated seasonal worker.

After entering a pre-forestry program at the Schenck Civilian Conservation Center on the Pisgah National Forest, Maurice was recruited to work on Tongass National Forest at the Craig Ranger District on Prince of Wales Island during the summer of 1994. He and a friend were given several choices of states from which to select a summer placement location. They picked Alaska because it was the farthest away from home and they had never been to Alaska. His friend has not returned after that first season, but Maurice has come back for five summers.

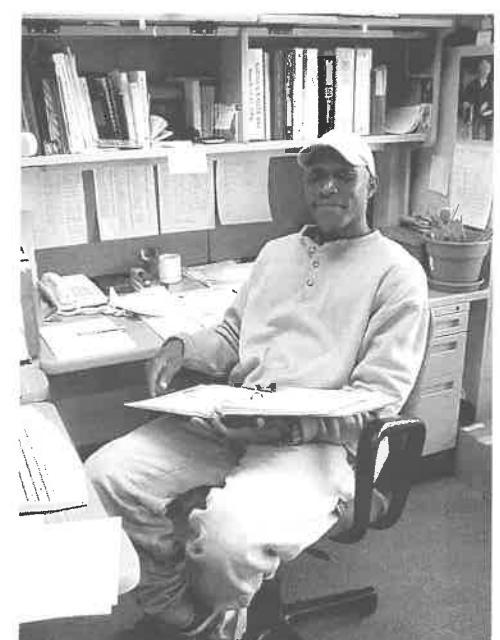
Maurice worked for the Craig Ranger District in 1994 and 1997. At the end of the season in 1997, employees from the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District

worked with Maurice and heard good reports about his work. The next spring they recruited and hired him.

Maurice works as a forestry technician on the pre-sale crew but has worked with lots of different people and crews over the last several years. He lays out units, cruises timber, traverses unit boundaries, and runs profiles on the contours of the land. He likes the work because no two days are the same and he enjoys working out of doors. This work gives him a greater understanding about managing the forest. Each season he tries to learn a different facet of forestry.

When asked about his least favorite part of working seasonally for the Forest Service Maurice says, "there should be more diversity in the Forest Service. I like the job—that's why I keep doing it. I'm trying to make a change. If I don't do it who will?"

Maurice plans to re-enroll in college this fall. He wants to complete his Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry. He says, "In 1995 I dropped out of the program, but nothing else was fulfilling. I came back in 1997 to Craig because they called me and



Ketchikan-Misty RD seasonal employee Maurice Green travels between Georgia and Alaska each summer to work for the Tongass.

I already had experience." He finds going to school and working seasonally a challenge because he has a seven-year-old boy to support. Like many other seasonal employees he usually works for construction companies in the winter season.

Maurice would like to land a permanent position in the Forest Service preferably here in Alaska. *

Alaska Press Club Recognizes Outstanding Communicators

Juneau's Pete Griffin and Anita Nettleton Awarded for Excellence

Sandy Frost, Writer-Editor,
Regional Office

This spring, two skilled communicators in the Juneau area were recognized for their contributions. It just so happens that both awardees were members of the Juneau Ranger District!

The Alaska Press Club presented awards to Anita Nettleton, Interpretive Specialist, and Pete Griffin, District Ranger. The organization is an "independent, professional organization providing information, continuing education, and recognition to reporters in the Last Frontier."

Nettleton's opinion pieces ('Out of the Woods') placed first in the columnist category, also known as the Susan Nightingale Award. Griffin explained, "I would describe her column as an Erma Bombeck column if Erma had lived in Southeast Alaska. Nita describes personal experiences, dilemmas, and non-sequiturs in a fun way. She is a real talent among us." Her columns are pub-

lished in the daily newspaper, the *Juneau Empire*.

Griffin received an honorable mention in the category of the 'Best Commentary or Editorial in the State' for "Shrews" an installment of his Tongass Trails radio program broadcast on KTOO radio. (Griffin's radio program was highlighted in the Summer 2000 edition of *SourDough Notes*). This weekly radio program blends musings about the natural world with accurate and complete biological information.

"I feel strongly that what Pete does is invaluable for not only environmental education, but local good will, voice and personality recognition ... in a large town like Juneau, where it's a challenge to keep the personal relationship we like with the locals," explained Nettleton.

Nettleton's work is a personal effort, while Griffin's work is a partnership between the FS and KTOO. *



Anita Nettleton (top) and Pete Griffin were recently recognized for their communication excellence outside their FS work.



Hark—Is That A Thrush I Hear?

Volunteers Help District Keep Track of Songbirds

John Haddix, Wildlife Technician & Ellen Lance, Wildlife Biologist,
Thorne Bay Ranger District, Tongass National Forest

The Thorne Bay Ranger District has joined the Birds in Forested Landscapes (BFL) Project. BFL is a cooperative project between the USDA Forest Service and Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, that engages local recreational bird watchers and amateur scientists in scientific research.

This community involvement program allows the public to help collect important bird habitat and distribution data. The Thorne Bay Ranger District eagerly joined this project. Due to limited staffing, these types of community outreach programs may not otherwise occur.

Because of the growing concern by conservationists and ornithologists regarding declining trends of forest bird species, the BFL project is collecting data on bird population trends by enlisting the help of volunteers. There are three conservation questions the BFL project is trying to answer: 1) what are the breeding habitat require-



Volunteers Nick Bickford (left) and Jimmy Isom forged a lasting friendship during the bird monitoring project on the Thorne Bay District. Photo by J. Haddix.

To find out how your district can become involved in this project, contact Barbera Kott at bkott@fs.fed.us or 503/622-3191 x687. *

GeoFest a Rocking Success!

Geologists from throughout the United States Converge on Juneau

Sandy Frost, Writer-Editor,
Regional Office

Early 250 minerals specialists and geologists journeyed to Juneau this April to take part in the largest 'GeoFest' ever. The Alaskan odyssey marked the seventh in the series of this biennial, national meeting.

John Kato, Assistant Director of Minerals & Geology in the Regional Office, explained, "we had lobbied for the Alaska Region to host the meeting for a number of years. When we were selected, we wanted to make sure that it was a good workshop."

Juneau, Alaska was the perfect place to host such a meeting. Acting Regional For-ester Paul Forward welcomed the group to this geologically-dynamic land. Associate Chief Hilda Diaz-Soltero presented the keynote address.

Many of the conference attendees participated in pre-conference trips and workshops. A group traveled to Prince of Wales Island to learn about Karst management, while others sailed the Alaska Marine Highway ferry from Ketchikan to Juneau.

Conference topics included discussions ranging from the Kensington Mine proposal, to paleontological resource management, to groundwater management.

A highlight of the conference was the evening presentation by Dr. Larry Agenbroad. Dr. Agenbroad regaled the standing-room-only crowd with stories of his work with excavating the Jarkoff Woolly Mammoth. This fascinating project was recently highlighted in Discovery Channel specials.

In addition to plenary sessions, the meeting featured four different field trips. Some participants toured the historic A.J. and Treadwell Mines, while others investigated Mendenhall Valley and glaciers. A tour of Mt. Edgecumbe to discuss volcanology drew others. Still another group toured the Greens Creek Mine on Admiralty Island. "A gal from Louisiana even experienced her first snow on that trip," said Kato.

"GeoFest 2001 was a resounding success," said Kato. "The hard work of Jim



Participants in the Karst Management pre-conference workshop traveled to northern Prince of Wales Island to experience some of the nation's most extensive cave systems. Photo by N.Day.

Baichtal, Carol Huber, the Chugach Design Group, Curtis Edwards, and the Juneau Ranger District were critical to the meeting's success."

The next GeoFest will be held in Park City, Utah in 2003. *

The Never Ending Story . . .

Reader's Comments Taken to Heart in *SourDough Notes*

Sandy Frost, Writer-Editor,
Regional Office

Over the last year it has been a great honor to edit and produce *SourDough Notes* for Alaska Region employees—both past and present. It has been a joy to work with folks to share your tales of hard work and accomplishment.

We have asked what you like about the newsletter and what can be improved upon. While we haven't been able to implement all of your suggestions at this point, we do try to make incremental improvements in each edition.

A few changes that have been prompted by reader's suggestions include the resurrection of SourDough Sam, inclusion of retiree stories, improved consistency in award information, and the expansion of the scope of stories covered by the newsletter.

Other suggestions are in the works.

northbound migration this spring. Although discouraged, project coordinators trucked the swans back to their summering grounds in New York and will again attempt a southbound migration this fall.

Flash—the Wonder Dog (Spring 2001)—Jeff Bryden and Flash continue to do great things! Jeff was this year's recipient of the Chief's Award for Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. He was also awarded an American Police Hall of Fame Silver Star for Bravery in January.

Digicam Savvy (Spring 2001)—Two eagle-eyed readers spotted my error in this spring story. The accompanying photos were switched in the final version. Good eyes folks—and my apologies for the error.

Watch for more updates in the next edition of *SourDough Notes*! *

The Bat Lady of Cordova

Talented Seasonal Employee Makes a Difference for Cordova's Kids

Her license plate reads "BATTY1" and the local newspaper has dubbed her 'the bat lady.' Christal Burton, a seasonal employee with the Cordova Ranger District, has tried to share her love for bats with the community. She went to college at Rutgers University in New Jersey, where she first became interested in the only mammal that can fly and began working with a Fish & Game biologist mist-netting bats.

After moving to Cordova, she noticed that many residents complained about bats living in their houses—but no one knew what to do about it. As a member of Bat Conservation International and its Bat House Research Project, she began to formulate an idea. Working with a local Girl Scout Troop, she piqued their interest in building bat houses as a community service project. She drafted a strong grant pro-

posal and received a community action grant from the Alaska Conservation Foundation. Armed with a small pot of seed money, and with the use of Forest Service facilities, Christal and the Girl Scouts constructed three nursery houses built to cold climate specifications.

Christal tries at every opportunity to spread the good news about bats to anyone who will listen. As part of the Forest Service's partnership with the Prince William Sound Science Center, she put on an evening Science of the Sound program on bats for the community to dispel some popular myths as well as share building plans for bat houses and humane exclusion procedures. Hoping to spark an interest and appreciation in Cordova's youth, Christal provided materials and assisted in the Discovery Room month-long unit on bats for grades K-6.



Surrounded by her bat-loving converts, Christal Burton shows off the effective bat house that the group constructed.
Photo by J. Holland, Cordova Times.

Christal definitely has bats in her belfry—and she's proud of it! Christal and her new husband Wes Burton will be moving to Ketchikan this fall where Wes will work for the Tongass NF. Lookout Southeast—the bat lady is on her way!*

The Seasonals in Tan and Blue

Alaska Natural History Association is an Important FS Partner

Kristi Kantola, Regional Interpretive Specialist, Regional Office

Not everyone working at major Forest Service visitor facilities this summer is wearing green and gold uniforms. Alongside their Forest Service counterparts, employees of the Alaska Natural History Association (ANHA), wear tan pants and blue shirts.



ANHA employees work at the three largest visitor facilities managed by the Forest Service in Alaska: Begich, Boggs Visitor Center, at Portage Glacier; Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center, in Juneau; and the Southeast Alaska Discovery Center, in Ketchikan. They endeavor to fulfill ANHA's mission to further the interpretive and educational efforts of its five agency partners (the Forest Service, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Alaska State Parks).

Most often you probably see ANHA employees selling books at visitor center bookstores, but that is not all they do. ANHA employees work with Forest Service staff

to design and write interpretive materials, they lead interpretive programs, they staff information counters when needed, and they help with interpretive planning.

If you get to know them, you will discover that most of them applied to work for ANHA because of a strong commitment to the wise use of natural resources, and because they enjoy serving people. Often they have a zeal for interpretation and education, and are willing to work

under trying circumstances because they care so much about what they are doing. (One year when there was not enough housing for ANHA seasonal employees, an ANHA branch manager had two of them sleep on her floor

all summer. Branch managers often work long hours in the summer and short hours in the winter. Some of them have been known to routinely haul large amounts of inventory in their personal vehicles when the agency could not transport it. The examples could go on and on, but I think you get the picture.)

ANHA employees at the three centers include: at Begich, Boggs Visitor Center—Feather Wagner, Branch Manager, and clerks Amira Goldstein, Lynne Becker, Katherine Batchelder, Jamie Pinkstaff; at Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center - Dru Garson, Branch Manager, and clerks Rebecca Coatney, Sandra Harbanuk, Kelsey Korpela, Wendy Swedell, Jason Brown, and Jessica Oyloe; and at Southeast Alaska Discovery Center—Gayle Nixon, Branch Manager.

The next time you are at one of the big visitor centers, look for the Alaska Natural History Association employees in the tan slacks and blue shirts. Those shirts display the eye-catching caribou logo with the word "ALASKA" in capital letters, over the smaller "Natural History Association." The logo is so intriguing that visitors once offered to buy the shirt off an ANHA employee's back at one of our visitor centers. Do you think they were able to? Not a chance! That employee wanted to keep the shirt as a memoir from a summer job she loved. *

ANHA employee Jessica Oyloe is a friendly face at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center.
Photo by K. Kantola.

To Live in the Wilderness

Seasonal Employee Revels in Hard Work and Wilderness Challenges

Sandy Skrien, Education Specialist & Acting Public Affairs Specialist, Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District, Tongass National Forest

Cody Smout grew up in the Midwest but he always wanted to live in the wilderness. Now he works on a crew that maintains trails throughout the Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District. On this crew he is living his dream of working and living in a wilderness setting.

Cody studied zoology in college and first came to Alaska to work on Prince of Wales Island on a wildlife crew. He worked on wildlife crews for three seasons. He also worked on a Wilderness monitoring program in Misty Fiords for a season. This is his second year on trail crew. He works in both the backcountry and in the front country. He likes being able to work in remote locations and being provided an opportunity to be away—to be out in the woods.

When I asked Cody about his favorite part of the job he says, "being able to work hard in remote areas. The days when I'm way back out in Misty, Shelokum, Bailey Bay—those are the best days. Very satisfying. You know how it is."

Cody describes a typical day in the woods; "Get up about 5:30, and drink an hour's worth of coffee; hour and half to wake up... Start at 7:00 pretty much every day... We work hard. You can't just stand around and be wet all day long; you have to go for it. We just go until noon, and take a half hour lunch or if it's cold, take a 5-minute lunch and work 'til 3:30."

Cody likes swinging a pulaski, working hard, and is proud of his calluses. He enjoys boating and 'gets' to boat around the island about a dozen times a summer. Cody claims, "I spend hundreds of hours on the water—way more time on the water than in a plane. There are always logistics to figure out—getting crews and tools to the right locations. I work on a crew of twelve people. We split up to do certain jobs but at times we are all together. Jon Swada and I handle the logistics for the crew."

Cody says he'll probably stay until September and he's looking into other jobs. He'll probably leave Ketchikan, but may not leave Alaska. He's applied to some permanent positions with the Forest Service but with no success yet.

Cody's least favorite part about working seasonally? I'm sure you can guess it—coming into the office. That answer shouldn't surprise any of us who have lived and worked in the wilderness at some point in our careers. *

Seasonal Award Unveiled

Units Called on to Nominate Outstanding Interpreters

Kristi Kantola, Regional Interpretive Specialist, Regional Office

After nine years honoring our permanent full time interpretors for the work they do, the Alaska Region will be honoring seasonal interpreters with an award of their own.

This year, for the first time, the Region will award the "Seasonal Interpreter of the Year" to someone who has made a significant contribution to interpretation in the Region. The recipient will be awarded \$150 from the Alaska Natural History Association and an appropriate plaque or memento. Nominees need not have full time interpretive jobs, but at least part of their duties must include interpretation.

Judges selecting the award winner will come from the Tongass and Chugach National Forests and will include representatives of two large interpretive programs, two small interpretive programs and each Supervisor's Office. Nominations are due in the Regional Office August 20, 2001. Details about the award and how to make nominations are in a July 6th letter to Forest Supervisors.

For more information, contact Kristi Kantola at 907-586-8727. *

Seasonal Interpreter Erika Carls shares information about the area's glaciers with visitors at the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center. Photo by K. Kantola.



The Phone Call

A Story of Growth, Relationships and Glorious Endings

Katy Toth-Stable, Education Specialist,
Seward Ranger District, Chugach National Forest

A simple phone call was all it took to kindle and set ablaze a dynamic partnership between the Seward Ranger District and the Cooper Landing School.

This initial contact from teacher Sheryl Settelo convinced us to sign on as a minor partner in the 'Windows to the Past' grant she was applying for. The district agreed to lend a hand and consult on the interpretive sign project involving grades K through 8 students. Sounds good so far.....

A few months later I met with a very bubbly, upbeat, and excited teacher eager to share the details of the sign project. Mrs. Settelo proceeded to tell me there were 13 signs planned (GULP) and the students would generate, produce, and print them on regular paper using the school printer (GULP).

I continued to smile, nod my head as an attentive listener does, while Mrs. Settelo continued with more of the details: the signs would be laminated with the school laminator then sandwiched between plexiglas (My gasping for air goes unnoticed) and mounted on the boardwalk at the Forest Service/Kenaitze Indian Tribe IRA Cultural Heritage site called K'Beq. Gulp!!

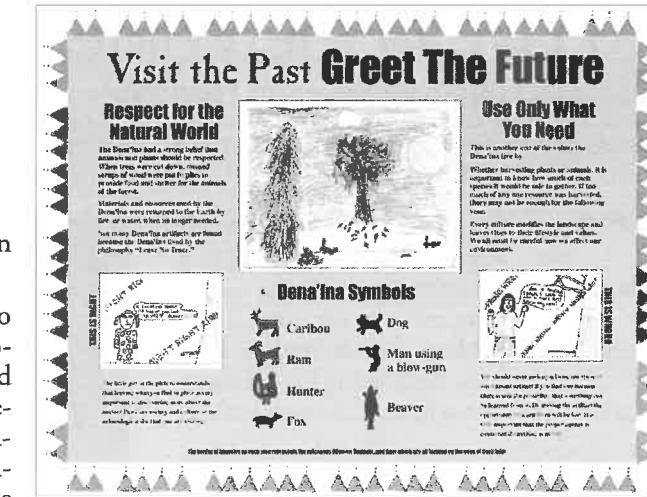
Ssssteady now, I think to myself. Finally, it is my turn to speak. It was time to call upon all the diplomacy I had ever learned. I had to explain to this very enthusiastic, sweet, and gung-ho teacher, that thirteen signs was a huge undertaking, and that the materials and printing wouldn't be appropriate for a FS-managed site. After much deliberation, we decided on six signs whose

topics would correlate to the Kenaitze guided talk along the boardwalk.

Finally ready, the signs were sent to the Chugach Design Group to tweak and iron out the rough spots. With the first proofs hot off the printer, district folks, and archaeologists looked at the text and composition penning in their suggestions. Many proofs later, I brought the final copy to the students for their vote on background color, overall approval, and critique before going to the printers. Once again, I was dazzled by these novice sign designers. Their eye for attractiveness, balance, and detail had become very keen. In this final critique they



Seward Education Specialist Katy Toth-Stable guided the interpretive sign project from inception to completion.



Working with the Seward Ranger District, students from the Cooper Landing School created an effective set of interpretive signs for the K'Beq cultural site on the Kenai Peninsula.

were making changes, sometimes very small changes towards perfection. They were absolutely correct in the changes made. I was very proud.

With the dedication and perseverance of Charles Lindemuth and Mona Spargo, the computer version of the signs went off to the printer. With only a few days remaining until the sign dedication ceremony the countdown was on.

The printed signs in-hand, parents and students K-5, diligently worked on cutting, nailing, and gluing wood (donated by Spenard Builder's of Soldotna) into 24 x 19-inch sign frames. The day before the dedication ceremony the signs were mounted by district personnel. On Friday May 4, 2001, students, teachers, parents, Kenaitze people, members of the community, and the Forest Service attended a large potlatch, complete with Native Youth Olympic competitions. All traveled to the K'Beq site for the sign dedication ceremony.

What were the lessons learned?—teamwork, listening skills, and appreciation of other's ideas, values, and culture. Sign vandalism may become a rarity if all students were required to experience the effort, trials and tribulations of sign design. It is my guess that those students will always be able to spot a good interpretive sign from a bad one.

The glorious part of this project is how it brought a community and the Forest Service together. This project took on a life of its own... the signs were only one facet of a year-long project in which the students discovered Kenaitze heritage, culture, and their own talents and abilities.*

Funny Business at Resurrection South Trailhead

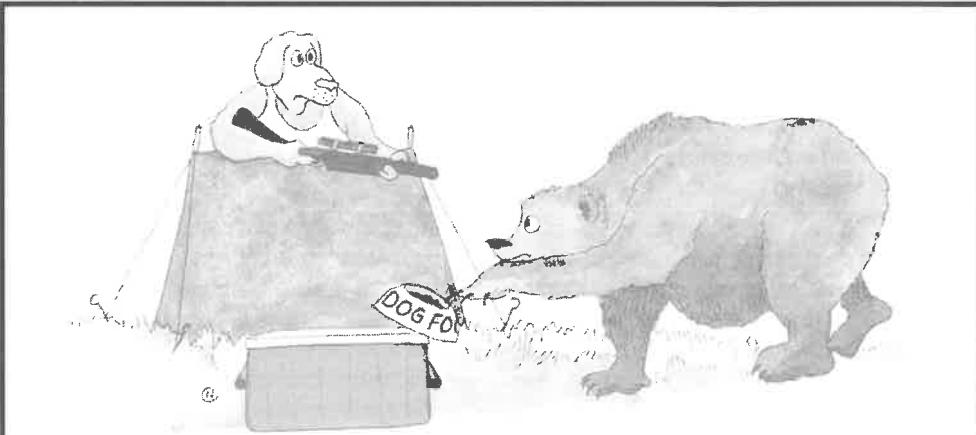
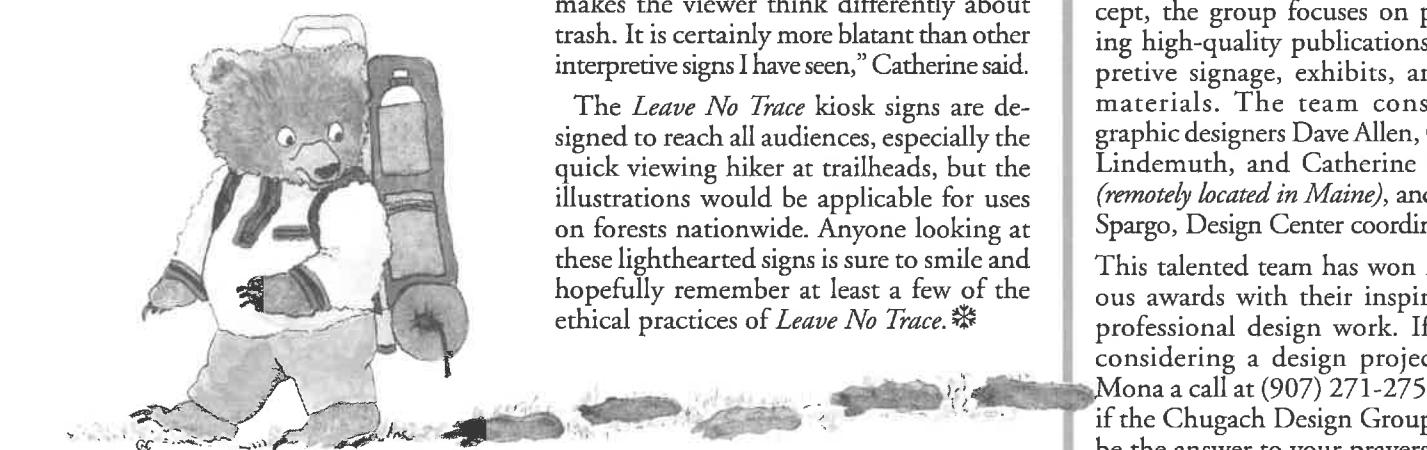
New Interpretive Kiosk on the Seward Ranger District Brings Both Smiles and Lessons

Nancy Gehm, Leave No Trace Coordinator,
Chugach National Forest

Leave No Trace—How do we get the message across to visitors? Forest Service trail rangers spend much of their summers contacting visitors and teaching *Leave No Trace* principles. Unfortunately, time is also spent burying human waste and toilet paper, removing fire rings, and packing out often heavy loads of trash. All this cleanup feels like too little too late. How much better to reach people with a *Leave No Trace* message before they pack their backpack!

The Seward Ranger District has been doing just that for nine years. Nancy Gehm, a *Leave No Trace* master, reaches hundreds of people through talks, slide shows, and skits for children. Scouts, church and school groups, and other outdoor enthusiasts have heard the message. Nancy incorporates very strong *Leave No Trace* ethics into each presentation she gives—Backpacking 101, Wilderness Safety—or any topic the groups want to learn about. The *Leave No Trace* message may be subtle but Nancy makes certain it is strong and not soon forgotten.

Most groups who attend a *Leave No Trace* presentation are already thoughtful about minimal impacts. The biggest challenge is reaching visitors who don't give a hoot. Irene Lindquist, Seward Ranger District's trails technician, has pondered creative answers to this challenge for years. After brainstorming with Nancy and securing assistance funds through a State of Alaska TRAAK grant (Trails and Recreation Access for Alaska), the *Leave No Trace* kiosk project was born—eight whimsical signs



Respect Wildlife: never feed wild animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.

Chugach Design Group Sets High Standard for Excellence

It's hard to keep creative people in a box! On the Chugach National Forest, an innovative solution to the information needs of the public has resulted in a new way of doing business.

The Chugach Design Group was formed in the early 1990s to capitalize on the talents and expertise of a unique group of employees. At that time, a vacancy in the RO left the Alaska Region with a 'design vacuum'. The Chugach Public Affairs program developed a proposal to create a team of design professionals that would be available to units throughout the region—as well as other federal agencies.

Based on the 'enterprise team' concept, the group focuses on producing high-quality publications, interpretive signage, exhibits, and web materials.

The team consists of graphic designers Dave Allen, Charles Lindemuth, and Catherine Norkin (*remotely located in Maine*), and Mona Spargo, Design Center coordinator.

This talented team has won numerous awards with their inspired and professional design work. If you're considering a design project, give Mona a call at (907) 271-2752 to see if the Chugach Design Group might be the answer to your prayers!*